

**International Journal of  
Linguistics, Literature and  
Culture  
(Linqua- IJLLC)**

*2016 / June*

Publisher:

**European Scientific Institute,  
ESI**

Reviewed by the “Linqua – International Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Culture” editorial board 2016

*June 2016 edition vol. 3, no. 2*

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# Tone, Intonation And Pitch-Accent In Igbo

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## Abstract

Pitch is an overriding prosodic feature that cuts across all languages. The universality of pitch while not disputable, the manner/pattern of application in various languages differs. This has resulted in the designation of languages as Stress/Intonation; Tone; or Pitch-accent languages. Igbo is classified as a tone language. This paper examines Igbo language as it exhibits tone, stress and pitch accent. It argues that all these pitch patterns are manifested in Igbo in varying degrees and concludes that the erstwhile straitjacket designation of languages as tone; stress/intonation or pitch-accent be revisited such that more details of the prosodic characteristics be reflected.

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**Keywords:** pitch; tone; intonation; pitch accent; Igbo.

## Introduction

Pitch is basically acoustic and has often been defined thus “sounds may be generally characterized by pitch, loudness and quality. The perceived pitch sound is just the ear’s response to frequency...”<sup>1</sup>. The concern in this paper though, is restricted to pitch in speech, often equated to fundamental frequency ( $F_0$ ).

Pitch in speech is generated at the larynx as a result of the vibration of the vocal cords/vocal folds.

The higher the vibration of the vocal cords the higher the pitch. The rate of vibration of the vocal cords has been the basis for the identification of voice quality in gender terms. The average male voice is lower in pitch than that of his counterpart female. The child’s (male or female) is highest in pitch. Languages are prosodically classified in terms of their use of pitch. So far three basic categories of languages are designated in phonological literature.

They may be diagrammatically captured as seen below:

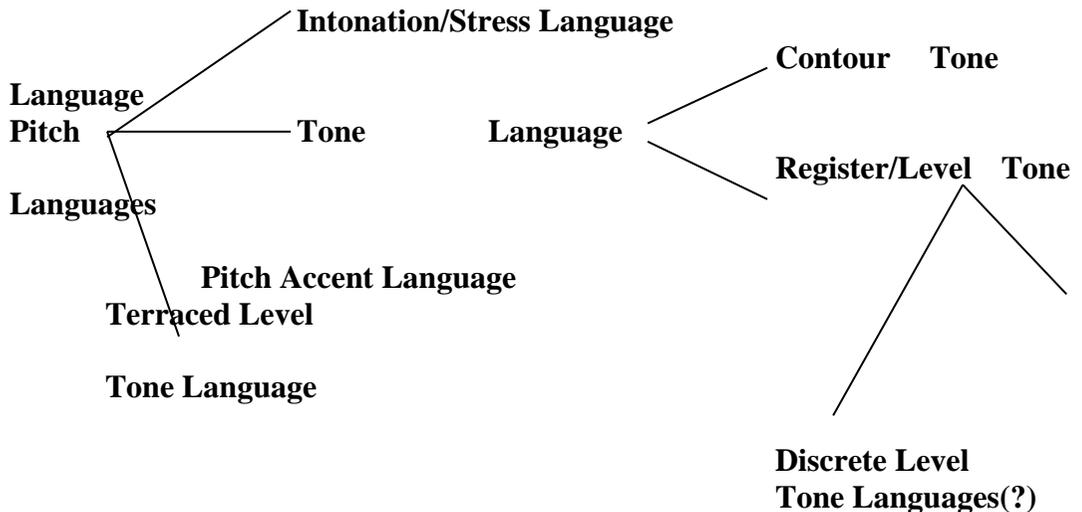


Fig. 1

### 1.1 Intonation/Stress Language

Stress is the defining characteristic of the intonation language. It inheres in the prosodic weighting of relative prominence as it were of the component syllables (often mapped into feet) of a given utterance. The effect of stress is often cumulative as it becomes more pronounced in longer utterances such as phrases, clauses and sentences. Canonical examples of stress/intonation languages are generally from the Germanic Group of the Indo-European language family. Of this group the English language is apparently the most cited probably due to the largely indepth study of this linguistic feature in English, Daniel Jones (1960) Abercrombie, D. (1967) O' Connor (1980) Gimson, A.C (1980) Cruttenden, A. (2014) Hyman, L (2010) states”...what makes English so unambiguous is that metrical stress is multiply ‘activated’ throughout the phonology...English ‘cares a lot more about stress than many other “stress languages”

For intonation, pitch is applied to word groups-phrases, clauses, sentences for a change of meaning, and the change here is not ‘lexical’ but attitudinal. A grammatical dimension may be involved in some cases as in:

- i. He ‘saw the ‘cat.
- ii. He saw the cat.

The first utterance using the high fall (HF) tune is a mere statement of fact while (ii) using the high rise (HR) is not only a question but implies some element of surprise on the part of the speaker. In both utterances the semantic component of each word/lexical item remains the same.

## 1.2 Tone Language

A tone language typically applies pitch variation to each syllable of a word either individually or in constructions such as phrases, clauses and sentences.<sup>2</sup>

The pitch variation is with meaning implications as in the following examples:

| <b>Igbo</b> |                            | <b>Yoruba</b> |                    |
|-------------|----------------------------|---------------|--------------------|
| H H         | oke 'male'                 | M H           | igba 'calabash'    |
| L L         | oke 'share' eg one's share | L L           | igba 'time/period' |
| L H         | oke 'rat'                  | M M           | igba 'two hundred' |
| H L         | oke 'boundary'             |               |                    |

When tone is used to distinguish meanings between morphemically identical words, it is said to be performing a lexical function. If however it semantically distinguishes between phrases, clauses, sentence or any other syntactic structure. It is said to perform a grammatical function.

### **Igbo**

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| HHHHL  | osisi ụkwa 'breadfruit tree'                   |
| LHHHL  | osisi ụkwa 'cooking of breadfruit'             |
| LLLHL  | osisi ụkwa 'hardening of breadfruit'           |
| HLLLHH | Ọ biara ahia 'He/she came to the market'       |
| LLLLHH | Ọ biara ahia? 'Did he/she come to the market?' |

As seen on fig. 1 there are different categories of the tone languages. There are the contour tone languages with examples such as Chinese, Vietnamese and other South-east Asian languages, on the one hand and the level tone languages, with examples such as Igbo, Yoruba, Akan, most African languages on the other. The basic distinctions are those of pitch realization, number and function.

There is generally an 'unsteady' outlook for the pitch patterns of contour tones hence there could be a glide from one pitch level to another within a lexical item as seen in the following.

|    |                  |          |
|----|------------------|----------|
| mā | [ <sup>̄</sup> ] | 'mother' |
| má | [ <sup>˘</sup> ] | 'hemp'   |
| mǎ | [ <sup>ˆ</sup> ] | 'horse'  |
| mà | [ <sup>ˋ</sup> ] | scold    |

Adapted from Hyman, 1975

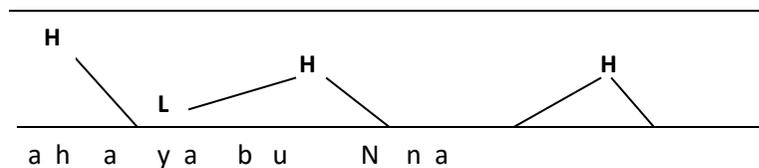
For the contour tone languages there could be up to six (6) pitch level distinctions or tones. In the contour tone language the function is lexical. The level Tone Languages have steadier pitch levels or tones high (H) mid (M) or low (Low). More often than not in the latter there are between two and three tones, and the function of tone is both lexical and grammatical.

The level tone language had also been categorized into two the terraced-level tone language as against the Discrete level tone language. (Welmers, 1959).

The Terraced-level tone languages possess the phonological phenomenon known as downdrift. Downdrift traditionally is said to result in the drop in pitch level of a high tone when preceded by a low tone and followed by yet another low tone. Hence in a phrase of the tonal make up:-

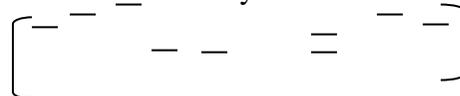
$L - H^1 - L - H^2 - L - H^3$

the second high tone is lower in pitch than the first but higher than the third, so some terrace pattern emerges.



For the Discrete level tone each pitch level remains more less static as it were. Diagrammatically, Welmers gives the Jukun example:

/ani ze sura a syi ni bi/ who brought these yams.



The existence of a discrete-level tone language has been disproved by subsequent researches. Yoruba language which was cited alongside Nupe and Jukun as depicting the discrete-level tone has been seen to possess according to Connell & Ladd (1990) a pitch pattern referred to as a ‘hog-back ridge’ tonal pattern whereby a preceding high tone is followed by a much higher pitched high tone.

Generally, the discrete-level tone language has not been validated by research based on any digital/computer based investigation.

### 1.3 Pitch-Accent

Pitch-accent languages combine in varying degrees, tone and intonation features. In a given lexical item a syllable gets the prominence over any other. This prominence which in many cases is reflected as a high tone, could also be a low tone. Basically there is a critical pitch change that results on the prominent syllable. Hayes (2009) profiles pitch-accent languages as follows:

Pitch accent languages are something of an intermediate case. Pitch distinguishes words... Pitch accent languages differ from pure tone languages in that words can only have one prominent syllable. This

syllable serve as the anchor point for a pitch change and pitch in the remainder of the word is predictable or determined intonationally.

Japanese is generally accepted as the epitome of pitch accent languages. Swedish with her word-accent is also classified a pitch accent language

Japanese

- i. na ga 'vegetable'
- ii. makura 'pillow'
- iii. kaki 'fence'
- iv. okoro 'heart'

Adapted from Katamba (1989)

In the above example (i) and (ii) have prominence on the first mora (iii) has prominence on the second mora while in iv it is the second mora.

Swedish Word accent also typifies the pitch accent. The language has two accents. In a given lexical item the prominent syllable may bear either the Acute or Grave accent.

**Swedish**

klòra stègen 'manage the ladder'

klòra stégen 'manage the steps'

Gosta Bruce (1977).

The compartmentalization of languages prosodically as seen above has raised some serious analytical issues that some scholars have had cause to draw attention to, and sometimes proffer solutions.

Van der Hulst (2009) comments as follows:

A considerable number (probably the majority and to me: all) of the worlds' languages display a phenomenon known as word stress

Hyman, Larry 2010 states:

The approach that I advocate is what I call 'Properties-Driven Typology' (PDT).

Whereas word-prosodic typology has been concerned with pidgeon-holing languages and given them names such as 'tone'

'stress' and 'pitch-accent'...the approach PDT is to eschew this concern and typologize on basis of individual properties which may or may not satisfy preconceived definitions and proto types.

## 2.0 Igbo Language

Igbo language belongs to the Benue Congo Language family. It had been classified by Greenberg (1967) as belonging to the Kwa Subgroup of

the Niger Congo language family. The language is spoken in the South East of Nigeria by an estimated over forty-five million native speakers.

Igbo has two basic tones high (H) and Low (L). Prosodically, Igbo is a tone language of the Terraced-level extraction. As I would subsequently show the language has aspects of intonation and pitch-accent as well.

## 2.1 Intonation in Igbo

The phenomenon of downdrift which manifests extensively in Igbo language is intonational. It can be compared to declination in intonation or stress languages. The pitch declination unlike earlier reports is not restricted to only L-H-L-H constructions. It is there in all tonal patterns including H-H-H-H and L-L-L-L. The first high H in the all high sequence is higher in pitch than all the others. The declination of pitch however is not as steep as in the L-H-L-H construction. Similarly in the all low (L) sequence the first low is high in pitch than the rest and each subsequent low is lower in pitch than the preceding one. Downdrift is automatic while the downstep, another phonological phenomenon often discussed alongside the downdrift in the language is not. The downstep is contingent on a number of factors such as the elision of segment(s) or lexical items and the indication of focus. (Ikekeonwu, 1993).

## 2.2 Pitch-Accent in Igbo

Pitch accent manifests in two basic ways in Igbo (i) Lexically (ii) phrasal/sentential form. In some dialects of Igbo especially the Northern Igbo dialects of Izi and Ezaa, often classified as the Abankaleke dialects, there exists the High Raising Tone (HRT). The HRT would generally occur between low tones in certain lexical items.

### Izi

|           |               |
|-----------|---------------|
| ìgbe'`rì  | 'guinea corn' |
| àshĩmòkù  | 'groundnut'   |
| èku'`tàrà | 'right hand'  |
| àkǎ hù    | 'old/elderly' |

Adapted from (Obianika, 2012)

The HRT is generally higher in pitch than the average high tone in the dialects. The latter could occur elsewhere viz word initially, medially or finally in constructions with other high or low tones. The HRT as it occurs in these dialects depict the pitch accent in the words where they occur. These words are, however, relatively few.

Another tonal phenomenon in Igbo that lends credence to the existence of pitch accent in the language is the alternation of pitch, as it were, among grammatical structures. For instance, for the declarative sentence the verb root must bear the low tone irrespective of their inherent

tones. For the future particle ‘ga’ must bear a low tone while the verb root to which it is prefixed retains its inherent tone. In the serialization of verbs there is also a fixed pitch pattern. If the inherent tone on the verb root is high, then it is retained and is followed by a high toned suffix.

If, however, the inherent tone is low, it is followed by a high toned suffix. See A – D below.

**A**

|    |      |              |
|----|------|--------------|
| zù | zùó  | ‘buy’        |
| zà | zàá  | ‘sweep’      |
| mé | mèé  | ‘to do’      |
| pú | pùrù | ‘germinated’ |
| wè | wèré | ‘take’       |

**B**

|    |       |                     |
|----|-------|---------------------|
| zú | zúghì | ‘did not buy’       |
| zá | zághì | ‘did not sweep’     |
| mé | méghì | ‘did not do’        |
| pú | púghì | ‘did not germinate’ |
| wè | wéghì | ‘did not take’      |

**C**

|    |        |                |
|----|--------|----------------|
| zú | gà-àzú | ‘will buy’     |
| zà | gà-ázà | ‘will sweep’   |
| mé | gà-èmé | ‘will do’      |
| pú | gà-èpú | will germinate |
| wè | gà-éwè | ‘will take’    |

**D**

|                 |        |        |         |           |
|-----------------|--------|--------|---------|-----------|
| Ó               | biàrà  | zúó,   | rié,    | núó,      |
| láá.            |        |        |         |           |
| He/she came     | bought | ate    | drank   | left.     |
| Yáá             | pùó,   | dàá,   | wùó,    | bàá       |
| núlo.           |        |        |         |           |
| he/she went out | fell   | jumped | entered | the house |

A-D show that in each example the pitch makes a syllable prominent. It could be high or low but it is predictable based on the syntactic structure of the utterance.

**Conclusion**

It is clear from this paper that there are significant overlappings between the current universal taxonomy of prosody, lumping languages together as either stress/intonation or tone or pitch-accent. Most languages

are a combination of these categories. It is important from this perspective to revisit the classification.

I believe the PDT would prove a very useful tool of analysis of the prosodic affiliation of languages. However, the broad categories should still be retained as basic or broad outlines to capture the generalizations.

For instance, a language may be classified as basically stress/intonation while the properties would then reflect the existing elements of tone or pitch accent in the language, as the case may be. Alternatively, the PDT approach could be used more or less exclusively in the description of the prosodic properties of languages without recourse to the broad classifications. Then there would be need for the establishment of new types or categories but this may not be sustainable as the significant overlaps would still necessitate comparisons that would still point to the broad categories. I would suggest the two approaches be complementary.

### Notes

1. Pitch-Hyperphysics  
Hyperphysics, [phy-astr.gsu.edu/hbase/sound/pitch.html](http://phy-astr.gsu.edu/hbase/sound/pitch.html)
2. While Pike (1948) contends that of a necessity each syllable bears a distinctive tone, Welmers (1975) presents instances of some 'toneless' syllables.

