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Metadiscourse Markers in Technical Texts

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Abstract

The aim of this research is to analyse metadiscourse marker usage in English texts of various areas (Informatics, Energy and Civil Engineering) in pursuance to reveal the aspects of metadiscourse usage. This research is aimed to determine if metadiscourse markers are a frequent occurence in technical language and what category markers can be found in such texts. This study also pursues to define usage peculiarities of interdisciplinary metadiscourse markers. The usage of markers of interactive and interactional categories is analysed. Employing descriptive and comparative research methods and qualitative calculations it was determined that the usage of interactive category markers dominates in all researched technical areas. It was noted that such texts are characterised by visual means, consequently it explains the usage abundance of endophoric markers and code glosses as the author seeks to ensure that the information provided is properly interpreted. The analysis of interactional category markers indicated that technical texts are not so objective as they were considered to be, i.e. the expression of the author's attitude and emphatic evaluation can be envisaged. It was observed that the area of Civil Engineering was the most objective and least personalised, the field of Informatics distinguishes by the abundance of code glosses and hedging markers whereas the sphere of Energy stands out by examples of all categories of metadiscourse markers.

Keywords: Metadiscourse, marker, metalanguage, technical texts.

Introduction

A deeper attitude to the author's work, his/her employed means to reason or persuade the reader and create suggestive and efficient scientific text is inevitable in modern world where the language is constantly developed, language processes and its functions are analysed. Discourse analyses can encompass multiple genres, disciplines, not only can they research a text or a language but also signs, pictures or video material. In general, discourse is a

wide range analysis which can be divided into many areas and branches, e.g. academic discourse, popular science discourse, political discourse or metadiscourse, etc. Namely, the latter branch - metadiscourse markers – is the object of this research.

Language means can inform, persuade or simply engage the reader, the text reflects the author's attitude to the described things simultaneously, all of this is inherent to metadiscourse. Lately, metadiscourse analysis receives a great attention, different disciplines, cultures are chosen for its analysis, languages are compared, functions of metadiscourse and its markers are discussed. For example, Šinkūnienė (2014) researches metadiscourse of four disciplines: economics, literature, sociology and linguistics whereas Alaunienė and Valskys (2009) choose students' works for their study. Thus, it can be stated that the resources of metadiscourse analysis are limitless. Therefore, the material of this research is technical texts. It was observed that technical texts are seldom chosen for metadiscourse analysis (Hyland, 2010, electronic engineering, computer science, aeronautics were analysed), the texts of humanities and social sciences are analysed most frequently. Accordingly, this research is essentially new and the obtained data is expected to reveal new results and metadiscourse properties.

The purpose of this research is to perform the analysis of usage of metadiscourse markers in English technical texts of various fields in order to reveal the aspects of metadiscourse usage. This research aims to determine if metadiscourse markers are a frequent phenomenon in technical language and which category markers can be found in such texts. It is also expected to define interdisciplinary peculiarities of metadiscourse marker usage.

Several research methods are employed to implement the objectives of this research, i.e. quantitative analysis where the frequency of marker repetition is calculated, and comparative analysis where interdisciplinary peculiarities of metadiscourse usage are specified. A descriptive research method is also applied as it evaluates the results, the selected examples are described as well as their relation to the objective of this research is defined.

Technical articles published in scientific journals are selected as the research material. English technical articles of three fields were analysed, i.e. Informatics (Journal of Education and Training, 2018; Information & Computer Security, 2015), Energy (Energy Conversion and Management, 2013; 2014) and Civil Engineering (Journal of Structural Engineering, 2015; 2016). Two articles were chosen for every area, totally 6 technical articles were researched. 352 examples were selected from the aforementioned articles, repetitive examples are also included into the analysis in order to determine the frequency of marker repetition, which is expressed in percentage terms. It is necessary to mention that the analysis did not include the examples of evidential markers if the author uses quotation style where the

quoted author is referred to only in footnotes or interactive references. Such decision was made as such references to the works of other authors do not perform a metadiscursive function. Selecting metadiscourse markers it is important to distinguish when a word performs a function peculiar to metadiscourse and when it conveys propositional contents in a sentence, thus the context plays a vitally important role here. According to Hyland (1998), automatic selection of metadiscourse markers is impossible as every case should be analysed independently.

1. The concept of metadiscourse and research overview

Metadiscourse or metalanguage is a comparatively new branch of discourse yet more and more linguists mention metadiscourse in their researches and scientific works. The term metadiscourse was coined by Harris (1959) who suggested it to name the author's efforts to engage the reader into his/her text, specify and define significant elements as if guide the reader with his/her written text. Whereas Hyland (2005) emphasizes that metadiscourse is extremely important since the absence of metadiscourse and its markers makes the text less personal, less interesting and it is more difficult for the reader to follow it. It is very hard to retain neutrality in both colloquial and written language. Occasionally, neutrality even has a negative impact on the text, i.e. it is difficult to perceive the author's position, his/her attitude to the described things. „Not only can a reader be persuaded by factual information but also selecting the appropriate linguistic means" (Poškienė and Vrubliauskienė, 2012, p. 36). This is why metadiscourse is so important, it creates a relation between the author and the reader, enhances context perception, allows the author to explain, specify or identify certain elements of the text. According to Kopple's suggestion (1985), metadiscourse was called „discourse about discourse" but Hyland (2004) states that such title is wrong as it is rather a concept concentrating on the portrayal of the author's position in a written text. Ädel (2006) defines metadiscourse as „discourse about a developing discourse" or detailed comments of the author about his/her written work. Hyland (2005) provides a very specific term of metadiscourse where he states that metadiscourse is statements reflecting position, which are used to present meanings of interpersonal relations in a text. They also help the author express his/her attitude and keep relation with readers as the members of the same society. Majority of authors writing texts use metadiscourse markers without perceiving that they are not the words specific for a particular area or scientific language. These language elements can be found in both daily and high level scientific texts. Metadiscourse constructions allow the reader to observe how the author strives to be understood in both a written text or representing his/her position (Hyland, 1998). It is necessary to note that in order to perform a purposeful analysis of metadiscourse markers it is essential to comprehend the

concept of metadiscourse properly, rely on researches of other authors and choose one particular model of metadiscourse markers.

Classification of metadiscourse markers was compiled by several authors. For example, Kopple (1985) distinguished 7 marker categories which are classified into two larger groups, i.e. textual and interpesonal metadiscourse. But later it was observed that references to other texts are attributed to two categories, thus a partial marker function coincidence occurs. Therefore, references are difficult to differentiate, identify a proper category and use this classification practically. Crismore and others (1993) tried to improve Kopple's model. This model included 12 marker categories which in accordance to Kopple's structure were classified into two larger groups – textual and interpersonal. However, textual metadiscourse group was further classified into two other parts, i.e. textual markers and explanatory markers. By such classification, Crismore, et al. (1993) suggest that linguistic means can perform the functions of a metalanguage if only the author decides so. Therefore, it is forgotten that markers in the text are frequently essential for syntactic reasons. Whereas Hyland (2005) referring to the performed researches offers his own classification taking the suggested models of metadiscourse markers into account and discovering their flaws. It is suggested that metadiscourse is characterized by three main ideas:

1. metadiscourse differs from theoretical statements of metadiscourse;

2. metadiscourse specifies the direction of the text where the relationship between the author and the reader is expressed;

3. metadiscourse indicates inner relations of a discourse exclusively.

Regardless of a growing interest in metadiscourse analysis it is difficult to characterise and classify it to meet the expectations of all researchers (Ädel and Mauranen, 2010). Since there are several marker classifications and so that the final work is consistent it was decided to follow Hyland's suggested model of metadiscourse markers. Hyland's (2005) metadiscourse markers are classified into two main categories, i.e. markers of interactive category and interactional category. The author can manage information flow, specify his/her position and interpretation clearly by markers of interactive category (Hyland, 2010). This category encompasses transitions, frame markers, endophoric markers, evidentials and code glosses (Šinkūnienė, 2014). Whereas interpersonal markers form relation between the author and the reader as the latter can envisage the author's attitude to the described information with the help of these markers. Interpersonal markers involve the reader into the text, they let him/her feel himself/herself as a part of it, create a dialogue between the author and the reader: the author can foresee the reader's contradictions or reactions and defend his/her opinion (Hyland, 2005). This category of markers includes hedges, boosters, attitude markers, self-mentions and engagement markers (see Table 1).

Metadiscourse can take various forms, namely morphemes (the least meaningful part of a word), separate words, word combinations and sentence sequences (Ädel, 2006). It was noticed that metadiscourse markers are expressed by particles most frequently, e.g. *taigi, bene, ypač;* adverbs, e.g. *todėl, pavyzdžiui, toliau*, inserts, e.g. *deja, kaip matome, kaip minėta;* conjunctions, e.g *ir, kadangi, bet.*

Metadiscourse category	Function	Marker
Interactive category	*Help to guide the reader through the text*	
Transitions	Express relations between main glauses	*In addition; but; thus; and*
Frame markers	Discourse acts, sequences or stages	*Finally; to conclude; my purpose is*
Endophoric	Information in other parts of the text	*Noted above; see Fig.; in section 2*
Evidentials	Information from other texts	*According to X; Z states*
Code glosses	propositional meaning	*Namely; e. g.; such as; in other words; i. e.*
Interactional category	*Involve the reader in the Examples text*	
Hedges	Withhold commitment and open dialogue	*Might; perhaps; possible; about*
Boosters	Emphasize certainty and close dialogue	*In fact; definitely; it is clear that*
Attitude	Expresses writers' attitude to proposition	*Unfortunately; I (do not) agree; surprisingly*
Self-mentions	Explicit reference to author(s)	*I; we; me; our*
Engagement	Explicitly build relationship with reader	*Consider; note; you can see that*

Table 1. Categories of metadiscourse markers according to Hyland (2005)

It is essential to mention that markers are multifinctional. Depending on the context they can perform several functions simultaneously or be classified into a category other than usual.

Thus, metadiscourse is one of the major expression means of the author's position. The author selects every language element in his text consciously and it means that such an element performs a certain function: be that argument combinations or reference to the text of the other author. It was noted that metadiscourse researchers pay more attention to researches of interpersonal relation markers in particular as they clearly indicate the author's position and the created relation with the reader. Although interactive markers are not the object of many researchers their analysis is not less important as these markers create a coherent and systematic text. As technical sphere is

traditionally considered to be objective and impersonal the usage of metalanguage elements of inner text is expected to be more ample and will reveal by what methods a coherent and consistent technical text is created. A chosen analysis of different fields will help determine what impact structural technical area makes on the usage of metadiscourse.

In order to perform a purposeful analysis of metadiscourse linguists recommend to follow one model of marker classification. Regarding a frequent usage of marker model suggested by Hyland (2005) among various language researchers of the world, this classification is precisely followed in this study.

2. Analysis of metadiscourse markers in technical texts

Quantatitive analysis of metadiscourse markers is rendered first. It was performed on the basis of examples selected from technical articles of three spheres. 352 examples were chosen for this analysis. The provided picture shows the exact number of markers found in every chosen technical area.
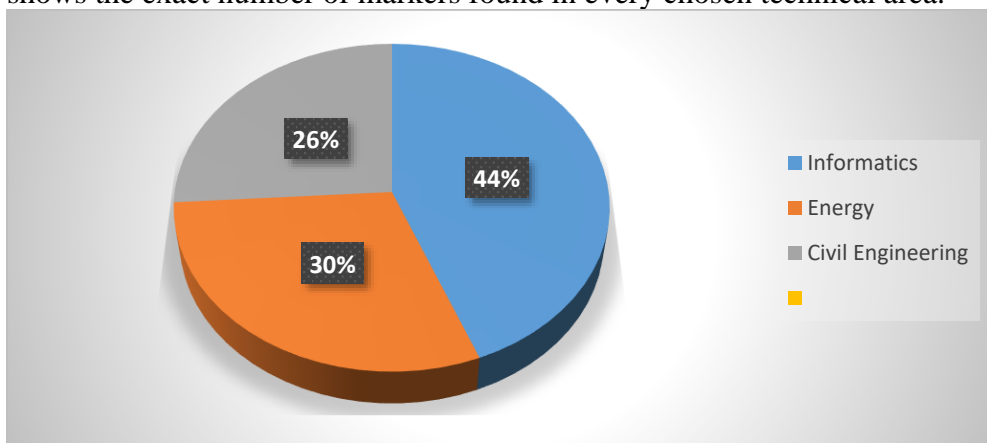
Pic. Quantatitive diagram of metadiscourse markers

As the picture illustrates, the majority of metadiscourse marker examples were found in the articles of **Informatics** (153 examples). This could be influenced by the fact that nevertheless the field of Informatics is technical it can encompass both sophisticated programes and calculations, and presentations of innovative technologies, information management and storage. Besides, it is a fast developing area, therefore information in such articles may be presented as an assumption or possibility rather than a fact:
(1) This would suggest that their privacy is not being considered during the completion of the task set before them. (Inf AN 2)

Hedging markers are the most abundant here, i.e. they make even 24% of all found examples of metadiscourse markers of the sphere of Informatics (repetition of metadiscourse marker examples of the area of Informatics is

expressed by percentage and showed in Table 2). It is also observed that hedging markers in the field of Informatics are the most numerous in comparison with other areas. The opposite to hedging markers are boosters although they are infrequently used, they make about 7% of all markers in the texts of Informatics. Engagement markers by which the author involves the reader to the discussion directly or indirectly constitute 9% of all markers of the analysed texts in the sphere of Informatics. The author's position can be distinctly perceived from attitude markers. As Ryvitytė (2005) claims, they are very problematic to identify as assessment can be reflected in the entire text but not expressed by markers. In the field of Informatics, only 11 of such markers were found and they make 13% of all analysed examples of Informatics.