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# Multicultural Literature: A Tool To Enhance Business Students' Intercultural Communicative Competence

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## Abstract

Globalization and computer-mediated technologies bridged the gap between nations and altered the role of culture in language teaching. They also denationalized English and turned it into a lingua franca. This phenomenon resulted in adjustments in EFL classrooms such as the change in teaching goals and the re-evaluation of cultural awareness especially with the rising tone of hate speech today. Business English teaching is not an exception to all these changes. In fact, it is no longer considered as a mere transmission of infinite lists of vocabulary, diagrams, tables, and figures. In their future career business students will need business jargon as well as intercultural communicative competence (ICC) to cope with multicultural situations. This article reports back a pedagogical experiment on a class of Tunisian MA business students. It was a qualitative action research intended to explore whether multicultural literature, specifically short stories, together with inquiry-based learning (IBL) can enhance their ICC. Data were collected through class observations, journals and semi-structured interviews. Findings showed that using multicultural literature may improve business students' ICC, the short story may be a motivating material for them to read, and inquiry-based learning being enjoyable and autonomous can be an effective approach to teaching literature.

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**Keywords:** Business English- Culture- Intercultural Communicative Competence- Multicultural Literature

## Introduction:

The beginning of the twenty first century brought about changes to the humanity such as globalization and computer-mediated technologies, which bridged the gap between nations and altered the nature and the role of culture in language teaching (Risager, 2006). Those changes de-nationalized English and turned it into a lingua franca (Van Essen, 2004). In fact, a

variety of Englishes are now used to speak of any pattern of any culture (Alpetkin, 2005).

This phenomenon resulted in adjustments in EFL classrooms. Among them is the acknowledgement of the role of learners' cultures (Clouet, 2005). Learners should learn how to be aware of cultural differences, accept them, and avoid stereotypes (Kramsch, 2013). This dialogue among members of different national cultures is called intercultural communication which necessitates mastering intercultural communicative competence. Teachers are becoming aware that one of the main goals of language teaching is to enable learners to communicate effectively with people from diverse cultural backgrounds. In the same vein, this article reports back a pedagogical experiment on a class of Tunisian MA business students. It was a qualitative action research intended to explore whether multicultural literature, specifically short stories, together with inquiry-based learning (IBL) can enhance their Intercultural Communicative Competence.

### **1.1 Statement of the Problem**

Over the last few years there has been a general belief that business and economics English are boring, dull and dry because of the rigid scientific nature of economics, finance and business. Therefore, a considerable research body has been carried to show the relevance of teaching literature to business students to enhance realism in the classroom (i.e. matching theory and practice) and, therefore, motivate them to be enthusiastically involved in class assignments (J. Ruder, 2010).

However, not all literature genres are applicable to business and economics studies due to students' general reluctance to read long literary works and also the limited time dedicated to language learning. Therefore, being brief, intense and ambiguous, short stories may be used as a motivating asset in teaching business concepts. Moreover, emotional and personal involvement that short stories offer can help students grasp the importance and complexity of economic issues after being distant and abstract to them (J. Ruder, 2010).

Equally necessary is the belief that teaching business English is not only transmitting infinite lists of business vocabulary, charts, diagrams and technical terms. Teachers should rather bear in mind that intercultural communicative competence may be a decisive factor in business students' future employability. They should be both knowledgeable (i.e. culture and business knowledge) and skilful (i.e. language and business skills) (Liu, 2013).

Since intercultural encounters are very rare in the Tunisian educational context, teachers should prepare and provide opportunities for encounters with other cultures through authentic materials (Le Baron-Earle, 2013; Han

& Song, 2011; Liaw, 2006; Schenker, 2012). Indeed, Dogancay-Aktuna (2005) assures that when a material is “transported from its context of origin, and presented to different learner groups, it becomes an example of an intercultural encounter” (Dogancay Aktuna, 2005: 100).

Diversity of students’ cultural backgrounds necessitates the inclusion of ICC in educational curricula. Nevertheless, students who do not belong to a diverse setting may still need openness to other cultures in order to survive future intercultural encounters (Arellano, 2011; Barletta Manjarrés, 2009; Dewey, 2007). In fact, Tunisian students are not only members of a mono-cultural educational context, but also have little chance to go abroad to acquire other cultural experiences.

Much research drew the attention to the fact that the absence of intercultural perspective constitutes a serious problem to EFL students (Barletta Manjarrés, 2009; Dogancay-Aktuna, 2005; Klein, 2004; Mohammadzadeh, 2009). However, to my knowledge little research has been made within the context of enhancing Tunisian business students’ intercultural communicative competence through multicultural short stories. Furthermore, the field of culture in English language teaching needs further contribution on the level of research.

## **1.2 Purpose of the Study**

The general purpose of this study is to examine whether multicultural literature, precisely short stories can enhance business students’ intercultural communicative competence (ICC). More specifically, the study aims at exploring the effectiveness of the short story in motivating business students to read literature, and of inquiry-based learning (IBL) in teaching multicultural literature.

## **1.3 Research Questions**

- 1- To what extent does the use of multicultural literature, enhance Tunisian business students’ intercultural communicative competence?
- 2- How far can the short story be a motivating material for business students to read literature?
- 3- How effective is the IBL approach in teaching multicultural literature?

## **2 Literature Review:**

### **2.1 Culture**

Culture is a particularly difficult term to define. According to Spencer-Oatey (2008) “culture is a fuzzy set of basic assumptions and

values, orientations to life, beliefs, policies, procedures and behavioural conventions that are shared by a group of people” (Spencer-Oatey, 2008:3).

Culture manifests itself in three fundamental layers; artefacts, values, and assumptions (Patil, 2014). Different basic assumptions can lead to different values across cultures and, consequently, to different artefacts and creations (Spencer-Oatey, 2012).

Moreover, culture is not a homogeneous entity due to intra-cultural variation (Spencer-Oatey, 2012) and is also not static because of the gradual change resulting from discovery, invention, and diffusion (Patil, 2014). Therefore, any static perspective to culture may lead to stereotypes (Gómez R, 2013).

Furthermore, the inseparability between culture and language results from the fact that language is simultaneously a product and a vehicle of culture. Indeed, without language, culture cannot be transmitted or understood. Thus, it is imperative to investigate the socio-cultural context when studying language (Patil, 2014).

By mid 1980s, the benefits of teaching culture in L2 classes were acknowledged. Nevertheless, questions like what and how culture should be taught did not emerge until the 1990s (Kitao, 2000).

Afterwards, a postmodernist perspective won the ground; both target and host cultures need to be highlighted in order to achieve cross cultural understanding (Kramsch, 2001; Patil, 2014). Therefore, culture classes play a humanizing role in the language learning process in which learners are able to draw on similarities and differences among various cultural groups (Genc & Bada, 2005).

## **2.2 Intercultural Communicative Competence**

Intercultural communicative competence (ICC) is the concept that gave Hymes’ ‘communicative competence’ its intercultural dimension. According to Byram, Gribkova and Strakey (2002) ICC “aims to develop learners as intercultural speakers or mediators who are able to engage with complexity and multiple identities and to avoid stereotyping which accompanies perceiving someone through a single identity” (Byram, et al, 2002: 9).

The need for intercultural communicative competence comes from the “accelerated interconnectedness” (Dewey, 2007) among cultures and the necessity of communication between them (Patil, 2014). ICC requires that students acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to communicate interculturally (Parmenter, 2003).

The importance of developing ICC alongside linguistic competence has resulted from learners’ need to acquire intercultural skills for cross-cultural communication in which they may encounter linguistic and cultural barriers. That is to become interculturally as well as linguistically

competent. EFL teachers, therefore, need to shift from a traditional stance to an intercultural one in order to develop both linguistic and intercultural competences of learners (Kiet Ho, 2009).

### **2.3 Literature**

There has been a constant rejection of the use of literature in EFL (Bobkina & Dominguez, 2014). Stern (2001) states three factors for the lack of interest in teaching literature to EFL students. These factors are: the scarcity of resources and materials, the lack of preparation in the area of literature teaching in ESL/EFL programs, and the absence of precise objectives defining the role of literature in ESL/ EFL.

Despite its complicated syntax and vocabulary (Bobkina, 2014; McKay, 2001; Savvidou, 2004), literature has several benefits to language learning (Tayebipour, 2009). According to Richards and Schmidt (2002) linguistic competence has to be complemented by communicative competence. In this respect literature offers various types of ideas to EFL learners through exposing them to authentic wide range of styles, text types and registers (Bobkina & Dominguez, 2014; Tayebipour, 2009).

Moreover, literature should be taught as one type of instructional materials not as an object of inquiry or an end in itself (Tayebipour, 2009). Thus, literature can be utilized as a motivating resource for language learning because of its authenticity, ambiguity, intimacy, and originality (Bobkina & Dominguez, 2014; Tayebipour, 2009; Van, 2009).

Most importantly, EFL learners may be accustomed with various cultural aspects of language via reading literary texts. Indeed, literature is a genuine “cultural artefact” by excellence (Bobkina & Dominguez, 2014; McKay, 2001). It is one of the codes which embody culture (Patil, 2014).

### **2.4 Multicultural Literature**

The disagreement over how many and which cultures does multicultural literature encompass made it difficult to find a unique definition. However, according to Harris and Hodges (1995) multicultural literature mirrors the traditions, principles, and practices of people of different nationalities and races (Harris & Hodges, 1995 cited in Oswald & Atkinson Smolen, 2011). In fact, multicultural literature is not only what differs from the mainstream but it may emerge from any culture (Henderson & Young, 2011).

Multicultural writers write about their belonging to their host country while retaining the uniqueness of their heritages. They have what W.E.B. Du Bois called a “double-consciousness” and Richard Wright, “a double vision” (Arana, 2009). What unites these writers is the use of English as a medium to express thoughts and to speak about heritages and identities (Dewey, 2007). However, their use of English does not erase the influence

of their original languages (Ansary, 2009; Zepeda, 2009). Carpio (2009) drew the attention to the importance of using original languages in multicultural literature. They are important in the way they tell a lot about other cultures.

The benefits of multicultural literature are too numerous to be tackled all at once. Still, they can be summarized in one broad role. According to Nguyen (2009) multicultural literature bridges the gap between cultures toward a deeper understanding of the human and literary experiences. Consequently, through the use of multicultural literature in EFL classrooms, students learn to accept each other and one's identity. They also can reach cultural awareness and openness to diverse cultures (Arellano, 2011; M. Landt, 2006).

## **2.5 Short Stories**

Scholars agree on specific characteristics to define the short story. M. H. Abrams and Galt Harpham (2009) state that it is a "brief work of prose fiction." It only requires "from half an hour to one or two hours in its perusal" (Poe, 1954 cited in Kirkgöz, 2012). The short story is based on a single event with only one or two characters, which creates its single effect (Kirkgöz, 2012).

The aforementioned characteristics give the short story its practicality and, therefore, suitability to ELT (Hişmanoğlu, 2013; Kirkgöz, 2012; Gómez R, 2013). By being short, brief, and concise, short stories help students to learn autonomously and independently (Hişmanoğlu, 2005; Kirkgöz, 2012; Rocha Erkaya, 2005). This is considered as one of the motivating factors that the short story offers besides its authenticity, universality, and ambiguity (Hişmanoğlu, 2005)

Similarly, short stories can be used as a tool to develop the linguistic four skills- listening, speaking, reading and writing- as well as proficiency in the three language areas- vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation (Aldersi, 2013, Kirkgöz, 2012; Pourkalhor & Kohan, 2013; Rocha Erkeya, 2005).

Most importantly, short stories can be seen as a cultural enrichment tool as they broaden the students' worldviews through exposing them to different cultures and universal experiences (Hişmanoğlu, 2005; Pourkalhor & Kohan, 2013).

## **2.6 Inquiry-Based Learning as a teaching approach**

Inquiry-based learning (IBL) is an educational approach which, unlike traditional learning, is based on students' questions rather than teacher's lessons. As opposed to conventional instruction approaches

IBL distributes teacher-student roles and transforms learning into student-centred active and interactive learning (James et al, 2014).

According to Kuhlthau (2004), during IBL projects learners go through cognitive and affective experiences as well as actions of looking for information (Kuhlthau, 2004). Then, knowledge reached is usually presented to others (Branch & Oberg, 2004). The teacher is only responsible for modelling the inquiry strategies and scaffolding its steps. Consequently, assuming an active role enables the students to improve the quality of their learning (Branch & Oberg, 2004; James et al, 2014).

IBL is one of the constructivist approaches which rely on collaborative learning in order to reach higher cognitive development (Beheshti, et al, 2013; Branch & Oberg, 2004; James, et al, 2014). Indeed, when students collaborate in small groups to solve problems, they can reach a variety of methods and a multitude of solutions (Branch & Oberg, 2004).

Although IBL proved to be an effective instructional model, it seems uncommon in EFL classrooms. This resistance to introduce IBL stems in parents', students', and administrators' belief that lecture-based teaching methods are better (James, et al, 2014).

### **3. Methodology**

#### **3.1 Research Design**

Since there is no fixed attainable goal in ICC proficiency and because there is no perfect intercultural speaker, ICC components cannot be entirely measured in a quantitative way (Byram, 1997; Karwacka-Vogele, 2012). Qualitative methods are rather advisable for the evaluation (i.e. the observation and the measurement of the effectiveness of the pedagogical intervention) and the assessment (i.e. the measurement or the description of learner's progress) of ICC proficiency. This type of research looks for people's points of view, perceptions, and understanding (Stake, 2010). It also takes verbal forms, including qualitative judgements and meaningful communicative patterns (Candlin & Hall, 2002). Therefore, data generated are primarily words not numbers. Qualitative methods may vary from class observations, portfolios and learner diaries to reflexive papers and interviews (Karwacka-Vogele, 2012).

Therefore, bearing in mind the preceding theoretical framework and didactic attitudes, I implemented a qualitative research in order to find out how a group of Tunisian business students could enhance intercultural communicative competence through multicultural literature. This was fundamentally an action research in which I examined a small group of learners and drew conclusions about that group within that precise context. Hence, what I intended to do was only to observe the results that emerged

from the implementation of my pedagogical proposition. Therefore, the ultimate goal was not to test any hypothesis or theory.

## **3.2 Data collection**

### **3.2.1 Data collection instruments**

To answer the research questions, I resorted to three methods of assessment of the experiment and of the intercultural communicative competence enhanced in the students.

- First, before the pedagogical intervention, I employed class observation in order to identify the extent to which students are interculturally aware. Then, after the pedagogical intervention I used class observation as an instrument for assessing the level of students' involvement and learning by means of monitoring their participation in class and their interaction with the literary selections. Field notes allow for the collection of qualitative data and the assessment of students' learning progress.
- Second, students submitted journals in which they reflected on their experience during the different phases of the course. They also reflected on the significance of these activities to promote their intercultural awareness.
- Third, at the end of the pedagogical intervention a semi-structured interview was carried out. It contained an enquiry about the intercultural knowledge acquired by students and the skills developed through the whole experience as well as their opinions about reading the short stories and learning by the inquiry-based approach.

### **3.2.2 Ethical Considerations**

Because of the importance of ethical issues in qualitative research, participants provided informed consent. In order to guarantee privacy and anonymity no identifying information about the participants was revealed. Therefore, students were given fictitious names to protect their identities. They were also guaranteed a fair and objective analysis of the information provided.

## **3.3 Participants**

The study involved business MA students of the Higher Institute of Technological Studies. They were 20 adults, aged 20 to 32. They developed their linguistic and grammatical competences via different courses throughout their primary, secondary and tertiary levels of education. They were never provided with authentic multicultural literature.

### ***3.3.1 Business Students' Reluctance to Read Literature***

In the first part of the semi-structured interview students were asked about their relation to reading literature. The following were their opinions. I grouped them within three categories.