Marker category	Examples	Percentage
INTERACTIVE CATEGORY		
Transitions	*In addition; thus*	12 %
Frame markers	*Finally; first*	4 %
Endophoric	*As mentioned; figure X shows*	8 %
Evidentials	*According to X; Z states*	18 %
Code glosses	*For example; i. e.*	11 %
INTERACTIONAL CATEGORY		
Hedges	*Might; perhaps*	24 %
Boosters	*Clearly; obviously*	7 %
Attitude	*Surprisingly; important*	7 %
Engagement	*Note; you can see that*	9 %

Table 2. Repetition of metadisourse marker examples of the sphere of Informatics expressed in percentage

Referring to markers of interactive category by which text and discourse coherence and structure are maintained, it was identified that markers of the aforementioned category exclusively are more plentiful than the ones from interactional category. Technical texts from the field of Informatics are not exceptional, 100 examples of markers of interactive category were found. Examples of evidentials and code glosses are the most frequent in this category:
(2) For example, the aim of building social capital with friends through using Facebook would suffer if the user was privacy oriented. (Inf AN 2)

The reason of their frequency might be article authors who present information based on examples or explanations. As the information can be new, so its rightness is substantiated. It is also necessary to emphasize that the abundance of code glosses indicates that the author refers to his/her reader, facilitates information relation to text elements (Šinkūnienė, 2014). Evidential markers referring to information from other sources are also related to

justification of information accuracy. No work can be written without referring to theories and ideas of other authors. It was observed that transition markers are difficult to identify, it is essential to read the context attentively and distinguish if a connector performs a metadiscourse function and joins arguments or it performs an external function and connects the fact only. However, in most cases they are to be used for argument connection:

(3) In addition, workshop participants provided feedback on their experiences in Automate workshops that were often used to refine the instructional processes and steps shown in the program videos and to incorporate participant testimonials. (Inf AN 1)

The smallest part of examples in the sphere of Informatics are frame markers and endophoric markers. Indeed, it is to be noted that frame markers by which the author points discourse stages are not widely used. The research proved that authors of other fields use even less frame markers than in the area of Informatics. The usage of these markers is more specific to longer texts as the reader is guided by the text, article stages and author steps are specified for the reader. It is peculiar for endophoric markers by which the author of the text can take the reader back to the mentioned part of the text or forward him/her to the future part of the text, remind the information, orient the reader's glance to the other part of the text:

(4) Figure 1 represents a training activity that uses cardboard boxes and inexpensive electronic components to show how a BAS system in a strip mall would work. (Inf AN 1)

Summing up, it is possible to claim that articles of the field of Informatics are characterised by plentifulness and variety of metadiscourse markers. The author's position and the relation between the author and his/her reader are revealed in such texts. Markers of interactive category are frequently used so it is possible to state that text authors try to maintain discoursive coherence of the text.

It was noticed that texts of the sphere of **Energy** are full of calculations, sophisticated terms and data analysis. Nevertheless, they retain a peculiar language structure (repetition of metadiscourse markers of the field of Energy expressed in percentage is presented in Table 3). As the articles of the area of Energy comprise many tables and diagrams, usage of endophoric markers is emphasized when the reader is directed to various parts of the text. These markers make 18% of all analysed examples:

(5) In this section a brief sensitivity analysis of the effect of these assumptions on the calculated PUE is carried out. (Eng AN 2)

It should be mentioned that endophotric markers are the most numerous in the articles of Energy comparing all three areas. Transition and code glosses are to be distinguished as they are quite abundant (10% and 11%). Frame markers are not plentiful and make only 4% of all examples of

metadiscourse markers of the field of Energy. It should be also observed that some examples of frame markers can coincide with endophoric markers as not only do markers direct the reader but discoursive movement is pointed:

(6) In this section a brief sensitivity analysis of the effect of these assumptions on the calculated PUE is carried out. (Eng AN 2)

Article analysis of the sphere of Energy is exclusive as the difference between markers of interaction and interactional categories is minimal, i.e. 54 examples of markers of interactive category and 53 examples of interactional category were found. Such balance of the categories indicates that not only are discursive references retained but the author's position and his/her relation with the reader are not stifled.

Marker category	Examples	Percentage
INTERACTIVE CATEGORY		
Transitions	*In addition; however*	10 %
Frame markers	*Finally; the aim*	4 %
Endophoric	*In this section; Fig. X illustrates*	18 %
Evidentials	*According to X; Z found that*	7 %
Code glosses	*Such as; for example*	11 % (12 pvz.)
INTERACTIONAL CATEGORY		
Hedges	*Might; suggest*	14 %
Boosters	*Clearly; demonstrates*	11 %
Attitude	*Surprisingly; actually*	17 %
Self-mentions	*We; our*	4 %
Engagement	*Note; it is necessary to consider*	4 %

Table 3. Repetition of metadisourse marker examples of the area of Energy expressed in percentage

Interactional category in the field of Energy is characterised by the intensity of author position expression revealed by attitude markers and self-mentions. 18 examples of attitude markers were found and they make 17% of all examples of metadiscourse markers of the sphere of Energy. Here not only does the author express his/her position on the discussed topic but also emphasizes the importance of information at his/her own discretion:

(7) Measuring the energy efficiency of a data centre is clearly very important if carbon emissions from the IT sector are to be reduced, and if companies are to reduce their electricity consumption. (Eng AN 2)

Taking self-mentions into consideration, the fact has to be distinguished that authors of the area of Energy as well as from other spheres are not liable to mention themselves in their texts. Relation with the reader is also retained expressed by the usage of engagement makers in the area of Energy. This relation is most frequently revealed by the usage of engaging *mes* (when the author has himself/herself and the reader in mind using *mes*) or

when the reader's attention is drawn. In the field of Energy, hedges are employed for assumptions, a marker *suggest* is most frequently used for this purpose, modal verbs *may, might, could, etc.* express the possibility of an argument. But basically their function is to identify uncertainty:

(8) There is also the possibility that regulatory measures for energy sustainability could arise and these could combine with land availability issues and constraints from environmental impacts. (Eng AN 1)

Markers emphasizing expression are opposite to hedges and they can be called „the other side of the coin" metaphorically (Poppi, 2004). The verbs *demonstrate, show* are used to intensify position in the texts of Energy, markers *of course, clearly, in fact* reveal assurance:

(9) It is clear from the graph that the greatest impact on the PUE came from changing these latter values (Eng AN 2)

Thus, having reviewed data analysis of the texts of Energy area it is possible to state that there is the least difference between markers of interactive and interactional categories in this sphere in comparison with other analysed fields. Due to the abundance of various calculations, tables and visual means, the author's assistance in orienting his/her reader, expressed by endophoric markers, is accentuated. The usage of attitude markers and self-mentions allows to envisage the author's position and his/her opinion about the described topic. Therefore, it is possible to claim that consistency between interactive and interactional categories in the analysed texts of the area of Energy is observed. Not only does it provide the text with coherence but it also forms relations and a common attitude between the author and his/her reader.

The sphere of **Civil Engineering** is the most technical from all the analysed fields. These texts are characterised by comparatively short and specific sentences, authors do not create relations with their reader. Thus, only 92 examples of metadiscourse markers are found (repetition of examples of metadiscourse makers of the field of Civil Engineering expressed in percentage is presented in Table 4). A double difference between markers of interactive and interactional categories is distinguished, i.e. 65 markers of interactive and 27 markers of interactional categories were discovered. Therefore, it is obvious that author's position, his/her evaluation or relation with the reader are difficult to be envisaged in the texts of Civil Engineering. Nevertheless, it is possible to find markers of interactive category which give metadiscursive shades for the text and allow to retain structure and coherence. For instance, there are many endophoric markers by which the author directs his/her reader to one or the other part of the text (21%), as well as in the sphere of Energy. Such markers as *see Fig X, Table X represents* are most frequently used if there is a reference to visual means and *noted below/ above, in this section* if other parts of the text are referred to:

(10) A schematic of the test setup used for the shear test configuration <u>is shown in Fig. 1.</u> (Stb AN 1) (Eng AN 2)

Usage of evidentials is not less common, they make 20% of all metadiscourse examples of Civil Engineering area. They are very similar to endophoric markers, the difference is that references are provided to other texts. Evidentials can be distinguished into two categories: integrated references and non-integrated references. Non-integrated references are more often employed in articles of all three analysed fields. Integrated references were found only in the areas of Energy and Civil Engineering. It indicates that article authors are more likely to emphasize the referred information but not its author.

The usage of transition markers and code glosses can be distinguished as they are quite numerous (13% and 15%). It was observed that frame markers by which the author informs the reader about discursive movements and stages are not differentiated in either sphere. Only 2 examples of these markers were found in the texts of Civil Engineering.

Marker category	Examples	English language
INTERACTIVE CATEGORY		
Transitions	*In addition; thus*	15 %
Frame markers	*Finally; first*	2 %
Endophoric	*In this section; see table X*	21 %
Evidentials	*According to X; Z states*	20 %
Code glosses	*For instance; i. e.*	13 %
INTERACTIONAL CATEGORY		
Hedges	*Might; perhaps*	9 %
Boosters	*Clearly; obviously*	6 %
Attitude	*Surprisingly; as expected*	13 %
Engagement	*Note; you can see that*	1 %

Table 4. Repetition of metadisourse marker examples in the area of *Civil Engineering* expressed in percentage

As it was mentioned, markers of interactional category are not plentiful in the articles of Civil Engineering. For example, self-mentions were not found at all and only one engagement marker was discovered. Then it is possible to state that authors do not emphasize either themselves or the reader in the texts of this field, characteristic impersonality is revealed here. Self-mentions are most distinguished in this category, they constitute 13% of all examples of the sphere of Civil Engineering. So a conclusion can be made that although the author does not point out himself/herself in the text but his position is expressed in some way:

(11) As expected, loading above the shear center causes a reduction in capacity. (Eng AN 2)

Hedges and boosters are combined in the articles of Civil Engineering. Hedges are insignificantly more numerous than boosters, i.e. 8 hedges are found in both languages whereas 6 examples of boosters were identified. It was noticed that the texts of all areas do not contain merely hedges or boosters. Although they are contrasting but they are very closely related. Šinkūnienė (2011) states that usage of hedges is more abundant than boosters but no matter how scientific their research is the data is improved and may seem inaccurate in the long term.

Hence, summarising the analysis of metadiscourse markers of all analysed spheres it is possible to state that markers of interactive category are more plentiful than the ones of interactional category. This data indicates that authors writing technical texts put more effort in maintaining discursive order, assisting the reader in orienting in the text. Texts where information is based on visual means, e.g. diagrams or tables, comprise endophoric markers and code glosses. Authors do not emphasize either themselves or the reader in technical articles, but the author's position is revealed by the usage of attitude markers. Hedges and boosters and their coordination provide the text with balance as information is neither imposed upon the reader nor it is stifled.

Conclusion

1. Metadiscourse becomes increasingly popular as the object of analysis among various language researchers. Authors provide different interpretations of metadiscourse, offer more refined researches. It was determined that there exist more than one model of metadiscourse marker classification, and the only correct version does not exist in marker analysis. In this way, metadiscourse multifunctionality is revealed.

2. The performed analysis of metadiscourse markers disclosed that the usage of markers of interactive category dominates in all articles of analysed technical fields. It was observed that such texts are characterised by visual means, so it explains the abundant usage of endophoric markers and code glosses. The author pursues to interpret the information properly. Marker analysis of interactional category revealed that technical texts are not that objective as it was considered earlier, expression of author's position and assertive evaluation can be envisaged there.

3. It was determined that metadiscourse is used creating both structural and suggestive text and revealing a clear position and evaluation of the author in the texts of all three areas. It was observed that the sphere of Civil Engineering is the most objective and least personalised, the field of Informatics is characterised by plentifulness of code glosses and hedges, while examples of all metadiscourse markers can be found in the field of Energy.

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Frontier Anxiety and the American Indian in the Fiction of Cooper and Simms

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Abstract

This research examines the opposition between the American Indian and civilization in two selected nineteenth-century frontier romances: James Fenimore Cooper's *The Pioneers* (1823) and William Gilmore Simms's *The Yemassee: a Romance of Carolina* (1835). The proposed study represents the effects of civilization and its role in forming a collective anxiety within the American Indian community. It aims at depicting cultural anxiety as a product of the confrontation between man and civilization on the American frontier: on the margins of the settlements in the two novels. This paper is based on Sigmund Freud's assumption that civilization is largely responsible for the misery of humankind and that experiencing anxiety stems from the destructive forces of the external world or from man's relationship to man.

Introduction

The conflicts that arise in the selected novels of Cooper and Simms are mainly due to the intrusion of civilization in the American Indians' natural world and traditional life. This intrusion causes "anxiety" as a response to the tension occurring on the frontier: on the margins of the settlements in James Fenimore Cooper's *The Pioneers* and in William Gilmore Simms's *The Yemassee.* Anxiety is a major part of American life. In this context, it shall not be considered as a symptom of clinical disorders but as "a mass cultural phenomenon". Collective anxieties are products of cultural dynamics, and my concern is on the dynamics that are at work in American society in the novels.

Bast et al (2014) contend that widespread anxiety is specific to the present and "that the contemporary moment in the United States is particularly prone to producing anxiety"; however, it was also present in the early centuries of the United States formation. The anxiety that is evoked in *The Pioneers* and

The Yemassee is constructed on a conflict between a yearning for the pastoral ideal and the actual violent intrusion of an external culture in the American Indians' world. This contention could be supported by Sigmund Freud's well thought assumptions about the discontents of civilization.

Freud (1962) discusses in *Civilization and its Discontents* the role of civilization and makes it responsible for the misery of humankind. "This contention holds that what we call our civilization is largely responsible for our misery, and that we should be much happier if we gave it up and return to primitive conditions"(p.33). Freud notes that at the origin of human suffering lie three historical factors which create disillusionment with human civilization: the victory of Christendom over pagan religions; the discovery and conquest of primitive tribes and peoples, who, to Europeans seemed to be living more happily in a state of nature; and the scientific identification of the mechanisms of neuroses, which are caused by the frustrating demands put on the individual by modern society (p.33).A reduction of those demands or the individual's withdrawal from the society that impose them would lead to greater happiness. In regard to the third factor, Freud contends "that the abolition or reduction of those demands would result in a return to possibilities of happiness" (p.34).