#### ***- Testing as an ultimate goal***

Students admitted that they are oriented towards examination and that everything they read is for the sake of success. For them, reading literature is a waste of time and a distraction from their original focus. They also attributed their lack of enthusiasm to their teachers' reluctance to include reading literature as a learning resource.

#### ***- Literary language***

Others find literary works hard to understand because of their ambiguous and philosophical language. They also insist on the difficulty of vocabulary which obliges them to excessively use the dictionary in order to understand the long literary sentences.

#### ***- Modernity***

Most of them affirmed that there are other more modern means of entertainment such as the internet and television. Without them, they would be bored.

### ***3.3.2 Business Students' ICC level***

Prior to reading the multicultural short stories, two activities were assigned to students.

- First, they were introduced to the theme through reading a text entitled "culture Shock" from the intermediate student's book New English File. As a title for the text, students chose either "The English have very good manners", "English people are too polite, but insincere" or "The Russians are very rude and unfriendly". I had to draw their attention to the fact that the significance of politeness and good manners vary from one culture to another. Students, therefore, need to suspend disbelief and abandon value-laden judgements about other cultures.

- During class discussions, students showed that they already know some facts about cultures. When asked: where did you know all these facts? They answered: from series, films, media and internet. However, most of the information students produced is about the visible sides of cultures; customs, rituals, practices, clothes, food, festivals and monuments. No one evoked the values and beliefs which lie behind them. Additionally, they showed little knowledge of other cultures'

communication styles and their origins. In addition, there were negative comments like “Americans are very violent” and “Mexicans are drug addict”. Through such comments students demonstrated attitudes towards other cultures. They need to change them into more positive, open and empathetic attitudes. Similarly, the students who were told to speak about Tunisian culture used phrases like “Tunisian people are very friendly”, “we have amazing customs”. Students showed evidence that they have an ethnocentric view. They need to adopt an ethno-relative one and look to other cultures through different eyes. They also need to see the limitations of living in one cultural context.

### 3.4 Course design

After an introductory session, two short stories (see table1.) were examined over 4 weeks. Once the stories were read, students prepared for presentations in groups with the help of teacher’s guiding questions. The presentations consisted of the different aspects of ICC in relation to business domain. In fact, the ultimate goal of the course was not to study the literary characteristics of the short stories, but to examine the different components of ICC which will be needed in the students’ professional career.

After delivering presentations, class discussions took place. Then, students submitted journals in which they reflected on the pedagogical experience. Journals were immediately written after the discussion in order to obtain the immediate impression and feedback.

**Table1. Multicultural Short Stories Read in the Business English Course**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Short Story</b>                          | Everyday Use   |
| <b>Author</b>                               | Alice Walker   |
| <b>Ethnicity</b>                            | African- American  |
| <b>Characters/<br/>Intercultural Themes</b> | Dee the educated girl goes back home to visit her mother and sister in the countryside. She wants to get the quilts, symbols of African American cultural heritage. The mother has to decide who deserves the quilts; Dee or Maggie. A dilemma is set; should the quilts be preserved through everyday use or display?                       |
| <b>Short Story</b>                          | Interpreter of Maladies  |
| <b>Author</b>                               | Jhumpa Lahiri  |
| <b>Ethnicity</b>                            | Indian-American  |
| <b>Characters/<br/>Intercultural Themes</b> | Mr Kapasi, the Indian who has never left India served as a tourist guide for the Das, the Indian family who has never been to India. Mr Kapasi works as an interpreter of maladies, a result of Indian cultural and linguistic diversity. Differences of communication styles and gender roles in Indian and American cultures are depicted. |

#### 3.4.1 Criteria for the Selection of the Short Stories

In the selection of the multicultural short stories, I took into consideration the unequal levels of students’ English language mastery. Therefore, the two selected multicultural short stories rarely present difficult or unknown vocabulary. In fact, both of them are generally taught to pre-intermediary and intermediary levels in native speaking settings.

Students' orientation towards business studies was also a determining factor in the selection process. The themes existing in the short stories are essentially relevant to business field.

While choosing the short stories, I tried, to some extent, to respect the "desired internal outcome" described in the Handbook of Methodology for Development of Intercultural Competence. Indeed, among the intended instructional goals in developing business students' ICC is leading them to:

- "adaptability to different communication styles and behaviours; adjustment to new cultural environments
- flexibility by selecting and using appropriate communication styles and behaviours; also cognitive flexibility
- ethno-relative view
- empathy"

(The Handbook of Methodology for Development of Intercultural Competence: 22).

### **3.5 Data analysis**

After the pedagogical intervention, I did a thematic qualitative analysis of the data gathered from the participants and class observations. Data emerged from participants' comments, class contributions and opinions of their awareness to develop ICC in business English classrooms, reading the short stories and IBL.

I analysed data according to a coding process (Patton, 2002), a technique used to identify the common issues that recur during the pedagogical experience, and categorize the themes that summarise all the views collected. The purpose of this process was to find recurrent information produced by all participants involved in the research. I used Byram's (1997) model of intercultural communicative competence- learning objectives to develop ICC (especially those which apply to FL class not to situations abroad) as a checklist through the analysis process. Then, I formulated a theme out of participants' reflections on each ICC component as well as on reading the short stories and IBL approach to teaching literature.

### **4 Results and Discussions:**

The first research question was: to what extent does the use of multicultural literature, enhance Tunisian business students' intercultural communicative competence?

According to business students' opinions, these are the themes related to the development of ICC in business English classroom through the study of multicultural short stories. Bearing in mind that ICC has three fundamental aspects; knowledge, skill, and attitudes I formulated themes according to them. (See table 2).

#### **4.1 Themes Related to the Aspect of Knowledge**

##### ***4.1.1 Through Multicultural Literature Students Acquired Knowledge about Cultural Heritages and Culture-specific Products***

Class observations which are divided into presentations and in-class discussions showed that students acquired knowledge about culture-specific products and the marking cultural heritages of ethnic groups.

In each presentation students included a description of the knowledge they attained through the literary readings. They displayed pictures of the quilt and of African American women quilting. They also provided information about the material, the procedure, and the uses of the quilt in African American community.

Similarly, during interviews students pointed out to the fact that multicultural literature opened a window for them to see the specificities of cultures such as the job of interpreter of maladies which is the result of linguistic and cultural diversity in India.

#### **4.2 Themes Related to the Aspect of Skills**

##### ***4.2.1 Through Multicultural Literature Students were Able to Discover the Mechanisms of Interaction in Cultures (Skill of Discovery and Interaction)***

Students showed that they were able to read literary texts to extract useful information about cultures. Throughout Interpreter of Maladies presentations students dedicated a part in which they displayed the differences in greetings in Indian and American cultures in the short story.

During Everyday Use presentations students discovered that education plays an important role in African-American interaction. They said that being educated made Dee sophisticated and articulate. She knew how to manipulate the arguments in her favour as opposed to her uneducated sister.

Salwa wrote:

*“The uneducated daughter Maggie was afraid of facing her educated articulate sister. She did not speak to her till the end of the story. Even when she spoke, she addressed her words to her mother who was uneducated too.”*

In interviews students' responses were in favour of the act of discovering. They said that multicultural literature presents characters and events as they are, and it was their role to discover what the author does not overtly say. Somehow, they felt themselves active not mere passive readers.

#### ***4.2.2 Through Multicultural Literature Students were Able to Interpret the Cultural Origins behind Communication Styles: Collectivism Vs Individualism (Skill of Interpreting)***

Through an internet research students were able to answer the teacher's guiding question: Why do Indians and Americans communicate differently?

They reached the conclusion that Indian and American communication styles differ because of cultural origins. Indian culture is collectivist, whereas American culture is individualist. Being collectivist, Indians like doing things, celebrating events, taking decisions and living together in communities. However, every American is valued for what he/she is. Individuals are, therefore, responsible for their own deeds and decisions.

Thus, multicultural literature enhanced students' logical interpretation of literary language by triggering their schemata and pushing them to make liaisons between what they read and what they already know.

When interviewed, one of the students extended the idea of collectivist Vs individualist communication style on the short story *Everyday Use*. She said:

*“Because the three women in Everyday Use were living in an individualist society, each one of them assumed her responsibility. Maggie decided to quilt, Dee chose to be the educated arrogant woman and Mama decided to give the quilt to Maggie.”*

#### ***4.2.3 Through Discussions over Multicultural Literature Students were Able to Interpret the Drawbacks of Ignoring Other Cultures' Communication Styles (Skill of Interpreting)***

In their discussions, students showed that they were able to broaden the knowledge they acquired about differences of communication styles and their cultural origins. When answering the teacher's question: what if we don't know our interlocutor's communication style? a multitude of answers were given such as: “communication will break down”, “there will be a misunderstanding”, and “conflicts and hate will appear”.

I further extended the same question into “what if we don't know our interlocutor's communication style while doing business?” The following were the students' answers: “meetings will be called off”, “deals will be signed off”, “contracts will be cancelled”, “negotiations will be cut off” “business will fail”, and “companies can go bankrupt”.

#### ***4.2.4 Students Interpreted the Importance of Reinserting Cultural Heritage in the Economic Cycle (Skill of Interpreting)***

During class discussions over the short story *Everyday Use* students showed the capability of interpreting suggestions to reschedule cultural heritages in the economic agenda. Most of them were inspired by the title and the main idea of the short story. They insisted on the importance of everyday use to preserve cultural heritages. Some of them provided useful ideas to reinsert the cultural heritage within the economic cycle. Amira wrote:

*“Cultural heritage does not end at monuments and collections of objects. It can be alive through letting more people know about it. It can also be promoted through modernization. Nowadays, designers are using ideas from their cultural heritages in the modern outfits they design.”*

When interviewed, Salwa further extended this idea on the short story *Interpreter of Maladies*. She said that Indians knew how to use their cultural heritage to promote their tourism.

#### ***4.2.5 Discussions over Multicultural Literature Helped the Students to Compare Cultural Heritages, Products and Communication Styles to those in their Culture (Skill of Relating)***

Class observations showed that students were able to relate to other cultures by comparing products and communication styles in other cultures to those in their own. For instance, during *Everyday Use* presentations students managed to compare the quilt in the short story to the ‘kleem’ in the Tunisian culture. They did not only state the similarities but also the differences between both products.

During the discussion about *Interpreter of Maladies* I asked the students: “Is Tunisian communication style similar to Indian or American one?” they managed to conclude that although collectivist, Tunisians do not interact and behave identically as Indians because of differences in religions, customs and beliefs.

### **4.3 Themes Related to the Aspect of Attitudes**

#### ***4.3.1 Students Became Open to Other Communication Styles***

Class observations showed that students were able to give practical suggestions for cross cultural communication when answering my question: “How do we have to communicate with people from other cultures in business contexts?”

They gave suggestions like “we have to be open to other cultures” and “we have to learn about other cultures”.

When interviewed, Amira stretched the idea of knowing each other's culture by giving a practical suggestion to owners of companies.

*I think that in order to have a successful business, companies should train their employees on how they should communicate with partners and customers from different cultures.*

Ahmad pointed out to the fact that employers should select their employees according to their intercultural competence.

*In job interviews employers have to test the ability of the candidates to communicate with people from other cultural backgrounds in addition to their professional competences.*

#### **4.3.2 Through Multicultural Literature Students were Able to Appreciate and Respect other People's Cultural Heritage**

Class discussions over the African-American short story Everyday Use showed that students were able to decentre and admit that cultural heritages other than theirs are worth respect and appreciation. Students understood that intercultural communication is a reciprocal act.

#### **4.4 Themes Related to Reading the Short Stories**

To answer the third research question; how effective is assigning short stories in motivating students to read? These are the themes tackled.

##### **4.4.1 The Short Stories were Easy to Read**

When asked about their experience with reading the short stories, students affirmed that it did not take a long time. As its name suggests, the short story is a short genre of literature. It can be read in one sitting. This was a motivating factor for the students to continue reading.

Most of the students noticed that in addition to their brief form, the short stories contained familiar vocabulary. Thus, they did not encounter any major difficulty in understanding the language and therefore getting the morale from each short story.

Students affirmed that understanding the language helped them understand the sequencing of events, the relationships between characters and most of all the cultural elements present in the short stories.

Students confirmed that because they understood the thread of events, they felt encouraged to continue reading in order to accomplish the assignments related to the short stories. Therefore, the easiness of the vocabulary was a source of motivation and consolidation during the preparation for the presentations.

#### ***4.4.2 Reading the Short Stories was Fun and Interesting***

During the interviews, students showed interest in reading the short stories. They agreed upon having fun while guessing the coming events. Indeed suspense was a motivating factor for the students to continue reading.

Similarly, students affirmed that while reading, they tried to discover the meanings hidden behind the language. This proves that the ambiguity of the literary language urges the students to look at the short stories with a critical eye. They also learnt how to produce different explanations for the same sentences.

This multitude of ideas was also observable during class discussions. Some of the students compared learning business English with multicultural short stories to a regular English business class.

Safwen said:

*“We used to read short and unrelated texts and do boring activities such as fill in the gaps and circle the right option. This semester was different. We read two short stories by ourselves. I personally enjoyed reading them. It was a new and funny way of learning English.”*

#### ***4.4.3 Students Related to and Identified with the Characters of the Short Stories***

In interviews, students affirmed that they found common points with the characters in the short stories. They related to their lives and identified with their problems although they belong to different cultures. Finding affinities with the characters motivated them to carry on reading. Thus, seeing themselves in the learning material may be a motivating factor for the students to be more involved in the learning process.

### **4.5 Themes Related to Inquiry-Based Learning Approach**

To answer the third research question; how effective is IBL approach in teaching multicultural literature? I classified students' opinions into two themes.

#### ***4.5.1 During Inquiry-based Tasks Students Enjoyed Learning***

In the semi-structured interviews students expressed their satisfaction of the inquiry-based tasks. Most of them declared that they enjoyed working together in the classroom and outside it.

#### ***4.5.2 IBL Made Students Responsible for Their Learning***

Class observations and students' opinions in interviews showed that students managed to deliver presentations in front of the whole class after going through an inquiry-based work. Most of them admitted that they were

able to discover the unsaid in the short stories with the teacher's guidance. They stated that the help of the instructor was valuable in the sense that it showed them how to deal with information in the short stories.

However, some of them said that although the teacher's help was valuable, they did the whole task alone. The teacher only framed their assignments in order not to feel lost with too much information.

Furthermore, learners stressed the importance of distributing roles in order to accomplish the inquiry-based tasks. As a result, everyone contributed to the success of their work. At last students expressed pride of what they produced and some of them felt responsible for informing their classmates.

**Table2. Themes that Emerged From Data Analysis**

|                                     |  |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|
| <b>Knowledge</b>                    | Through multicultural literature students acquired knowledge about cultural heritages and culture-specific products. |  |
| <b>Skills</b>                       | <b>Skill of discovery and interaction</b>  | Through multicultural literature students were able to discover the mechanisms of interaction in cultures.   |
|                                     | <b>Skill of interpreting and relating</b>  | Through multicultural literature students were able to interpret the cultural origins behind communication styles (i.e. collectivism Vs individualism) (skill of interpreting) |
|                                     |  | Through discussions over multicultural literature students were able to interpret the drawbacks of ignoring other cultures' communication styles (skill of interpreting)       |
|                                     |  | Through discussions over multicultural literature students interpreted the possibility of reinserting cultural heritage in the economic cycle (skill of interpreting)          |
|                                     |  | Discussions over multicultural literature helped students to compare cultural heritages, products and communication styles to those in their culture (skill of relating)       |
| <b>Attitudes</b>                    | Students were able to be open to other communication styles.   |  |
|                                     | Through multicultural literature students were able to appreciate and respect other people's cultural heritage.      |  |
| <b>The short stories</b>            | The short stories were easy to read.   |  |
|                                     | Reading the short stories was fun and interesting.   |  |
|                                     | Students related to and identified with the characters   |  |
| <b>Inquiry-based Learning (IBL)</b> | During inquiry-based tasks students enjoyed learning   |  |
|                                     | IBL made students responsible for their learning   |  |

## Conclusion

Under the light of our qualitative results, we conclude that multicultural literature may be a resource to help students develop intercultural communicative competence. The findings support our initial idea that the use of multicultural literature in a business English classroom can enrich

students' intercultural communicative competence. Indeed, focus on the three fundamental aspects of ICC when dealing with multicultural short stories may be a systematic and planned guideline for the teacher. By exploring, then exploiting the cultural elements in relevance to business, instructors may provide students with a rich motivating learning material.