For the regulation of social relationships, a "decisive step" toward civilization lies in the replacement of the individual by the power of a community. Civilized societies place the rule of law over individual instincts, and this is one way by which civilization imposes restrictions on the liberty of the individual. In order to avoid anxiety, man employs various strategies for this purpose, among these, man voluntarily isolates himself as a reaction to the third source of unpleasure. But, according to Freud, another important way to steer clear of it is becoming a member of the human community (p.35). Thus, the behavior that should be adopted to achieve happiness and avoid anxiety depends on the interaction of the individual with his environment. From this perspective, in the analysis of the selected novels of Cooper and Simms, major research questions will be considered: How could civilization be responsible for anxiety as a mass cultural phenomenon? And how could civilization be particularly responsible for the misery of the American Indian?

The term 'frontier anxiety' is used by David M.Wrobel (1993) to refer to the anxiety that the closing of the frontier generated among white expansionists. In this study, I use the term to refer to the anxiety that results from the opening of the frontier, and that occurs on the margins of the settlements in the fiction of Cooper and Simms, but that majorly affects Native Americans. The following sections will be devoted to showing the anxiety that is engendered by the clash between man and civilization in the two novels. It stems from the external force that, according to Freud, may range against the

individual with merciless forces of destruction (p.20). It can also emanate from the individual's relations to other men.

Cooper and Simms's Fiction

Nineteenth century historical romances are predominated by the frontier tale, the plantation romance and the western. The frontier romance encapsulates an important and predominant concern which is the theme of national identity as related to the prominent features of the territory and the people constituting the American nation. Other elements recurring in the 19th century historical romances are "melodramatic battles, love stories, rescues in the wild, settlers, newcomers, and skilled Boone-like woodsmen, and beautiful women" (Crane, 2007, p. 40).Frontier romances share plots centering on the conflict between white settlers and Indians and their interest lies in tracing positive and negative characterization of Indians. For example, in *The Pioneers* (1823), James Fenimore Cooper portrays Natty Bumppo or Leatherstocking "somewhere between savagism and civilization, *the beau ideal* of the frontiersman, with all the goodness and greatness that the pioneer could have in the circumstances of pioneering" (Pearce, 1953, p. 202).Cooper tells the story of Templeton, the actual "Cooperstown", governed by Judge Temple. The story centers on Judge Temple's acquisition of the land that the Effingham family had lost after the Revolutionary war, and it is constructed on the opposition between Natty Bumppo who is considered as the spokesman for natural law, and Judge Marmaduke Temple who represents civil law.

Another frontier romance which illustrates the conflict between white settlers and Indians is William Gilmore Simms' semi-fictional work: *The Yemassee: A Romance of Carolina,* first published in 1835. In this novel, the Southern American writer deals with Indian Enslavement, black slavery, and the clash between greedy white South Carolinians and the Yemassee, an unknown Indian tribe. The novel is structured on racial conflict and the inevitability of native displacement, and it is set on the South Carolina frontier. Simms' depiction of the American Indian is more realistic than Cooper's; his personal travels through Indian lands made him render Indian culture in greater depth. But though the title of the tale indicates that it is a frontier romance, it also tackles the most important issue for Simms that was much debated in the beginning of the nineteenth century: the future of black slavery.

Besides being a story about the extermination of an Indian race, *The Yemassee* is also a defense of slavery, and the relation between races in the novel also entails the master-slave relation. The intention of Simms in writing the novel is two-dimensional, defending the institution of slavery and foretelling the future of the American nation. He portrays "Sanutee", the Indian chief and major character, as a noble savage possessing the virtues that show this nobility. Sanutee refuses dependency; he is honorable and heroic

and denigrates degradation. He is depicted by Critic Joseph Kelly (2012) as a tragic hero, exerting "a heroic, ineffectual struggle against inescapabale fate"(p.56).

Civilization and Anxiety in *The Pioneers* and *The Yemassee*

The monopolization of the wilderness by the white American settlers in Cooper's *The Pioneers* occurs on the margins of the settlement that is founded by Judge Marmaduke Temple. The rapid destruction of natural resources in the novel is causing a growing anxiety in Natty Bumppo, the major character and defender of America's natural resources. The latter expresses his worries about the loss of hunting grounds and the deforestation of the land as civilization spreads out. Rumbinas (2012) argues that "The European agrarian model of settlement made the clearing of the forest necessary in order for the settlers to survive. As more and more settlers arrived seeking land, the allure of felling and burning trees for ready cash was a great enticement for poor settlers to move to the frontier areas" (p.319).In the novel, Judge Temple saw the necessity of taming the frontier for agricultural use. As a land speculator, he profited from the clearing of forests and their transformation into agricultural lands.

James Cooper's view was already expressed by St John de Crévecoeur. The pastoral ideal and the image of the growing American agricultural society that Crévecoeur (1904) portrayed in his letters became one of the dominant symbols of nineteenth century American culture. Henry Nash Smith (1950) notes that the pioneers "plowed the virgin land and put in crops, and the great Interior Valley was transformed into a garden: for the imagination, the Garden of the World"(Chapter XI, para.2). In James Fenimore Cooper's *The Pioneers* (1823), this garden is disrupted by civilization. As the frontier is pushed back, Natty Bumppo is always moving west. He can only survive on the margins of society. Natty urges the other settlers as the sheriff and Billy Kirby to use the wilderness only to sustain themselves and not to kill animals just for sport. He clarifies this view to Judge Marmaduke Temple in the beginning of the novel,

There's them living who say that Nathaniel Bumppo's right to shoot on these hills is of older date than Marmaduke Temple's right to forbid him", he said. "But if there is a law about it at all, though who ever heard of a law that a man shouldn't kill deer where he pleased!-but if there is a law at all, it should be to be to keep people from the use of smooth-bores. A body never knows where his head will fly, when he pulls the trigger of one of them uncertain firearms.(Cooper, 1823, p.17)

Cooper shows man's predatory attitudes towards nature, he outlines "the pattern of protest" against the slaughter of birds and animals through "Judge Temple's advocacy of conservation and Natty's denouncements of the settlers' "wasty ways""(Philbrick, 1964, p.584)· In the beginning of the tale,

Temple's notes on the past represent the image of an undisturbed wilderness; the later scenes, however, are different. The pioneers slaughter countless pigeons, and nature is abused by the settlers' extravagance. Natty's urge for the conservation of nature for practical use is exemplified in his reaction at the onslaught of pigeons. In April, the citizens of Templeton who are directed by Richard Jones, the Sheriff and cousin of Judge Temple, shot flocks of pigeons migrating northward. Accordingly, thousands of birds are slain wastefully and Natty Bumppo condemns the carnage as it represents an aggression against nature.