This qualitative research has also validated the rationale of using multicultural short stories as a motivating instrument for students to read literature. The results achieved from students' views and class observations demonstrated that they developed into critical readers. They went beyond reading literature to interpreting and discussing it with a critical stance. This supports the theory of combining the three aspects of ICC in order to establish critical cultural awareness (Byram, 1997). Furthermore, the familiarity of vocabulary in the short stories may turn students into independent readers and therefore into autonomous learners. This statement is already evoked in the literature review.

Similarly, engaging students in inquiry-based learning makes them feel responsible for their own learning process. They interact, disagree and ultimately settle their conflicts for the sake of their group. In IBL students go through an emotional and cognitive journey towards growth and maturity. Eventually they become owners of their learning process.

## **Limitations**

### ***5.2.1 Limitations in Relation to Reading the Short Stories***

Not having the habit of reading literary selections, students showed a difficulty in sitting to read the short stories. However, most of them confirmed that once they read the first pages, they were eager to finish the story. In fact, this eagerness to know what comes next motivated them to read literature.

Although carefully selected, the short stories presented some unfamiliar vocabulary. Students admitted that while reading, they resorted several times to the dictionary. However, this did not hinder their overall understanding of the stories. It was a challenge for them to understand a language which is slightly beyond their level.

Moreover, some of the cultural elements depicted in the short stories such as the quilt, the butter churn and the interpreter of maladies did not trigger familiar representations in the students' schemata because of the absence of these elements in the Tunisian culture. However, drawing their attention to similar known components helped them interiorize new knowledge.

### **5.2.2 Limitations in Relation to IBL**

Coming from various universities, students did not previously know each other. At the beginning, it was hard for them to cooperate. However, most of them affirmed that they managed to collaborate, and the preparation for the presentation was an opportunity for them to be acquainted with each other.

Furthermore, students acknowledged that several conflicts and disagreements emerged while preparing for the presentations. This was caused by the presence of more than one strong leading student within the same group. However, none of these conflicts appeared during class presentations. Students knew how to settle their conflicts for the sake of the whole group.

## **5.3 Recommendations**

### **5.3.1 Policy recommendations**

- (i) More attention should be paid to culture and its importance in business field. However, language teachers should not be teaching facts about other cultures but equipping students with a life-long competence that enables them to cope with multicultural situations in their future career.
- (ii) The planning and the implementation of intercultural communicative competence in business English classrooms need serious attention from all stakeholders. Therefore, translating the components of ICC into practical familiar pedagogical steps can be useful to facilitate the implementation of ICC.
- (iii) Since teachers are the first intercultural mediators and are responsible for making their students culturally aware, a special training of teachers and pre-service teachers may facilitate the implementation of ICC in various curricula.
- (iv) The implementation of practical assessment methods and clear cut examination guidelines is seriously needed to evaluate students ICC level.

### **5.3.1 Recommendations for Research**

- (i) Further research on more modern and up-to-date techniques to enhance business students' ICC is suggested.
- (ii) The absence of efficient methods to assess ICC for educational purposes such as examinations and certification urges for further research.
- (iii) Since a special training in ICC is imperative to prepare teachers for more mature pedagogical decisions, further research on effective methods to enhance teacher trainees' ICC is recommended.

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# **Suffering Is An Essential Part For Human Existence In The Reference Of Samuel Beckett's Play 'Waiting For Godot'**

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## **Abstract**

Samuel Beckett was Irish playwright and novelist. He was a dominant figure among the absurdist playwrights. His master piece 'Waiting for Godot' is all about existentialism. The play was written after World War II at the age of depression. Due to this depression era or World War II, people were facing a lot of problems and miseries regarding their lives. The play is also considered one of the best absurdist plays. Many writers had raised the same issue in their writing regarding human sufferings. Suffering means the disruption of the normal functioning of life. Suffering includes waiting, shortage of food, homelessness, physical and mental pains, miseries, suicide, etc. Samuel Beckett mentioned these facts in his play 'Waiting for Godot'. He proved this statement through his main characters of the play, Estragon and Vladimir that suffering is an essential part of human existence. Qualitative research methodology was adopted for this study. The researcher focused on the theme of human suffering and human existence. The study critically analyzed contently. This research solved different answers regarding this study. It was concluded that suffering is not imaginable without human existence. In other words, suffering is an essential part of human existence.

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**Keywords:** Absurdist, Waiting for Godot, existentialism, age of depression

## **Introduction**

Humans consume much of life in suffering or trying to stay away from suffering, yet there is little accuracy or steadiness in the definition of 'suffering'. It can be classified as mental, physical, and social suffering, and then offers sub-categories. For example, depression grief, anxiety, and

existential suffering are all types of mental suffering. Suffering is defined as distress consequential from threat or damage to one's body or self-identity.

In Samuel Beckett's play "Waiting for Godot", Suffering is an essential part for human existence. It is full of mental, emotional and physical sufferings. These sufferings let the man towards the death. In suffering, man wants to search out for the companion. Therefore, Estragon and Vladimir wanted one other in their crucial times. Suffering also affects on the human relationships and the other matters of the society. Waiting is miserable state and situation where a man wastes his precious time for the sake of someone or something. If a man does not know for whom he is waiting for, this is more suffering and painful or in other words this is a worthless waiting or waiting for death. This waiting gave Vladimir and Estragon more misery because in their minds Godot is a saviour for them. When Godot did not come, they lost their hope and tried to commit suicide but failed. The loss of hope also led them towards sufferings.

In this play, the sufferings are waiting, lack of food, misery from diseases, slavery, dumb and blind, suicide, loss of memory, loss of hope and homeless. These are the basic sufferings for the human existence. Existence is not imaginable without suffering and pain. In waiting for Godot, suffering is offered as a regular norm of the society and life. Suffering is a source of mental and physical pains. Both Vladimir and Estragon are suffering from psychologically and physically pain and misery.

### **Literature Review**

Beckett's writings show death, suffering, judgment, guilty and salvation. Salvation is promising in Beckett's world (Vmanimozhi, 2013, p.02). These things are miseries for human in life but salvation from these problems are to return to God. It is the only way for the salvation.

Beckett expressed three main concerns in 'Waiting for Godot' those are relationships, human nature and suffering (Shams, 2012, p.175). These three elements are essential for human existence. Humans have to face all challenges in life because without these challenges humans cannot survive. Humans can form their destinies or they can lead their lives as a life should be lived.

Beckett faces the realities of existence. Birth, death and sufferings are all connected. In life people need each other and without each other they feel pity for another. As Vladimir and Estragon tried to hang themselves, Estragon refused to hang himself first due to break of the branch and Vladimir would be there alone. The world where they live or they exist, give them pain and its human nature to receive the give and receive the pain (Shams, 2012, p.176). In miseries people want one another like that

Estragon and Vladimir wanted each other in their bad times. Even though they wanted to hang themselves together.

By looking at the situation of human's life, it is the proof that suffering is the essential part of human existence, in other words existence is not imaginable without suffering. In 'Waiting for Godot', suffering is expressed as a regular norm of the society. Mental and Physical pains are related to the human existence. Therefore, humans exist for the sufficient and constant suffering in this world. Estragon and Vladimir were suffering from injuries. Estragon had a pain in his foot and Vladimir had urine problem. These two problems kept them away from the happiness. Both had psychologically and physically issues that decomposed and influence their physical and mental state (Shams, 2012, p.177). Samuel Beckett believed that every being has two types of sufferings in this world, physical and mental. Both sufferings eradicate happiness and enjoyment from the existing beings. Now it exposes that if there is any existence for any being, it must have sufferings.

Man is born for sufferings in this world. He passes the time to survive but he is going to close and close towards the suffering and death. So far as man is here in this world he will face the troubles and sufferings. It will also affect the mental state (Shams, 2012, p.177). Humans are here in this world for surviving in every means. In other words, humans will live here to face every sort of agony that helps them to compete with others.

For the mind physicality is a source of suffering. Body is barrier from which the death cannot offer a release. There is lack of perfection in the world of Beckett. Characters suffer due to their existence. Human is a subject to decay in this world (Shams, 2012, p.178). Beckett defines that there is two types of sufferings: mental suffering and physical suffering. The only thing that keeps away human from the suffering that is death but death also cannot give a relaxation.

The article explains in conclusion that life is related and enriched with suffering because man is unable to get the responsibility of facing the realities of the existence (Shams, 2012, p.179). Existence is related to the miseries. Human beings are incapable to take the blame or face the harsh realities of the existence.

For the characters of 'Waiting for Godot', Godot was the source of removing their miseries and sufferings which they were facing in their life (KARMAKAR, 2014, p.06). Godot was actually a saviour for the Estragon and Vladimir. They thought that when Godot would come. We would be fine and far from every sort of sufferings and miseries.

Estragon and Vladimir would be happy when they find Godot. They are living on the earth and those who are living here cannot lead life without miseries and sufferings. For the guidance, they believe on Godot that Godot

would show us everything and that would be our key to forget all sufferings (Withanage, 2011, p.32). In the characters' mind Godot was redeemer for them. With the help of Godot they would finally find the way to overlook all sufferings.

Humans' existence enforce different type of questions in their minds such as: why are they here? Why do they exist? Why are they alive? etc. (Rakwal, 2013, p.111). Existentialism was a philosophical movement that gives emphasis to freedom, choice and individual existence. Why do humans ask such questions? The answer is simple that whenever human traps in any trouble then he blames himself, world, God and other people. Even though sometime he asks questions about his existence.

The same article expresses regarding frustrations, helplessness and resentments. It gives awareness to the people about human suffering and misery. It shows the misery and suffering of beings (Rakwal, 2013, p.112). Frustrations and helplessness give consciousness about the human sufferings. When a being exists here, so that being would face the pain, misery and sufferings.

There are many types of human sufferings. And it is easy to differentiate among those sufferings. The best way to distinguish among these miseries is by external miseries or cause, for example emotional self, determinable reasons outside of the body, the person's mind and cognitive self. Modern people are suffering from different issues, misers and circumstances like: harmful natural conditions, harmful ecological conditions, harmful political condition, harmful economical conditions, harmful social conditions, emotional conditional, spiritual condition and leading a meaningless life (Diehl, 2009, p. 37). All these issues and problems are related to the human existence. Human will face all kind of sufferings to survive and lead a simple life. He will focus on the emotional, Natural, mental, political, social, environmental and economical situation.

There are different circumstances of human suffering like: existential anxiety (that raises many questions what to do, where to go, who am I? from where did I come?), losing basic reality of life, losing 'will' to live etc. It explains that some one feels or suffers pain to grab a meaningful movement in life (Diehl, 2009, p.40). Realities of life cannot be denied. These have to face by human in this world. No one can separate these realities from the life. When a person becomes sure that he would face those situations then the life will not be easy for him.

Existential sufferings are related to the struggles of one's existence. These struggles give the answer of what this life all about (Anderson, 2013, p.12). When a being exists in the world he will face the world and its sufferings. And from these sufferings a being will get the answer of all about the life.

Suffering signifies a dimension of individual misery that goes far beyond emotional or even physical pain. There is no agreement regarding precise, comprehensive and single definition of human misery and suffering (Coulehan, p. 717). It argues that there is no exact meaning and definition of human suffering. Every meaning has its own way and time to take it.

In the play 'Waiting for Godot', main characters are waiting for Godot from the start till the end of the play. But that Godot does not show or come, that gives them more suffering and pain (Wang, 2011, p.198). Estragon and Vladimir think that when Godot comes, our problems and miseries will be solved by Godot. But Godot does not come and they still wait for Godot a lot. This waiting gives them more pain and suffering.

Godot does not appear, but the only thing which still there is hope. The tree presents the reality of life. It also gives some hope for boring waiting. The waiting of human being is now no longer hopeless because it gives a remarkable existence (Wang, 201, p.200). The saviour does not appear and Estragon and Vladimir still have a hope. The only thing which they used for their advantage in waiting, which is a tree. That tree gives them a hope.

'Waiting for Godot' starts with physical suffering of the main characters. The suffering shows the reflection of World War II. Both characters have their own problems like Estragon was suffering from sore feet and Vladimir was suffering from urinary infection (Shobeiri, 2011, p. 290). Beckett used these two characters in the play as a symbol of distress due to the World War II.

Their meaningless and aimless acts give them frustration, suffrages and miseries. To get rid of these sufferings they find the only solution of commit suicide. This idea brings a crack in their friendship and relationship (Makhfuddin, p.120). It is obvious that when the destiny is unknown, it will provide tension between the heart and mind. For the salvation of frustration, miseries and suffering Estragon and Vladimir find out the way to hang themselves but failed.

The second act of the play shows some physical and mental changing. Pozzo get blind, Lucky becomes dumb and Estragon and Vladimir get wearied regarding their losing of hope for escape and salvation. They come up with the idea to commit suicide and keep themselves away from all anxieties and sufferings (Moinao, p.4). When the life goes on it shows us many realities of life. A person will have to bear all the truth and realities and there is no short cut way to overcome on all sufferings. He will have to find out a permanent solution.

They suffer from loneliness, attempt suicide, evoke pessimism and remain unpredictable and dissatisfied till the end of the play. The reason behind such attributes is the prolong torment of waiting for an unidentified

and unpredictable entity Godot who is supposed to be the saviour of all ills (Azam, 2014, p.24).

It suggests existential feeling of human life that life is nothing but a monotonous waiting for nothing. As we can see, Vladimir and Estragon are trapped in a painful, void-like existence in which suffering is commonplace and death (comparable to escape perhaps?) an impossibility (Azam, 2014, p.36).

The idea of committing suicide “while waiting” as it is together with the subsequent dialogue demonstrates that Vladimir and Estragon literally suffer from a universal absence of any kind of meaningful core in their existence. Their despair also demonstrates another critical attribute of the existential condition of a human being, namely the circumstance of a universal loneliness (Liljeström, 2012, p.13).

While observing and examining the plays of Beckett, there is one common issue that is suffering (Shalghin, 2014, p.10). That means that for the existence of human the miseries are necessary because both are related to each other.

The conceptual framework shows the limitation of the characters and also their continuous disappointment, endless miseries and distress or compulsion. In this play characters are controlled and helpless in their skills to face the harsh realities of life (Shalghin, 2014, p.03). Harsh realities of life refer the sufferings of human in this world.

Critics explained that the play expresses the endless feelings of all human kind. This can be proved by different scenes of the play (Shalghin, 2014, p.03). Critics believed that for the existence of human being suffering is necessary and human existence is not imaginable without miseries, pain and sufferings.

Lucky’s disreputable speech is all about the human worries. The speech also defines compulsion and suffering of all humanity. He wants to keep speaking more and more (Shalghin, 2014, p.08). Lucky shows the abnormal state of a person. He wants to talk consecutively but the only thing that stops him from abnormality is the removal of a hat from his head. After taking off his hat from head he becomes a normal person and he feels comfortable.

Human takes shades in temporarily solution to keep away from the suffering and pain. Like Hamm, in *Endgame*, takes pain-killer to overcome his sufferings. One day he finds that there is no more pain-killers that gives him more pain and sufferings (Shalghin, 2014, p.14). This is human nature to find out quick solutions for their problems and miseries. They do not focus on the permanent solutions. When they face the reality that temporary solution is not perfect solution then they feel more suffering than before.

Sufferings are related to the many things. But the worst thing is waiting. If you don't know for whom you are waiting then It will give you more pain and misery. "They are sufferings because they are waiting. And they are waiting because they are sufferings". Waiting is part of human existence (Shalghin, 2014, p.18). Waiting is an element of sufferings. Waiting is far more difficult situation but if a man does not know for whom he is waiting for, it gives him more misery.

## 1. Scope

The study explains human suffering in Samuel Beckett's play 'Waiting for Godt'. The author exposes different sort of sufferings. The idea of human suffering relates to the human existence. In other worlds pain or suffering is not imaginable without human existence. For human all types of sufferings are the part of life. In the play 'Waiting for Godot', Samuel Beckett shows human sufferings with the help of two characters Vladimir and Estragon.

## 1. Research Methodology

The methodology of this study was qualitative in nature. The content analysis was done by the researcher. The researcher analyzed the specific theme of Samuel Beckett's master piece "Waiting for Godot". There are many themes in this play but the researcher only focuses on the statement that "suffering is not imaginable without human existence". The play shows, from start till the last page, human misery, pain and suffering. The play also shows the age depression and existentialism.

This research provides the answers of the following questions:

- i. How is suffering not imaginable with human existence?
- ii. What are the causes of human sufferings in 'Waiting for Godot'?
- iii. In what ways has Beckett expressed the meaning of suffering?
- iv. How does suffering relate to the human existence?

## 1. Content analysis of the (Play Waiting for Godot)

**"ESTRAGON:** (feebly). Help me!

.....

**VLADIMIR:** (angrily). Hurts! He wants to know if it hurts!" (p. 10)

Estragon was suffering from sore feet. He wanted to get off his shoes but he couldn't due to the severe pain and they became swollen. Shoes hurt all the time when he tried to get off. It shows physical misery.

**"VLADIMIR:** Ah yes, the two thieves. Do you remember the story?

.....

**ESTRAGON:** Saved from what?

**VLADIMIR:** Hell." (p. 12)

Both Estragon and Vladimir were expecting a saviour therefore; they started a story of two thieves just for passing their time. They were waiting for their saviour and for that they waited for long time but the Godot did not appear. Just to avoid from the agony they started to tell the story.

“Vladimir.) Let's go.

**VLADIMIR:** We can't.

.....

**ESTRAGON:** That we were to wait.” (p.14)

They wanted to move away from all these troubles but they were waiting for their saviour. They were not even sure whether he would come or not. Now they could not do anything except waiting for him. Waiting for unspecific time is misery.

“Estragon recoils.) You stink of garlic!

**VLADIMIR:** It's for the kidneys.” (p.17)

Vladimir was suffering from kidney disease and Estragon had a sore feet. Both were facing the physical pain. The pain is suffrage.

“**ESTRAGON:** Let's hang ourselves immediately!

.....

**ESTRAGON:** (with effort). Gogo light—bough not break—Gogo dead.  
Didi heavy—bough

break—Didi alone.” (p.17and p. 18)

To keep away from all troubles they had an idea to hang themselves for that reason they offered each other to be hung first. When a person despaired from everywhere and he felt no relieve then he took such types of step to end his life. He thinks that this will be enough for his salvation.

“**VLADIMIR:** Well? What do we do?

.....

**ESTRAGON:** What exactly did we ask him for?” (p. 18)

They believed that it will be a good idea to wait for Godot. Godot will explain everything to them. They were at a state of confusion to act upon his offer or leave it. They didn't do anything for sake of Godot because he will tell them what to do and what not.

“**POZZO:** (off). On! (Crack of whip. Pozzo appears. They cross the stage. Lucky passes before Vladimir and Estragon and exit.

.....

Vladimir takes a step towards Lucky, Estragon holds him back by the sleeve.)” (p.22)

Slavery is also misery for human being. Lucky was a slave of Pozzo. All the time Pozzo jerks him and ordered him to do something. Lucky has his own life but now his life is in the hand of Pozzo. Slavery is sort of stain on human existence.

**“POZZO:** (with magnanimous gesture). Let's say no more about it. (He jerks the rope.) Up pig! (Pause.) Every time he drops he falls asleep

.....

(Before their incredulous expression.) Yes yes, sincerely happy. (He jerks the rope.) Closer! (Lucky advances.) Stop! (Lucky stops.)”(P.23)

Irregular behaviour also gives pain to human. Pozzo called Lucky all the time pig, hog, etc. Now Lucky is a slave and his master Pozzo can do whatever he wants to do to him.

“What happens in that case to your appointment with this . . . Godot . . . Godot . . . Godin . . . anyhow you see who I mean, who has your future in his hands . . . (pause) . . . at least your immediate future?” (p.29)

Estragon and Vladimir believed that their future is now in the hand of Godot. In other words, their future depends on Godot. Without doing anything they gave their lives in the hand of Godot. This is the worst scenario for both.

“(He looks at Lucky, jerks the rope. Lucky raises his head.)

.....

Is everybody listening? Is everybody ready? (He looks at them all in turn, jerks the rope.) Hog! (Lucky raises his head.)” (p.30)

Now again the bad behaviour and slavery will be discussed here. With this fact the play also expresses physical suffering of Pozzo, he has a throat problem. He is a sort of ruler on Lucky, if anything happens wrong; he disturbs Lucky by jerking the rope.

**“POZZO:** Walk or crawl! (He kicks Lucky.) Up pig!

.....

**POZZO:** You must hold him. (Pause.) Come on, come on, raise him up.” (p.45)

Lucky suffers a lot with Pozzo due to cruel behaviour. Sometime Pozzo kicks Lucky and he feels extreme pain. All the time he is at the state of suffering. Pozzo shows animalistic behaviour to Lucky.

**“POZZO:** Which of you smells so bad?

**ESTRAGON:** He has stinking breath and I have stinking feet.” (p.46)

Physical pain and misery are far from tolerance. Both main characters of the play have diseases or in other words, they are suffering from physical pain. Estragon is suffering from stinking feet and Vladimir is suffering from kidney issue.

**“VLADIMIR:** That passed the time.

.....

**VLADIMIR:** We're waiting for Godot.

**ESTRAGON:** (despairingly). Ah! Pause.” (p.48)

They were waiting for Godot. When they became bore they started to pass the time. They were not willing to do anything expect waiting for Godot. It

shows that they were wasting their precious time for the sake of an unknown person. They gave their precious time from their life.

**“BOY:** Mr. Godot—

.....

**VLADIMIR:** Words words. (Pause.) Speak.

**BOY:** (in a rush). Mr. Godot told me to tell you he won't come this evening but surely tomorrow.” (p.48)

Memory conflict is also a torment for them. They believed that they had met the Boy yesterday but the Boy neglected his words and memory and said they haven't met yesterday. And this is his first time to meet them.

**“VLADIMIR:** You work for Mr. Godot?

.....

**VLADIMIR:** Whom does he beat?

**BOY:** He beats my brother, Sir.” (p. 51)

There it shows human suffering in form of cruelty and unkindness. If he does not care about his workers how can he be a saviour for them? It creates a doubt in their minds about waiting for Godot but they do not have any other idea or choice.

**“Vladimir:** Does he give you enough to eat? (The Boy hesitates.) Does he feed you well?

**BOY:** Fairly well, Sir.

**VLADIMIR:** You're not unhappy? (The Boy hesitates.) Do you hear me?

**BOY:** Yes Sir.” (p. 51)

Estragon and Vladimir were facing numerous issues they had also lack of food. When the boy came, they asked about the food because they were thinking about the same issue as they were facing. They also wanted to know about the Godot to whom they were waiting for because they thought Godot was saviour for them. If he takes care of his messenger, he will also take care of them.

**“VLADIMIR:** Your boots, what are you doing with your boots?

.....

**VLADIMIR:** But you can't go barefoot!” (p. 52)

Estragon was feeling sore foot therefore; he was not able to walk in the boots. So he left the boots and tried to walk barefoot. After all these miseries he faced one more problem. He started to walk barefoot. It gave him more agony.

**“VLADIMIR:** We've nothing more to do here.

.....

**ESTRAGON:** Then all we have to do is to wait on here.” (p. 52 and p. 53)

After waiting for long time, they became exhausted. They didn't know what to do. There is a slight hope now and that is Godot. Vladimir said that Godot will come tomorrow and everything will be ok. Vladimir gave a little hope to

Estragon that everything will be alright. Godot will come and take away their all sufferings.

**“ESTRAGON:** Don't touch me! Don't question me! Don't speak to me! Stay with me!”(p.58)

Both characters did not want to talk, discuss or speak but they wanted to stay with each other. They were facing the suffering all the way long and a person needs someone in this kind of circumstances. Therefore, they did not want to leave each other.

**“VLADIMIR:** We are happy.

.....  
**VLADIMIR:** (after a moment of bewilderment). We'll see when the time comes. (Pause.) I was saying that things have changed here since yesterday.” (p. 60)

They were happy due the visiting of Godot but they were not sure about Godot's visiting. Estragon had asked the question if he doesn't come then. The answer of Vladimir showed hopelessness. He said that when the time comes, we will see. This response shows uncertainty and this fact gives sufferings to them.

**“VLADIMIR:** (in anguish). Say anything at all!

.....  
**VLADIMIR:** No no! (He reflects.) We could start all over again perhaps.” (p. 63)

They believed that waiting for unknown is awful. To pass the time they were arguing on many topics even though they started singing songs. Waiting gives them both physical and mental pain. Therefore, they were discussing about different things.

**“VLADIMIR:** Wait . . . we embraced . . . we were happy . . . happy . . . what do we do now that we're happy . . . go on waiting . . . waiting . . . let me think . . . it's coming . . . go on waiting . . . now that we're happy . . . let me see . . . ah! The tree!” (p. 65)

Both Vladimir and Estragon looked happy but internally they were afraid, waiting, suffering and getting pain. Due to these issues even they were not able to talk in proper manner.

**“VLADIMIR:** (letting go the leg). What are your boots?

.....  
**VLADIMIR:** (triumphantly, pointing to the boots). There they are! (Estragon looks at the boots.) At the very spot where you left them yesterday! Estragon goes towards the boots, inspects them closely.”(p. 67)

Physical pain sometime influenced the mind. Physical and mental pains both have a connection with human life. A person makes a decision but later on he doesn't remember what happened before. Estragon threw his

boots but he did not remember. Again the factor of lost memory is involved. This factor increases the suffering than before.

**“ESTRAGON:** (having tried in vain to work it out). I'm tired! (Pause.) Let's go.

.....  
**VLADIMIR:** There's nothing we can do.” (p. 68)

From the beginning of the play till the end of the play they were suffering from different issues. They could not do anything regarding that. They had no idea what to do. Except to wait and wait.

**“ESTRAGON:** Let's go.

.....  
**ESTRAGON:** Ah! (Vladimir walks up and down.) Can you not stay still?” (p. 71)

Vladimir and Estragon heartedly waited for Godot. They didn't move from their place. They had nothing to do except wasting their time for sake of nothing. Once again it tells about the human life that is full of worries and sufferings.

**“VLADIMIR:** We are no longer alone, waiting for the night, waiting for Godot, waiting for . . . waiting. All evening we have struggled, unassisted. Now it's over. It's already tomorrow.” (p. 77)

Waiting is part of human life. It gives the harsh reality of life. Estragon and Vladimir waited for Godot day and night but now they felt exhaustion due the misery and suffering to wait for Godot but he didn't show or appear.

**“ESTRAGON:** Let's go.

.....  
**ESTRAGON:** Ah! (Despairing.) What'll we do, what'll we do!” (p. 84)

Many times the play shows the same conversation about visiting of Godot. They wanted to go but they couldn't and didn't want to leave the place. They waited for Godot and this reason they left everything and met with Godot. They believed that Godot will solve all their problems and remove all their worries.

“What is he waiting for?

**VLADIMIR:** What are you waiting for?

.....  
**POZZO:** Well to begin with he should pull on the rope, as hard as he likes so long as he doesn't strangle him. He usually responds to that. If not he should give him a taste of his boot, in the face and the privates as far as possible.” (p. 87)

The play also shows the uncertainty because sometime they believed that Godot will come but the next movement they did not have any hope for Godot. First of all they didn't know who is Godot? Next they even were not sure that Godot would come. And when they meet with Godot, what will

they ask? So, it is sure that uncertainty and hopelessness put more pain in their life.

**“POZZO:** I don't remember having met anyone yesterday. But tomorrow I won't remember having met anyone today. So don't count on me to enlighten you.

.....  
**VLADIMIR:** You were bringing him to the fair to sell him. You spoke to us. He danced. He thought. You had your sight.” (p. 88)

It is the time of World War II and very near to the age of depression. Lose of memory is the impact of this era. Even Estragon and Vladimir explained everything but they didn't remember anything. This problem also explains the suffering of human beings.

**“POZZO:** But he is dumb.

.....  
**VLADIMIR:** Dumb! Since when? “ (p. 89)

Again physical suffering is here. Lucky became dumb in second act. He lost his precious ability. But he helped Pozzo in his crucial time due to his blindness.

**“VLADIMIR:** (violently). Don't tell me! (Silence.) I wonder is he really blind.

.....  
**ESTRAGON:** Well what about it?” (p. 91)

As it is discussed that physical suffering is also a part of human existence. In the second act, Pozzo became blind. This shows his physical suffrages in the world because he is needy for someone else to help him and guide him all the time. In this bad time Lucky was the only one who helped him a lot.

**“BOY:** Mister . . . (Vladimir turns.) Mister Albert . . .

.....  
**ESTRAGON:** Ah! (Silence.) He didn't come?

**VLADIMIR:** No.

**ESTRAGON:** And now it's too late.” (p. 93)

The loss of memory is also a worst suffering. The boy and massager came yesterday and told that Godot would not come. They even didn't remember the entire event. The boy also told them it is his first time to them. Both believed that Godot will come tomorrow therefore, they should be waiting for Godot.

**“ESTRAGON:** Why don't we hang ourselves?

.....  
**VLADIMIR:** And who'd hang onto mine?

**ESTRAGON:** True.” (p. 93)

When a person deals around with sufferings and pains and he has no solution for the salvation then the last thing which comes in the mind that is

to end up his life and free himself from all worries. Vladimir and Estragon had the same situation even though they didn't have rope for suicide, therefore, they used a belt for that but failed. Now these worries and pains are related to the human existence.

### **Conclusion**

Suffering is not imaginable without human existence. Human existence related to the suffering. Many researchers have written and argued about it. Suffering has many forms and shapes such as: waiting, physical and mental pains, lose and confused memory, blindness, dumb, try to commit suicide, shortage of food, homeless, misbehaviour, hopelessness, despair, etc. Samuel Beckett's play 'Waiting for Godot' explains all about human existence. It expresses the idea of humans suffering that means human will face miseries and problems in their life. Without pain, existence is not conceivable. Samuel Beckett describes this fact in the play with the main characters Vladimir and Estragon. They became ill from all troubles of life. They were waiting for Godot, who is a saviour for them in their minds. But this waiting creates hopelessness and they become despair due to the absence of Godot. They did not want to leave each other. When the Godot did not appear, they got the idea to commit suicide. Even in this disparate situation they tried to commit suicide but failed. These sufferings are due to World War II. From all these facts now it is sure that suffering is not imaginable without human existence.

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## **Archetypal Memory And The Dislocated Subject In Marie Ndiaye's *Three Strong Women***

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### **Abstract**

At the crossroads of various disciplines, the concept of the archetype has proven itself to be a rich and complex tool of literary analysis. Indeed, it is used in both anthropological and psychoanalytical approaches, drawing notably on the writings of Mircea Eliade and Carl G. Jung. Both thinkers came to the conclusion that the archetype belongs to the time of myth, before the historical time heralded by the arrival of monotheist religions, and that it operates in the collective unconscious. Prior to the individual and particularly charged with energy, the archetype escapes representation. Nonetheless, it manifests itself through images and particular correspondences with affective tonalities.