This comes of settling a country! he said. Here have I known the pigeon to fly for forty long years, and, till you made your clearings, there was nobody to skeart or to hurt them, I loved to see them come into the woods, for they were company to the body, hurting nothing-being as it was, as harmless as a garter- snake. But now it gives me sore thoughts when I hear the frighty things whizzing through the air, for I know it's only a motion to bring out all the brats of the village. Well, the lord won't see the waste of his creatures for nothing, and Right will be done to the pigeons, as well as others, by and by. (Cooper, 1823, p.216).

When Temple acknowledges all the extravagance of his townsmen in dealing with natural resources, he blames Billy Kirby, the woodchopper, for deforesting the country. "You are not exempt from the censure yourself, Kirby, he said, for you make dreadful wounds in these trees where a small incision would effect the same object. I earnestly beg you will remember that they are the growth of centuries, and when once gone none living will see their loss remedied"(Cooper,1823,p.199).As Temple's character demonstrates a susceptibility to the settlers' use of the land, he is also unable to establish laws to constrain this use. The landscape in Templeton is established by a civilization that imposes its traits of wastefulness and arrogance.

The anxiety that Natty Bumppo faces is related to the destruction of nature, and because he cannot overcome and avoid it, he voluntarily isolates himself. This anxiety is caused by civilization that Freud defines as majorly responsible for the misery of mankind. Natty Bumppo escapes this misery through his withdrawal from the society that imposes the demands of civilization. He is thrust from society and enjoys freedom only in the wilderness; in the end, he leaves to the west in a self-willed retreat and escapes the fallen world of civilization. According to Cheyfitz (1993), Bumppo exemplifies "the individualist who, relying upon himself and the wilderness around him, pursued without qualification the laws of Nature's God" (p.118).

Natty Bumppo, who lives in his cabin with the Delaware Indian Chingachgook, known as the white hunter John Mohegan, considers judge Temple as his enemy. This fact is illustrated in one discussion between Chingachgook and Bumppo. As Chingachgook gets drunk and brags of his

victories, Natty says: "Why do you sing of your battles, Chingachgook,… when the worst enemy of all is near you and keeps the Young Eagle from his rights ?" (Cooper, 1823, p. 143). Obviously in the tale, the Indian's rights to the land are represented by Natty Bumppo and his Indian companion Chingachgook. Chingachgook's death and Natty Bumppo's retreat mark the inevitability of the alienation process that is produced by man's relationship to the law and to civilization as a destructive force. Chingachgook's death also parallels Leatherstocking's retreat before the expansion of civilization. "…….now I thought was the time to get a little comfort in the close of my days", Leatherstocking addressed Elizabeth Temple, "Woods! Indeed! I doesn't call these woods, Madam Effingham, where I lose myself every day of my life in the clearings." (Cooper, 1823, p.403).

In *The Pioneers*, the American Indian character's experience of unhappiness stems from the external world with its definitely destructive forces which is the second contention Freud makes to explain the causes of unhappiness. Natty could not adapt to the external environment, to civilized life, and he is drawn into the outer edge of the extending forests ahead.

The frontier is also the setting of much of William Gilmore Simms's work. It represents "the center of cultural confrontation" (Grantham, 1997, p.106). The existence of the American garden was in peril as landlordism was imposing itself on the American colonies, and this belief was much more engrained in the American Indian's mind than in the white's even before the westward movement began. The anxiety that the chief Indian character in Simms' *The Yemassee* experiences is an expression of the American Indian's concern over the future of his race in the light of an imposed civilization.

Grantham (1997) contends that "the frontier is a defining element of cultural confrontation"(p.108), it is this confrontation that engenders anxiety. The Indian in *The Yemassee*, represented by the character of Sanutee, is the one who must face and combat his inner fears as the fear of losing his identity, dignity, culture and land. Becoming part of the white man's civilization is the ultimate choice that could save the Yemassee Indian, but this alternative is inconceivable to Sanutee as well as his tribe. Sanutee is determined to confront the expansion of the white settlers and could not accept the way his people were led to destitution as was his son Occonestoga. According to the chief, his people are bought "with painted glass, and red cloth, and strong water"(Simms, 1866, p.89). Sanutee laments this situation: "Manneyto be with my people", he claims, "for the chiefs are slaves to the English; and they will give the big forests of my fathers to be cut down by the accursed axes of the pale-face. But they blind me not they buy not Sanutee! The knife must have blood the Yemassee must have his home with the old grave of his father"(Simms, 1866, p.89).

The anxiety of Sanutee starts growing at the intrusion of trade with the whites and ends at the novel's major resolution: the tragic war between his tribe and the English. Sanutee does not trust the English traders and unveils their treachery. When the chief of an English deputation, Sir Edmund Bellinger, wants to offer a coat to Sanutee, the latter replies skeptically:"Our English brother is good, But Sanutee asks not for the cloak. Does Sanutee complain of the cold?". "Does the white chief come to the great council of the Yemassee as a fur trader? Would he have skin for his coat?"(Simms, 1866, p.95). And as Bellinger admits at last that "the English do want to buy some of the land of (sanutee's) people", the Indian chief shows his strong determination not to sell the land of his people and addresses his tribesmen urging them to consider their situation:

It is good Chiefs of the Yemassee, now hear. Why comes the English to the lodge of our people? Why comes he with a red coat to the chief why brings he beads and paints for the eye of a little boy? Why brings he the strong water for the young man? Why makes he long speeches, full of smooth words why does he call us brother? He wants our lands. But we have no lands to sell. The lands came from our fathers they must go to our children. They do not belong to us to sell they belong to our children to keep. We have sold too much land, and the old turkey, before the sun sinks behind the trees, can fly over all the land that is ours(Simms,1866,p.97).

The conflict between the Yemassee Indians and the Californians is extended in the second part of the novel as Simms moves to the description of the bloody war that opposed them. In this part, Simms describes the Indian warfare as merciless and savage in its ways. The struggle that Simms uses as the backdrop for *The Yemassee* dates back to the fifteenth century, to the struggle between Spain and England to take over the Californian coast. Different wars took place before the Yemassee war between the two rivals for the appropriation of the coast. Ann Mary Wimsatt (1989) notes for example that "there were recurrent battles between pioneers and Indians- the Westo War of 1673, the Stono War of 1674, and of course the Yemassee War in 1715"(p.41). In the second part of the novel, Sanutee's anxiety is heightened at the approach of his death as he tells Matiwan about the inescapable fate of his nation. Death seems to Sanutee the best resort because of the inevitable expansion of the whites' civilization. "It is good, Matiwan", Sanutee tells his wife,

The well-beloved has no people. The Yemassee has bones in the thick woods, and there are no young braves to sing the song of his glory. The *Coosah-moray- te* is on the bosom of the Yemassee, with the foot of the great bear of Apalatchie.He makes his bed in the old home of Pocota-ligo, like a fox that burrows in the hill-side. We may not drive him away. It is good for

Sanutee to die with his people. Let the song of his dying be sung.(Simms, 1866, p.453)

The description of Sanutee's death is brief and centers on the sad end of the Yemassee race. Sanutee's anxiety ends as he utters his last words, the song of death. His ultimate goal was to preserve his nation from extinction and stop the white flux westward, but as he dies, everything he represents also dies. "Life went with the last effort, when, thinking only of the strife for his country, his lips parted feebly with the cry of battle- 'Sangarrah-me, Yemassee-Sangarrah -me- Sangarrah- me'!"(Simms, 1866, p.454).