In a novel, an archetype can generate characters as much as it can, in a more subtle and concealed manner, influence the entire structure of a narrative. Whatever the mode of its manifestation, the archetype betrays its presence by a tension between the conscious and the unconscious, the individual and the collective, and the profane and the sacred. Each of these tensions can be more or less accentuated or noticeable and conveyed in the writing through a range of methods, both obvious and subtle.

This article explores how in *Three Strong Women*, the presence of archetypal symbols and motifs contributes to the dislocation of subjects attempting to become characters and disrupts the narrative thread in order to unveil mysterious and complex psychic processes. One can then ask, who are these three women, from where are they coming and what is the nature of their power?

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**Keywords:** Archetypes, Memory, Biblical Motives, Resiliency

### **Introduction**

At the crossroads of various disciplines, the concept of the archetype has proven itself to be a rich and complex tool of literary analysis. Indeed, it is used in both anthropological and psychoanalytical approaches, drawing notably on the writings of Mircea Eliade and Carl G. Jung. These two

thinkers, each in their own domain, came to the conclusion that the archetype belongs to the time of myth, before the historical time heralded by the arrival of monotheist religions, and that it operates in the collective unconscious. Prior to the individual and particularly charged with energy, the archetype itself escapes representation. Nonetheless, it manifests itself through images and particular correspondences with affective tonalities.

In a work of literature, an archetype can generate characters as much as it can, in a more subtle and concealed manner, influence the entire structure of a narrative. Whatever the mode of its manifestation, the archetype betrays its presence by a tension between the conscious and the unconscious, the individual and the collective, and the profane and the sacred. Each of these tensions can be more or less accentuated or noticeable and conveyed in the writing through a range of methods, both obvious and subtle.

In reviewing the novels of Marie Ndiaye, literary critics have praised not only the virtuosity of her style, but also the very distinctive manner in which she succeeds in disrupting the dull monotony of everyday life by introducing fantastic and supernatural elements into the narrative. This particular aspect of her writing has been approached by several scholars in the past ten years and creatively developed according to different axes of research.

In her essay dedicated to the novel *Rosie Carpe*, entitled “Marie Ndiaye’s Discombobulated Subject,” Lydie Moudelino considers Ndiaye’s representation of what Dominique Viart calls “the subject in disarray”— the condition of a contemporary subject ill-equipped to interpret a reality whose logic always seems to escape her, and approaches it via a brilliant analysis of conjunctions in the narration (Moudelino, 2006).

In “Migration and Metamorphosis in Marie Ndiaye’s *Trois Femmes Puissantes*”, Deborah B. Gaensbaeur examines “the innovative embedding of the shape-shifts in *Trois femmes puissantes* in both harrowing socio-political realities and the ambiguities of the fantastic and superstition to convey the dehumanizing, unequal power relations governing contemporary women’s migration struggles.”(Gaensbaeur, 2014).

Finally, at the last Pacific Ancient and Modern Literature Association – PAMLA – Annual Conference, held in Portland, Oregon, in November 2015, Elizabeth Linley from the University of Cambridge in UK presented a paper entitled “Identity and the Fantastic: Reassessing Female Figures in Marie Ndiaye’s Theater”. She analyzes how the writer adapts fantastic elements to evoke the challenging but creative journey of her theatrical female characters toward identity.

In *Trois Femmes Puissantes* the strange and fantastic motifs appear indeed to haunt the stories through a manipulation of the characters’ identity

and, more specifically, their capacity to remember. All at once, some of the characters start to act without knowing any longer who they are and find themselves unable to trace back the thread of their own story.

Building upon the work already done on identity, fantastic and migration in Ndiaye's novels and plays, and insisting on the fact that the "subject in disarray is also a "dislocated subject," I would like to explore how in *Trois Femmes Puissantes (Three Strong Women)*, the presence of archetypal symbols and motifs contributes to the dislocation of subjects attempting to become characters and disrupts the narrative thread in order to unveil mysterious and complex psychic processes. One can then ask, who are these three women, from where are they coming and what is the nature of their power? This novel, which won the Prix Goncourt in 2009, takes the form of a triptych. Marie Ndiaye, like an embroiderer, weaves a veil, which hold together the three separate parts of the text through the three women. Then she adds strange pearls to this veil, whose reflections sometimes mirror biblical themes, (names of characters like Jacob or Abel, transgression of family ties, presence of angels), sometimes African beliefs (importance of the flamboyant tree in the first story) and seemingly, a fairy tale which fails. Stuck between the conscious and the unconscious, the collective and the individual, the past and the present, the protagonists of these three stories, whether men or women, ultimately struggle with the power of memory. Emerging from the depths of the past this memory most powerfully points to the presence of archetypes.

## I.

Let's start with the repetitive power of memory and its capacity to be transmitted from generation to generation. In the first two stories of the triptych, the protagonists are not aware of being the carriers of the traces of familial memory. This trace manifests itself in the form of an ancient archetypal couple: the couple executioner/victim. Both Norah in the first story and Rudy in the second, have murderous fathers and, in one way or another, have internalized the energy of the archetypal couple. Their identity has been unconsciously formed in the oscillation between these two poles: at times victim, at times executioner and most of all, victim and executioner of themselves.

The concept of individuation has been used in psychology and psychoanalysis to define a process of transformation whereby the personal and collective unconscious are brought into consciousness to be assimilated into the whole personality. Marie Louise von Franz, Jung's foremost student and collaborator studied the process of individuation in fairy tales from different parts of the world in her book entitled "Individuation in Fairy Tales". She stresses the importance of dreams and active imagination in the

constitution of individual and collective memory of the heroes and heroines in the analyzed stories. Their quest toward individuation is often-arduous and entails a series of battles which are quest toward individuation, Marie Ndiaye's protagonists struggle with and within this trans- generational memory, which inhabits them and possesses them via archetypes whose behavioral manifestations they cannot control. Thus Norah, rejected by an obsessive and rigid father who murders his young wife because she had a relationship with her stepson, cannot realize that she too is as rigid, obsessive and capable of violence as her father. As for Rudy, a character in the second story, he is rejected by a mother enamored of blond children in the image of the Infant Jesus. He lives entangled in an outrageous lie, that of being the victim of an assault which supposedly took place at the French Lycée of Dakar where he teaches among other things Middle Age Literature, more specifically one of Rutebeuf's text that is quoted in the narration without any reference and appears as a palimpsest.

In each of these two cases, the narrative tells not only the story of the characters' sudden awareness of the memories transmitted by their parents but also how they got there. By this I mean that the writing itself becomes like a reflection, a mirror of the memory work that needs to be done to unveil this trace, transmitted over time like a hereditary defect. The narration digs into the memory of the characters but does so within the confines of their lack of consciousness, their ignorance and their inability to see. A sort of pact is created between the main character and the narration, and it is, in my view, this narrative pact and the way it enriches the writing of these two tales that has brought me to examine more closely the status of these characters. Are they simple containers, empty membranes ready to receive the energy of the archetypes? Are they possessed and thus "dislocated?" Or, in the final analysis, are they not part of the great canvas that the writer weaves from tales to tales, from books to books? It is easy for anyone who reads her with assiduously, to find connections between the characters of *Trois Femmes Puissantes*, those notably of the novel *Rosie Carpe* and the play *Papa Doit Manger*.

Moreover, there are more or less apparent links between the various characters of the three tales. If we observe how those connections are subtly broached and scarcely underlined, it would seem that Marie Ndiaye would like to suggest the existence of a network of connections belonging to another dimension more complex and less visible, yet as essential to the coherence and understanding of our universe. The collective unconscious is made of these subtle links and, in the three tales, they come to knock at the door of the imaginary without fanfare, unheralded, without arrogance, but with discretion and sometimes with humor.

Thus Jacob in the first tale and Abel in the second discreetly refer to biblical characters so embedded in the collective unconscious that the echo of their meaning can at first glance go undetected and seem to be without direct semantic connection to the stories in which they appear. However, upon a closer look, we realize that in the Bible Jacob is both a son who betrays his father (he passes himself off as his brother Esau in order to rob him of his birthright) but also a father betrayed by his sons, jealous of his preference for his last-born, Joseph. As for Abel, he is the victim of the jealousy of his brother Cain and becomes the first human to die in the Genesis. He is also a character in the Koran and thus straddles several cultures much like several of the characters in *Trois Femmes Puissantes*.

Now, let's have a closer look at the way Marie Ndiaye appropriates these biblical motifs and makes use of them in the first two stories of the triptych.

First of all, the characters who bear these names are very different from the biblical ones. In the first story, Jacob is the companion of Norah: he is tender, gentle and the complete opposite of the patriarch personified by Jacob in the Genesis. By contrast, the father of Norah, whose name remains unknown throughout the story, is the perfect incarnation of the authoritarian father. Above all, he is a father much loved by his only son, Sony, who, even if he betrays his father by engaging in a passionate affair with his young step-mother, is willing to go to jail in his place, for a crime which he did not commit. From this liaison between Sony, the adored son and the father's young wife come twins, two pretty little girls, referring back to the twins Jacob and Esau. This theme is taken up again in the story with another pair, the daughter of Norah and the daughter of her companion Jacob, who are the same age and therefore compared to twins. One can thus observe that another semantic web is woven around the presence of the biblical proper noun and forms a connection with the history of the biblical character while masking it or distorting it. It seems to me that the literary method adopted by Marie Ndiaye, - in which the name of a secondary character provides while also concealing information on the real identity of another, much more important character, could be seen as paralleling psychic processes now increasingly studied in the domain of psychogenealogy: the trans-generational inheritance of an archetype whose history has been all but forgotten by family members. However, this history plays itself out again with some modifications, through life paths following different trajectories in new places and cultural contexts.

One could say that the writer chose the names for her characters by whim or by coincidence. We would then be at the same level of consciousness as the protagonists, who feel and bear the weight of this archetypal inheritance without much understanding it. At least this is the case in the beginning since, little by little, the narration allows them to become

aware of their history and to excavate a past that is not solely individual but above all familial. Thanks to the narrative pact that respects the timing of each character's awakening, the story provides a therapeutic space similar to the one existing between a patient and a therapist specialized in psychogenealogy. This field, today well known in psychotherapy consists of revisiting and reconstituting the family tree based on what one knows or what one has been told. This memory work, this anamnesis, calls on various types of memory and illuminates zones of light and darkness.

In *Tout sur la mémoire* Bernard Croisile provides a rigorous and scientific study of the role of memory among human beings that complements well the work done by Boris Cyrulnik on the complexity of the psyche in terms of memory and identity construction. Cyrulnik is a neuropsychiatrist, ethnologist and psychoanalyst, above all known for his concept of resiliency. In particular, in his book entitled *Parler d'amour au bord du gouffre*, he develops the concepts of Affective Style and narrative identity and analyzes in a clinical context the processes of diverse memories: biological memory, episodic and semantic memory, declarative memory, procedural memory. All of this is complex but to illustrate my point, I will simplify by stating that one can distinguish two categories of memory: explicit and conscious memory and implicit and unconscious memory. In each of these categories, there are scripts of representations with which we identify ourselves consciously or unconsciously.

These scripts function as narrative that we keep repeating to ourselves and become patterns of behaviors and judgements.

As readers of Marie Ddiaye's stories, we become, thanks to the narrative pact, witnesses of a moment of life in which the character is in the midst of transforming a specific representational script: he or she is then not only able to reposition himself or herself in his or her universe, but he or she is also able to establish a new type of relations with others. The character then becomes the subject by dislocating itself in ways that refer to the etymological meaning of the verb displace. Indeed, in these three stories, the characters have to move not out of their own volition but as a result of a violent incident: Norah is summoned to Senegal by her father in order to plead the case of her brother in court; Rudy is obliged suddenly to leave Senegal after his fight with three students of the French Lycée of Dakar. An act of aggression connected to the murder previously committed by his father and masked as an accident. Meanwhile, Khady, the heroine of the third tale, is forced to secretly emigrate by her in-laws after the death of her husband. The narrative of her displacement is, in my view, the real challenge of *Trois Femmes Puissantes* since she is well aware, from the outset of the story, of the grim fate that awaits her. She knows that since she was unable to give a child to her deceased husband, she will be chased away by her in laws. In the

face of this certainty, Khady has no other choice than to step into the unknown, the extreme dislocation that her violent and painful displacement through several African countries will turn out to be, in the hope of one day reaching France and rejoining Fanta, the wife of Rudy in the second tale. Paradoxically, this displacement allows her to become a full-fledged subject in the most cruel of circumstances. She has nothing left but her awareness of being a human being, alive and certain of her integrity and form.

To speak of love on the edge of the precipice, is certainly what the story lets Kadhy do as she evokes the memory of those who have loved her during her tragic journey: the husband and the grand mother who “who had been able to see, even while treating her harshly that she was a very special little girl with her own attributes and not any old child.” This self-consciousness linked intrinsically to the necessity to be loved and recognized during childhood, is the basis for the concept of resiliency developed by Cyrulnik in his first two books, *Les Vilains Petits Canards* and *Un Merveilleux Malheur* on the basis of his observation of concentration camp survivors and diverse groups of children, especially children from Romanian orphanages and street children from Latin America.

Resiliency is what allows human beings to rebound after traumatic experiences and to rebuild themselves by overcoming the trauma. Unhappily for Khady, it is death that awaits her at the end of the ladder that she, following the example of her companions in misfortune, had built for herself in order to jump over the barbed wire and come nearer to her final destination. She is the sole character, who does not manage to survive, but she carries deep within her the essence of this female power multiplied by three alluded to in the title of the book.

## **Conclusion**

In the first two stories, dislocation brings about a psychic readjustment the final result of which is to integrate the elements of lived experience both personal and collective that until then had been disruptive and seemingly abnormal. Thus, these elements appear in the form of supernatural motifs: the father of Norah sleeps in a flamboyant tree and Rudy is chased and attacked repeatedly by a hawk. But as soon as the transformation of the representational script takes place, these elements are integrated or discarded. Norah joins her father in the flamboyant and stops asking herself questions about what she is supposed to do. Rudy kills the hawk and regains the love of his son and his wife. In the case of Kadhy, something else is at stake: In that story, Marie Ndiaye totally upsets the usual structure of the fairy tale. There is no happy ending for Khady: not only will she never reach her final destination but Lamine, the charming prince she met on the road who first appears as her potential savior, will exploit her to

achieve his own aims. In this final story of the triptych, the archetypal couple, executioner and victim, is transcended and takes on a different valence: As Khady climbs over the barbed wire, marching bravely and willfully towards her own death, she does not see herself as a victim. Even as she suffers and her body pierced by the barbed wire bleeds, she finds the strength within herself to be entirely present in the moment as if she were becoming one with all her surroundings. It is a sort of state of grace, a plenitude that abolishes all boundaries between inner and outer world, between the self and others. It is akin to a state known as *perceptude*, a concept coined by the psychoanalyst Jean- Louis Lamande and developed by François Roustang, a psychoanalyst specialized in hypnosis. Perceptude is defined as “ a singular form of communication; an ability to cultivate a state of receptiveness that allows us to perceive the signs of the world, a state of openness to the most subtle and ineffable dimensions of the world, a receptive stance necessary to reveal the unacknowledged dimensions of our individual and cultural identity.” (Roustang 2003)

I would like to quote a short passage that relates the death of Kathy Demba: "This is me, Khady Demba, she kept thinking as her forehead hit the ground, her eyes wide opened, as she saw a bird with long grey feathers hovering over the fence. This is me Khady Demba - she kept marveling at this revelation, knowing that she was that bird and that this bird knew it." (Ndiaye, 2009)

In the final analysis, Khady's ladder seems to rise up in the sky higher than the branches of the flamboyant on which Norah comes to join her father. Furthermore, the waking dream of Khady is very different from the biblical dream of Jacob in which he sees a ladder that rises towards the sky with the angels. The ladder in the last tale is another instance of the transformation of a biblical theme. Moreover, angels appear in the second tale. But in the same way that the Genesis character has no doubt as to the meaning of his dream, Khady also knows and she knows that all her worth and power as a human being resides in her capacity to be in that state of *perceptude*: a state embodied in the writing, as it were, as it performs this narrative pact, revealing another way to be in the world and to know oneself.