The destruction of the Yemassee in the novel seems to be a part of the order of things that it becomes acceptable. Sanutee's experience stems mainly from the external world, as well as from his relations to the white man. The most dangerous society as Freud contends is the one in which the leader is "exalted" and individuals do not acquire a sense of identity. In the novel, Lord Craven is the 'exalted' leader while the other characters as Sanutee are subjects. The Indian chief's combat to surpass his anxiety is rather related to the fear of losing his identity, dignity and culture, and his death and alienation also result from this struggle.

Conclusion

Simms and Cooper prescribe in their works the unique traits of the American character; however, the colonial settlements of the eastern seaboard had as their leaders the wealthy and educated hereditary aristocracy of old England as it is portrayed in the selected novels. Both Simms and Cooper depict the formation of "a mixed race" on the frontier and an advancing civilization that Freud defines as responsible for a widespread cultural anxiety. The two authors render the American Indian fatalistically lost and part of a mythic past. His withdrawal from the society that imposes the restrictions of civilization would lead him to greater happiness. In *The Pioneers* and *The Yemassee*, the authors attempt to romanticize Native American life in compensation for its destruction; the impossibility of the protagonists to adapt to the external environment generates a growing anxiety that majorly reflects the clash between nature and civilization. The frontier, in these novels, is a doorway through which expansion could become effective at the expense of the American Indian's distress and loss of his territory.

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Gossip as an Instrument of Tragedy in Tess of the D'urbervilles

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Abstract

Studies in Victorian literature have tended to regard gossip as a form of social talk without considering its significance as a social interaction that communicates information in fictional societies. This article takes a different approach and examines the novel, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles,* as a case study. Using contemporary research on the sociology of gossip, rumours, legends and scandal, it attempts to understand the function and importance of these various forms of social judgement utilized by Thomas Hardy in his novel. This paper argues that the informal circuitries of information greatly influence the plot and Tess's decisions and eventually lead to her tragedy. Furthermore, this study of gossip in fiction adds to the existing literary criticism of novels in Victorian literature, and prompts that gossip's unacknowledged and varied role in literature should be assessed in future research.

Keywords: Gossip, novel, social judgement, scandal, tragedy, Victorian literature, Thomas Hardy.

Introduction

Recent studies on gossip have evaluated numerous aspects of social talk and its implications on the society where opinions are vocally expressed. Even though the theories are based on research from society and real conversations, applying them to my research and analysis allows a more comprehensive understanding of the elements and characteristics of gossip in the text that taken as my case study. Niko Besnier defines gossip as a verbal "information exchange" that is "negatively evaluative and morally laden" and concerns itself with the behaviour of "absent third parties, involving a bounded group of persons in a private setting" (2009, p. 8). In his research on the sociological aspects of gossip, Jörg Bergmann sets out to prove that gossip is a "social form of discreet indiscretions" (1993, p. 118). He shows that it both violates and abides by the "boundaries between the private and public" (1993, p. 118) because when a person "intentionally" communicates information to

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particular friends instead of widely and "indiscriminately," he acts "discreetly" (1993, p. 151). He names three essential characteristics for the "subject of gossip" as "absence, acquaintanceship, and privacy" (Bergmann, 1993, p.54). This means that gossip must be done in the absence of the subject of discussion, among a group of friends or acquaintances, and is usually conducted in a private setting.

Patricia Meyer Spacks (1985) sets out to determine other characteristics of gossip and she argues that gossip is usually criticized and disparaged because of its disclosure of secrets, and its violation of privacy. After communicating a curious piece of information to acquaintances or friends, what determines whether this information will be transmitted further or die out with disinterest is the listeners' judgement of the incident and people involved. In other words, Spacks (1985) states that for gossip to be transmitted effectively to another person, it must be both believable and intriguing to the other person, shock-worthy, and a topic that can be analysed and commented on.

Gossip had particular power in the 19th century, especially in dealing with and monitoring a woman's reputation. "Oral speech," discussed by Laura Gowing in her study of early modern English societies, held great power for a person's reputation both legally and socially at a time when only a few women "used the written word with any frequency" (1996, p. 111). Since the female characters in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* also habitually do not read or write, the female society in the novel, especially in Marlott, distinctively form a community similar to that of early modern England where they speculate and judge Tess based on hearsay.

Both Bernard Capp (2003) and Melanie Tebutt (1995) in their study of gossip discuss how female gossips and older women of a neighbourhood assume a position of power by controlling and observing the borders of proper behaviour in their unyielding conventional position of moral authority. This is evident in the novel where Tess experiences the collective and disapproving opinion of her society and neighbours, and suffers the consequences of her improper behaviour. *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* was published in the late Victorian period (1891), but Hardy does not clearly determine a definite time period of when the novel is set. It can be deduced that it is after the invention of the telegram (1871) that is mentioned at the end of the novel. The time period is relevant in this study of gossip in the novel, because as J. F. C Harrison states, worry about "what the neighbours would think" while trying to maintain a higher "social standing" and "respectability" demanded an almost "neurotic cost" to the working class of the late Victorian period (1990, p.131).

Furthermore, it is necessary to define tragedy in order to demonstrate its connection to gossip in this novel. Tragedy, as defined by Peter Childs and

Roger Fowler (2006), "is a dramatization of an individual's sense of life and society" as continuously threatened by the capricious whims of fate and people's arbitrary viciousness (p.241). The individual's life is endangered when an action "opens a gap in the fragile fabric of morality and civilization" (Childs & Fowler, 2006, p. 241). In other words, tragedy in the case of *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* can be explained as the disproportionate suffering of a character due to a previous error in judgement. Tess's fate is considered to be a tragedy since her illicit pregnancy destabilizes her position and reputation in her local society and later leads to the unfortunate event of her death.

Research Questions

In this paper, I will proceed to demonstrate how several examples of gossip and other forms of traditional communication in the novel show the significance of gossip to the plot of the novel and the characters affected by social judgement. I will examine the following questions: how does gossip affect Tess's relations with the society around her and determine her fate? What are the different types of informal talk evident in the novel? Furthermore, how do the mechanisms of gossip create a form of moral and class regulation in the society of the novel?

Literature Review

Since the publication of the novel, critics have argued several reasons for Tess's tragedy. Richard Nemesvari suggests that the destruction of Tess is a direct result of Alec and Angel's "attempt to stabilize" their masculine identity, "and in doing so defeat the rival who embodies an alternative vision of self which they cannot accept" (2002, p. 88). Rosemary Jann (2000) in her discussion of the construction of class, states that Tess's "endorsement of middle-class mores contributes" to her "victimization" (2000, p. 411). Jeanette Shumaker, in her article about Victorian confession novels, says that Tess's "redirection of rage away from the unjust hierarchies of gender and class leads to tragedy" when her confession, though it "reinscribe[s] the gender and class hierarchies" does not enable her salvation as a 'fallen woman' (1994, p.445). However, I claim that very little of the narrative depends on Tess' sexual transgression, or even on her role a victim of sexual assault or social injustice. In his article about rumour, its physiology and movement within social spaces in the novel, Daniel Williams contends that "rumor operates as a compelling and often covert force" (2013, p. 95). To expound on Williams perspective on rumour, I will take this idea further and argue that the narrative is propelled by the combination of various economies of information present in the text that impel Tess towards her tragedy.