On a final note, I would like to say that from the tree to the ladder to the angels, the writing of Marie Ndiaye leads us readers, whether we are or not familiar with her fiction, from the most known to the most unknown, opening a bit further at every step the space where perception becomes *perceptude*. There is no English word that translates this French neologism. The closest concept would be that of totally sentient or extremely sentient. In *Trois Femmes Puissantes*, we become part of a process in which the narrative voice is submissive to the power of perceiving and fights to gain

access into consciousness despite all the obstacles set by a long tradition of story-telling in which the narrator pretended to be omnipotent.

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## **Wh-Movement In Persian, Russian, And English: A Cross-Linguistic Comparison**

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### **Abstract**

Syntax has been one of the important areas of research in second and foreign language acquisition. Today, examining the syntactic structure of different languages using the Minimalist approach is an ongoing process in the field of linguistics. Within the Minimalist framework, wh-movement as one of the most important principles of the theory of Principles and Parameters can be defined as the operation, according to which the wh-phrase moves to the specifier of CP to check a wh-feature in C (Carnie, 2003). Cheng (1991) made a distinction between languages in terms of wh-questions. She divides languages into the ones that show wh-movement (e.g. English) and the ones that keep the wh-word in-situ (e.g. Chinese). The first group is called *wh-movement languages* and the latter is called *wh-in-situ* (*i.e., in place*). The present study attempted to throw the distinction into question and analyze the syntax of wh-movement in Persian, Russian, and English within the Minimalist framework to offer a new framework for them. In doing so, the researchers provided notable examples from the three languages to draw a comparison and to offer a vivid picture of wh-movement in the three languages within the Minimalist Approach. Overall, the results indicated that Russian is a controversial issue as no general consensus can be felt among researchers concerning whether or not its wh-phrases undergo [wh]-driven movement. It was found that wh-movement in Persian language could challenge Cheng's (1991) proposal and manifests optional wh-movement which seemed to be impossible within Cheng's framework. The findings also revealed that Russian and Persian similarly function in terms of wh-movement.

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**Keywords:** Wh-Movement, Wh-in-situ, Echo Questions, Minimalist Approach

## **Introduction**

Wh-movement parameter is one of the areas of linguistic study on which language topologists can concentrate. According to Radford (1997, p. 18) wh-parameter can be defined as “the parameter which determines whether wh-expressions can be fronted or not”. In other words, it is a parameter of variation among different languages– a parameter which determines whether wh-expressions are placed fronted or not (Galbat and Maleki, 2014). Denham (1997) remarks that wh-movement is a parameterized fact about language, according to which whether a language has overt wh-movement or not is invariable in a language. In addition, Radford (1997) believes that in order to interrogate a statement, the wh-element moves and occupies the specifier position within CP (Spec-CP). In today’s minimalist syntax (Chomsky 2000, 2001, 2004), movement is viewed an operation that does not introduce a trace; rather, it leaves behind a complete copy of the moved element, with the result that structures formed by movement exhibit multiple copies of the moved element. The present paper draws its theoretical platform from Minimalism and employs the syntactic model known as the Minimalist Program laid out by Chomsky (1993, 1994, 1995, 2000, 2001a). We examine a very different kind of movement operation conventionally termed wh-movement, by which a wh-expression like *who* or *what languages* moves into the specifier position within CP (Radford, 2009).

### **1.2 Wh-Movement in Minimalism**

Initially in Minimalist Program (1995), the most recent outgrowth of the Principles and Parameters approach, Chomsky puts forward that wh-movement is developed by a strong operator feature of the functional C-head: “the natural assumption is that C may have an operator feature and that this feature is a morphological property of such operators as wh-. For an appropriate C, the operators raise for feature checking to the checking domain of C: [Spec, CP]” (1995, p. 199; cited in Abdolmanafi, 2012) thereby satisfying their scopal properties. If the operator feature on C is strong, movement is overt (e.g. English), and, consequently, if the operator feature is weak, wh-movement is postponed until Logical Form (LF) (e.g. Chinese). However, the trigger of movement, overt or covert, is constantly placed on a target (Abdolmanafi, 2012). In Minimalist Program (2000), Chomsky modifies the proposal, dispensing with LF movement: all movement operations must occur prior to the point of Spell-Out (Rahman, 2009). Wh-movement in this framework enjoys the following system: “the

wh-phrase has an uninterpretable feature [wh-] and an interpretable feature [Q], which matches the uninterpretable probe [Q] of a complementizer” (2000, p. 44). The uninterpretable probe [Q] on C seeks the goal, a wh-phrase, and once the probe locates the goal, the uninterpretable features (on both probe, F [Q], and goal, F[wh]) are checked and deleted. This feature checking is done by means of Agree, no movement is involved. Note that, according to Chomsky, the uninterpretable [wh-] feature of a wh-phrase is “analogous to structural Case for nouns” (2000, p. 21), consequently it does not have an independent status, but is a reflex of certain features of Q. The C-head in this version possesses only an uninterpretable Q feature. The uninterpretable probe [Q] on C cannot be an operator, as it is checked and deleted. The interpretable [+Q] feature, which is presumably a question operator, is assigned to a wh-phrase. Chomsky proposes that Q is realized on a wh-phrase. Being interpretable, Q specifies the semantics of a sentence (and of a wh-element) marking it as interrogative; furthermore, the operator’s properties are linked with the feature. It is reasonable to presume that Q should be the trigger of wh-movement (Rahman, 2009). However, in Chomsky’s program Q is, in fact, a “free-rider” which lands in an appropriate operator position, [Spec, CP] not for its own need, but owing to some properties of the C-head that need to be satisfied (Zavitnevich-Beaulac, 2002, cited in Rahman, 2009). Following are four sentences containing wh-movement (Radford, 2009).

- 1) a) **What languages** *can* you speak?
- (b) **Which one** *would* you like?
- (c) **Who** *was* she dating?
- (d) **Where** *are* you going?

(Adopted from Radford, 2009)

Each of the sentences in (1) contains an italicized inverted auxiliary occupying the head C position of CP, preceded by a bold-printed interrogative **wh-expression** –i.e. an expression containing an interrogative word beginning with **wh-** like *what/which/who/where/when/why* (Radford, 2009). (“How” in questions like *How are you?* is also a wh-word because of a similar syntactic behavior to other wh-words). Each of the wh-expressions in (1) functions as the complement of the verb at the end of the sentence – as we notice from the fact that each of the examples in (1) has a paraphrase in which the wh-expression occupies complement position after the italicized verb (Radford, 2009):

- (2) (a) You can *speak* **what languages**?
- (b) You would *like* **which one**?
- (c) She was *dating* **who**?
- (d) You are *going* **where**?

(Adopted from From Radford, 2009)

Structures like (2) are termed **wh-in-situ questions**, since the bold-printed wh-expression does not get preposed, but rather remains **in situ** in the canonical position linked with its grammatical function (e.g. what languages in (2a) is the direct object complement of *speak*, and complements are normally placed after their verbs, so *what languages* is positioned after the verb *speak*). In English, wh-in-situ questions are used primarily as **echo questions**, to echo and question something previously said by someone else – as we can illustrate in terms of the following dialogue (Radford, 2009):

(3) SPEAKER a: I just met Lord Lancelot Humpalot.

SPEAKER b: You just met *who*?

(Adopted from Radford, 2009)

Echo questions such as that produced by speaker B in (3) suggest that the wh-expressions in (1) originate as complements of the relevant verbs, and subsequently get moved to the front of the overall clause (Radford, 2009). But what position do they get moved into? The answer is obviously that they are moved into some position preceding the inverted auxiliary. Since inverted auxiliaries occupy the head C position of CP, preposed wh-expressions are moved into a position preceding the head C of CP (Radford, 2009). Given that specifiers are positioned before heads, it can be suggested that preposed wh-expressions move into the specifier position within CP (= spec-CP) (Radford, 2009).

### 1.3 Types of Wh-movement

Today, it is generally agreed that three general language types in terms of wh-movement in multiple wh-interrogatives can be found. First, the Chinese type, with all wh-phrases *in situ* (i.e. *in place*): second, the English type, where only one wh-constituent moves overtly and the rest covertly; and the Russian type, multiple wh-fronting (henceforward MWF) language, which requires all wh-phrases be placed fronted overtly. Ouhalla (1996) asserts that there is a special parameter that distinguishes languages with obligatory wh-movement (e.g. English) from wh-in-situ languages (e.g. Japanese) and the ones having optional wh-movement (e.g. the colloquial French). To put it simply, English language possesses an overt wh-movement in questions containing wh-phrase, while in Japanese language no wh-movement can occur and wh-phrases are in-situ. In colloquial French, yet, both forms can be found. Karimi and Taleghani (2007), however, hold that as opposed to English, Persian language neither shows obligatory single wh-movement, nor obligatory multiple wh-movement observed in Bulgarian. The difference in wh-question strategies is often assigned to the fact that cross-linguistically wh-elements are not identical in nature. In fact, most research done to date (Cheng 1991, Ouhalla 1996, Aoun and Li 1993, among others) show that wh-expressions in natural

languages differ as far as their morphological and syntactic properties are concerned. The claim made is that in languages like Chinese, Japanese and Hungarian wh-words are polarity items void of any quantificational force of their own. The argument is based on the fact that, in these languages, wh-elements that function as interrogatives can also act as universal and existential quantifiers (Zavitnevich-Beaulac, 2002).

#### 1.4 Wh-expressions without wh-movement

Wh-movement typically occurs to form questions in English language. However, Radford (1997) stated that at least three kinds of questions in which wh-movement does not occur can be found “1) *echo questions* 2) *quiz questions* and 3) *multiple questions*, when there is already one wh-word at the front” (Radford, 1997, p. 267):

Your friend bought **what!**? - Echo question (to confirm what you thought you heard)

Shakespeare was born in **which** country? - Quiz question

**Who** bought **what?** - Multiple wh-expressions

(Adopted from Radford, 1997, p. 267)

While wh-movement is the rule in English, other languages may leave wh-expressions in situ more often. In French for instance, wh-movement is often optional in certain matrix clauses (Radford, 1997, p. 267).

### 1. Overview of Persian Syntax

*Is Persian language a wh-movement language or a wh-in-situ language?*

Persian language is an SOV (Subject-Object-Verb) language and considered to be a pro-drop language, thus the subject is optional. Moreover, written Persian shows a solid SOV order, except sentential arguments of the verb systematically appear in post-verbal position (Karimi, 2005). However, in the colloquial Persian language a great degree of rearrangements is possible. Generally speaking, Persian wh-words or phrases are as follows:

Čera (why), ku or koja (where), če (what), ki (who), kei(when), kodam or kodamyek (which one), čænd (how many), čegune or četor (how), čeghædr (how much). Persian wh- words can be combined with Noun Phrases(NP) to form wh- phrases for example: Čevæght (what time), baraye če (why), be če mænzur (what for), be če ellæt/dæлил and be če sæbæb (why for).... (Adopted from Kashefi, 2014, p. 26)

Moreover, Persian language shows a large number of word order variants, both in declaratives and in interrogative (Adli, 2010). This can be shown by a set of wh-questions as follows:

(1a) Ali ketab -eš -o kei xærıde? (S O Adj<sub>wh</sub> V)

Ali book – his- OM when bought

When did Ali buy his book?

(1b) Ali kei ketab- eʃ -o xærìde? (S Adj<sub>wh</sub> O V)

Ali when book -his- OM bought

(1c) ketab- eʃ -o kei xærìde Ali? (O Adj<sub>wh</sub> V S)

Book - his -OM when bought Ali

Examples (1a) and (1b) indicate two forms with the temporal wh-adjunct at preverbal (though non-initial) position. They vary in the linear order of direct object and wh-adjunct. Example (1c) displays another possibility of “rearrangement” (Adli, 2010); the wh-adjunct is still preverbal but the subject is placed in postverbal position. OM stands for an object marker modifying the whole phrase rather than the head noun (Adli, 2010). Dabir-Moghaddam (1991) states that in some languages such as Chinese, Japanese and Persian, as opposed to English, the wh-phrase is not moved in the syntactic C component, i.e. between D-structure and S-structure; rather it remains in situ. Bateni (1995) views Persian language as a wh-in-situ language which does not allow wh-movement. For example, note the following example in which the wh-phrase has remained in situ:

Šomâ ketâb râ be ki dâd-i?

You book OM to who give.

Whom did you give the book to?

Similarly, Lotfi (2003) holds that Persian language is viewed to be a wh-in-situ language with a basic SOV sentential word order. This means the morpho-syntactic requirements of a wh-phrase--whatever they are-- are satisfied without a need for the phrase itself to move overtly from the position in which it is base-generated (Pahlevannezhad and Shahali, 2013). Nonetheless, Pahlevannezhad and Shahali (2013) believe that it is perfectly possible to front one or more wh-phrases for the sake of focusing or other discourse related reasons. Thus, Lotfi (2003) maintains that Persian language may display both syntactic wh-movement and wh-in-situ simultaneously. This means an Optional Movement in Persian can be rightly expected.

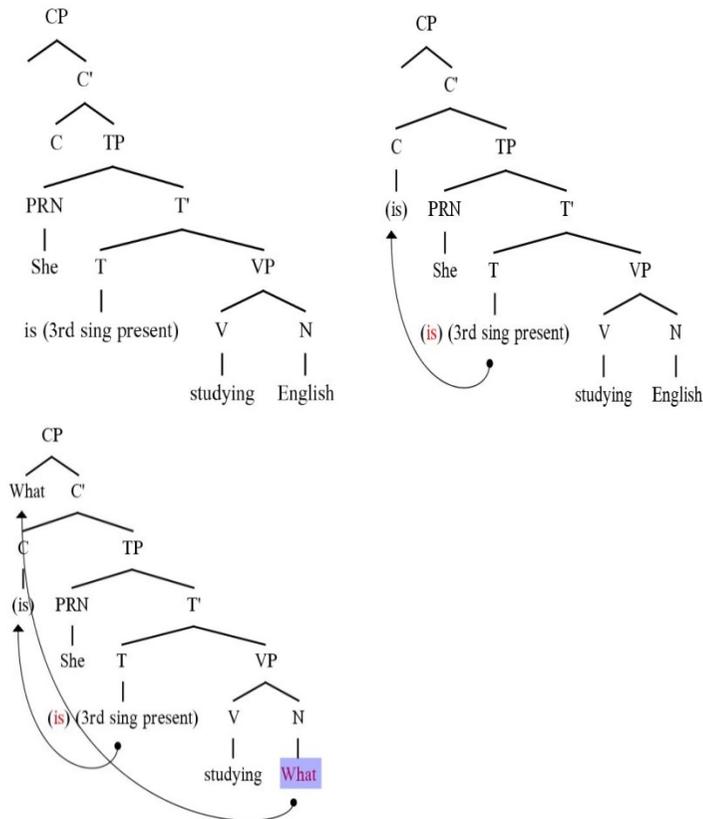
## 1. Overview of English Syntax

Common wh-interrogative words in English are *why*, *what*, *where*, *when*, *who*, *whom*, *whose*, *which*, *how*, *whence*, *whither*, *whether*. They are function words and are used to ask direct questions (*what are you doing?*), indirect questions (*I wonder what you are doing*), or make relative clauses (*the man who is standing there is my father*). Their syntactic behavior might not be the same all the time as collocations from different corpora might show different results. For example, the corpus of Contemporary American English displays the use of “**whither**” mostly with noun phrases, e.g. *whither art history? Whither Aero? Whither the board of directors?* Nevertheless, we aim to delve into how typical questions in English using wh-words are

structured and what processes are involved in the movement of the wh-word to its canonical position. Before analyzing the canonical structure of wh-questions, an analysis of echo questions is in order. That is, questions before any change in the structure of declarative sentences. In echo questions, the wh-word is in situ, i.e. in place: You are watching *what*? He is going *where*? He is getting married *when*? Echo questions explain the fact that wh-words originate from such positions in declarative sentences and force their way to the far left side of sentences. But that is not the only change they cause. Auxiliary inversion which typically happens in forming questions also occurs in the process:

She is studying English-> Is she studying English?-> Is she studying what? ->What is she studying?

Drawing a tree could help us analyze this sentence more clearly.

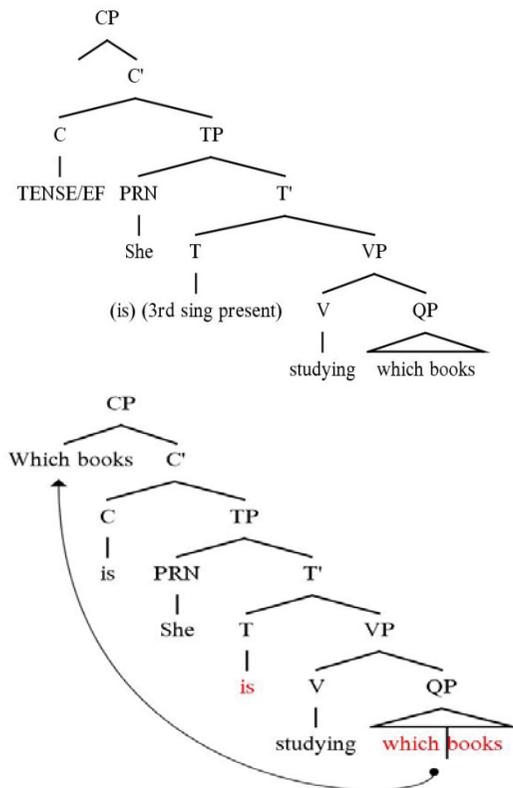


Category T is the head of TP (tense phrase) and as a result of Head movement it moves from the Head T position to the head C position in CP since it is null and empty. The tense feature can move to the C position because firstly it is a main clause and secondly it is interrogative. As a result, the tense feature in C attracts T. The second movement is the Wh-movement

i.e. movement of *What* from the head position of the NP to the Specifier position of CP. This movement is allowed as a result of C having an Edge Feature (Radford, 2009) enabling C to attract the Wh-word to the Spec-C position. The edge feature is subsequently deleted. Another important process that occurs in such an operation involves “wh-copying and wh-deletion” (Radford, 2009, p.189) whereby the category including the wh-word moves to the Spec-C category while leaving behind a copy at the extraction site which is deleted. Another important issue in wh-movement surfaces when the wh-word is the head of a phrase and is a minimal projection. In the following example the wh-word alone cannot move on its own leaving its complements behind.

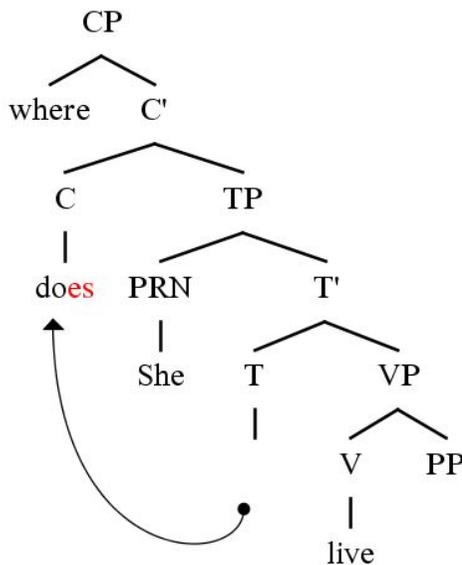
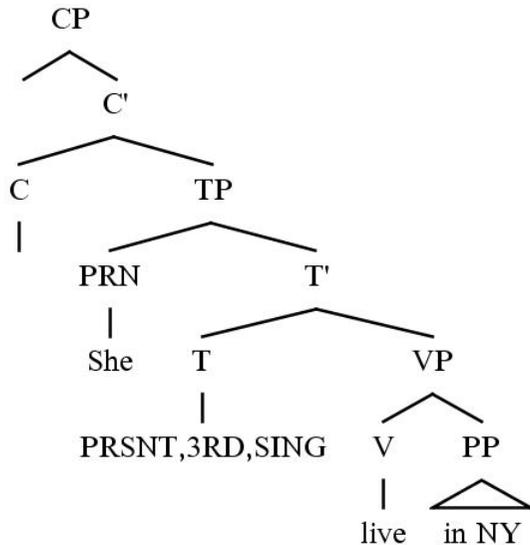
She is studying English books-> She is studying which books?-> which books is she studying?

As can be seen the whole QP is moved to the Spec-C position as a maximal projection following the Chain Uniformity Condition (Radford, 2009, p.199) in that since *which* heads a QP, all other copies of *which* should also head a QP, hence QP rather than Q moves.



In our examples, the T category was filled by “is” as an auxiliary verb. A question arises when there is no auxiliary verb to fill the T category.

That is, what happens when the Affix is ‘stranded’ and not attached to anything? If C in interrogative main clauses carries both an Edge and a Tense feature that attract wh-words and Tense from head T, this requirement must be satisfied for the sentence to be grammatical and the solution is Do-support (appropriately inflected forms of do (Radford, 2009, p.176).



As for relative clauses and indirect questions such as the following examples, based on the aforementioned argument, it is argued that since such clauses are not main clauses, the category C does not carry a tense feature, hence no auxiliary inversion or DO support. However, the edge feature of C attracts the wh-word to be placed in the specifier position of CP.

- 1) This is where he lives.
- 2) Do you know where he lives?

We should bear in mind that such analyses are only for typical and normal English questions; nevertheless, in conversational English one can observe different structures e.g. *why the long face?* Not that these structures contradict the rules laid by universal grammar, they are only different realizations of such rules on the surface.

## 1. Overview of Russian Syntax

The properties and features of wh-movement in Russian language is a controversial issue as no general consensus can be felt among researchers concerning whether or not its wh-phrases undergo [wh]-driven movement. In addition, fronting of a wh-word is obligatory both in single and multiple wh-questions, which can be seen as evidence that Russian language is a normal wh-movement language (Zavitnevich, 2005, cited in Chernova, 2012). On the other hand, since Russian apparently does not display strong Superiority effects in multiple questions, it has been suggested that the driving force of wh-fronting is of a different nature and in fact is a type of focus movement (Chernova, 2012).

Overall, some studies described Russian as a language resorting to a standard, [wh]-driven movement (Zavitnevich 2002, 2005; Bailyn, 2011; Scott, 2012) while some others maintained that Russian language in its core is a wh-in-situ language where wh-fronting is [focus]-driven (Stepanov, 1998; Strahov, 2001; Bošković, 2002a; Chernova, 2014; among others). Chernova (2014, p. 54) reports that “Russian lacks true syntactic [wh]-driven movement and all wh-words in a multiple question undergo pure focus-fronting to a position below CP”. The wh-in-situ hypothesis has been heavily criticized in the literature when it applied to Russian language (Dyakonova 2009; Bailyn 2011; Scott 2012, among others). Chernova (2014) argues that one of the principal inconveniences for claiming that Russian wh-elements undergo obligatory focus-movement is that there is no fixed position for focused constituents in this language (Bailyn, 1995a, 2011; Neeleman & Titov, 2009). Chernova maintains that in Russian the focused non-wh-elements can be occurred both preverbally and postverbally (Chernova, 2014), as illustrated in

- a. On pozvonil MAŠE.  
 he phoned Masha.DAT  
 ‘He phoned Masha’
- b. On MAŠE pozvonil.  
 he Masha.DAT phoned
- c. MAŠE on pozvonil.  
 Masha.DAT he phoned

(Adopted from Chernova, 2014, p. 74)

### 1. Cross-linguistic comparison: Persian, Russian and English

In this section we examine cross-linguistically possible positions of wh-words/phrases constructions in Persian, Russian and English. We evaluate whether we are dealing with the same phenomenon in the three languages or whether we need different analyses to account for cross-linguistic variation. In Persian some wh- words have prepositions implied in them. Notice the following examples:

?Ou be bazaar raft. (He to bazaar went.) Ou koja raft? (he where went?)

The PP “be Bazaar” (to the bazaar) has been replaced with “Koja” (Where) which is also the case in English. Since Bazaar is a place, it is expected that “Where” replace only the place “bazaar” and not the whole PP; however, the preposition is sometimes spelled out in Persian (mostly Literary style), and one can see sentences such as “?ou be koja raft?” (he TO where went?). The object marker in Persian is usually “raa” in written or formal style and “ro, -o” in informal or spoken style.

Ali-o didam. ( Ali- OM saw-1<sup>st</sup>Sg) I saw Ali

Didam Ali-o (Saw-1<sup>st</sup>Sg Ali-OM) I saw Ali

Ali didam. ( Ali saw-3<sup>rd</sup> pastSg-1<sup>st</sup>OM) Ali saw me.

The verb in the last example can be ambiguous on its own. It can mean both I saw and someone saw me. However, the preceding NP without the Object Marker can remove the ambiguity.

The Object Marker is attached to the Wh- word it modifies:

Ki-o didi? Who- OM saw(2ndSg)? Ki-o didi to? (Who- OM saw you?)

Ki didet? Who saw-(Obj-2ndSg)? Ki did to-ro? (Who saw you- OM?)

The wh- word *Who* is assigned an accusative case when it moves from the object position of the clause. In English though the position of a phrase reveals its case and quantifiers do not carry a spelled-out case, except for *Whom*. In Esperanto which is a constructed language also wh- words are assigned overt cases. –n is attached to wh- words in Esperanto as a sign of Object marker e.g., KioN vi mangxis? (what did you eat?) Kio mangxis viN? (what ate you?).

“Who” in subject position in English has been argued to carry a Tense feature, hence no need for T to C movement, auxiliary inversion, or DO-support (Radford, p. 221). “Who” in Esperanto, as has been mentioned, exhibits similar behavior:

Kiun vi vidis? (Who- OM you saw?)

Kiu vidis vin? (Who saw you-OM?)

However, in Persian the Object Marker “raa” is usually not used when a preposition modifies the NP:

Be? ou goftam. To he said(1<sup>st</sup>pastSg)

The interesting point is that in formal Persian, especially literary style, one can paraphrase the above example as:

?ou ra goftam. He OM said(1stPastSg)

It can be concluded that the Object Marker “raa” is in complementary distribution with Prepositions modifying the same NP. It can also be argued that the Object Marker “raa” can form its own Object Marker Phrase. The only issue would be that prepositions in Persian usually precede NPs, whereas OMs follow them. Consequently, to form wh-question where the Wh-word originates from the argument of a transitive verb, it is the OMP that moves to the Spec-C position of the main clause:

Inja ro doost daram. This place- OM like(1<sup>st</sup>PrSg).....> I like this place.

Koja ro doost dari? where OM like (2<sup>nd</sup>PrSg).....> Which place do you like?

To make the wh-movement in the three languages in hand more concrete, consider the following examples;

Ali-o didam. (Ali- OM saw-1<sup>st</sup>Sg) I saw Ali

Я видел Антона. (Ya videl Antona) (Sub. Saw- masculine Anton-accusative case) I saw Anton. (Similar to English)

Я Антона видел. (Ya Antonavidel) (Sub. Anton-accusative case Saw-masculine) I Anton saw. (Similar to English)

Didam Ali-o (Saw-1<sup>st</sup>Sg Ali-OM) I saw Ali

Видел Антона. (Videl Antona)(Reply)(Saw- masculine Anton-accusative case) saw Anton

Ali didam. (Ali saw-3<sup>rd</sup> pastSg-1<sup>st</sup>OM) Ali saw me.

Ki-o didi? Who- OM saw (2<sup>nd</sup>Sg)? Ki-o didi to? (Who- OM saw you?)

Кого ты видел? (Kogo ti videl?)(Who - accusative case you saw - masculine)

Ki didet? Who saw-(Obj-2<sup>nd</sup>Sg)? Ki did to-ro? (Who saw you- OM?)

Кто тебя видел? (Kto tebya videl)(Who- nominative case you- accusative case saw – masculine)

Кто видел тебя? (kto videl tebya) (Who- nominative case saw – masculine you- accusative case)

Тебя кто видел? (Tebya kto videl)(Accusative case who- nominative case you- saw – masculine)

Koja ro doost dari? Where OM like (2<sup>nd</sup>PrSg).....> which place do you like?

Какое место ты любишь? (Kakoye mesto ti lubish?) (Which place you - nominative case like? Which place do you like?)

Ты любишь какое место? (Ti lubish kakoye mesto?) (You - nominative case like which place? Which place do you like?)

## 1. Discussion

Wh- movement is a type of syntactic structure which is found universally. However, different languages employ different strategies to form wh-questions. The present paper cross-linguistically reviewed the issue of the nature of wh-expressions. The researchers explored the properties and features of wh-movement in three languages including Persian, Russian, and English within the Minimalist framework. We found that the interrogative sentences having question word or phrases in English and Persian bear some similarity as well as difference. The results indicated that Persian wh-phrases enjoy both covert and overt movements. It was also found that Persian language does not display obligatory single wh-movement compared to English, nor obligatory multiple wh-movement observed in Bulgarian (Karimi, 2005). In addition, Persian language wh-arguments may undergo optional movement either individually or multiply. However, Megerdooian and Ganjavi (2001; cited in Pahlevannezhad & Shahali, 2013) argue against optional movement in Persian. They claim that it is not possible to apply an optional movement strategy to Persian wh-question formation and offer various types of evidence from distributional properties of the two constructions showing that wh-in situ and overt wh-extraction are two distinct processes. A radical stance on wh-movement was proposed by Kahnemuyipour (2001) which is in line with the present study. Kahnemuyipour believes that Persian is neither a wh-movement language nor a wh-in-situ one; rather, Persian should be classified as a focused wh-movement language. It was also revealed that unlike English language in which wh-word places in the front, in Persian language there is no need to place wh- word at front. For example,

Where did you see Ali?

-علی دیروز با کی رفت؟

-علی دیروز با محمد به کجا رفت؟

On the other hand, in Persian both wh-movement and no-wh-movement principles are simultaneously operating. This might be against with what Radford (1997) claimed. He believed that there are only two possibilities for wh-parameters: a language does or does not allow wh-expressions to be systematically fronted. Overall, obligatory nature of wh-movement rule in English language as opposed to its optional nature in Persian and syntactic movement of question word in English as opposed to its non-syntactic nature in Persian were also seen the differences among Persian and English. Thus, while Persian is a wh-in-situ language, it enjoys wh-movement too. Interestingly enough, the movement is obligatory and sometimes optional. This is against Cheng's framework (1991). Concerning Russian wh-movement, it was found that Russian has the same morphological realization for interrogatives and relatives. Similar to other

Slavic languages, Russian uses the same wh-stem to build existential and universal quantifiers( Chernova, 2014). The analysis showed that a wh-word in Russian is required to move away from the postverbal field and the most natural way to ask a wh-question is to place a wh-word sentence-initially. Dyakonova (2009) argues that Russian must be grouped together with French, since both languages allow two strategies of formation of wh-questions: wh-ex-situ and wh-in-situ. Spelling out the similarities and differences between the three languages is of paramount importance in the Iranian university context as English is the only dominant foreign language taught in Iran, while Persian is the formal and official language and Russian is widely dominant in political domains nowadays.

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