Gossip as an Instrument of Tragedy

In the novel *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, Tess is the centre of different mechanisms of rumour[1] and is affected by damaging information from three sources. I will use 'information' in this context similar to Alexander Welsh's definition of "knowledge that is tucked away – hidden, in fact – until it is brought forth" and its "value hinges upon its release, which may occur through deliberation or by chance" (1985, p.44). The first source of information that induces change is when Parson Tringham sees fit to inform her father, John Durbeyfield about their supposed ancestors, the d'Urbervilles. I will call this source of information a local legend or tradition, because it is a "non-historical or mythical story[2]" that is "handed down[3]" from generation to generation. The second source of information is hearsay, according to which individuals in the novel prejudge Tess without concrete evidence. And the last source of damage is the gossip that occurs after Tess's fall becomes undeniably clear, and forms a reputation that neither she nor those who encounter it can forget.

This paper argues that the tragic outcome is as much the result of the informal economies of knowledge as destiny or her own agency, and in what follows I will track the course of these different circuitries of knowledge as they impact on Tess, and explore their unpredictable relationship to the events of the novel. I will explore what happens at the boundaries of these regimes of knowledge, suggesting that their influence diminishes only to be supplemented by the narrative which keeps the power of information foreground in the reader's mind. Finally, I will show how at various points in the novel the unexpected conjunction of the economies of information pushes the narrative forward.

"Curious bit of lore": The legend of the Durbeyfield's family history

The novel demonstrates the importance of a person's history as a source of gossip since, according to Max Gluckman, "members" of a community "can hit at one another through their ancestors," whereas their ignorance of such knowledge allows them to fall in a weak position. This desire and curiosity for knowledge urge the characters in the novel to learn about one another's history to maintain a position of power and belonging in a small community (1963, p. 309). In the first few pages in the novel, the Durbeyfield family history is introduced by Parson Tringham, and though his narrative is not solely concerned with Tess, she is the person most affected by the information. The clergyman informs John Durbeyfield of his ancestral

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1 The sociologist Jörg Bergmann explains that the "decisive difference between rumors and gossip is that rumors contain unauthorized messages that are always of universal interest and accordingly are disseminated diffusely (1993: 70).
2 From the etymology of 'legend' in the Online Etymology Dictionary
3 From the etymology of 'tradition' in the Online Etymology Dictionary

origins after claiming to have made "inquiries about his father and grandfather"[4] while "tracing the vicissitudes of the d'Urberville family" "till he had no doubt on the subject" (1993, p. 4). This parson, who appears to have upper-middle-class pursuits such as genealogy and local history, philanthropically decides to enlighten a known drunk like John Durbeyfield of his loftier origins, probably because he wishes to spread the knowledge he has gained through his research to the less fortunate. The reader becomes suspicious about this "useless piece of information" when the parson "rode on his way, with doubts as to his discretion in retailing this curious bit of lore" (1993, p. 4). To "retail[5]" in this context convokes all its etymological possibilities relevant to the economies of information: Parson Tringham refashions the information about the history of the d'Urbervilles he has researched, recounts the local legend he has heard, and then succeeds in metaphorically selling his doubtful information to a more than susceptible audience. John Durbeyfield's pride in his newly-acquired family connection is based on little fact and the word of a single clergyman, but this does not prevent him from repeating this history to anyone who will hear him. The evidence of their connection to the d'Urbervilles is a mere rusty silver spoon that may or may not have the crest of the ancient family. Whether the spoon is inscribed with the crest or not, their possession of such a spoon does not necessarily mean it has belonged to the Durbeyfield family for generations, as it could have been bought or given as a present to earlier generations of the Durbeyfield family. Furthermore, Tess's resemblance to the female d'Urberville's portraits displayed in the d'Urberville ancestral home can be a mere coincidence, for anyone can vaguely resemble one or two portraits in a gallery.

The lack of evidence substantiating Parson Tringham's claim does not discredit his actual research into the d'Urberville family tree, but merely his assumption, probably based on the similarity of the two names, that the D'Urberville family name has declined into the Durbeyfields. The text insinuates that the clergyman is believed because, as a virtuous member of the Church, he is a reliable source of information whose knowledge and behaviour should not be questioned but emulated. This narrative concocted by the clergyman about various individuals momentarily takes control of their lives, even if the narrative itself is without ill intentions. The clergyman's narration of the legend of the d'Urbervilles does largely dominate the Durbeyfield's lives and others' opinion of them throughout the novel.

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4 All quotations from the novel are taken from Hardy, T. (1993). *Tess of the d'Urbervilles.* Wordsworth Classics Edition.

5 To retail (v): mid-14c: "to cut off, pare, clip, divide," from re- "back" + taillier "to cut, trim" Sense of "recount, tell over again" is first recorded 1590s" Taken from the Online Etymology Dictionary.

This legend of the ancient family appears to be common knowledge to the individuals Tess encounters in the novel, and each has different reactions about this family history and her possible relation to the illustrious d'Urbervilles. John Durbeyfield is hopelessly vain; Joan Durbeyfield urges Tess to work for her false yet rich relations; the village further disdains the family's failure to rise above their station; Angel is impressed, and Mr Crick is curious. The widespread knowledge of a local legend could be the result of generations of gossip repeated and altered after every repetition. According to Spacks, communal histories partake of the mythic and "the fluid permanence of oral tradition may possess" the power to "remak[e]…history in talk" (1985, p. 231). Mr Crick, the dairyman, repeats to Tess a story he has heard as a child about the Durbeyfields that is quite similar to what the clergyman has told John Durbeyfield of his family history. Immediately after meeting Tess, the dairyman recollects that an "aged woman of ninety" has informed him that the Durbeyfields originate from an "'old ancient race'" but the "'new generations didn't know it'" (1993, p. 94). Mr Crick's story can be considered part of the local legend since it is an unreliable account of a now non-existent ancient family, the d'Urbervilles, that is repeated to others, generation (the old lady, Mr Clare senior) after generation (Mr Crick as a lad, Angel Clare). "Old Mr Clare", a notably "sincere" (1993, p. 138) and righteous clergyman, also relates to his son the story of the ancient d'Urbervilles. His father narrates his encounter with a "young upstart squire named d'Urberville" living "in the neighbourhood of Trantridge" but that "the original d'Urbervilles decayed and disappeared sixty or eighty years ago" and that a new family "has taken the name" (1993, p. 145-146).

It is important to point out that there is no concrete evidence that Tess is descended from the ancient family, and all accounts of the story are based on uncertain speculation. Nevertheless, this belief or fascination in a dubious story about a "curiously worn out" family is shared by several individuals in the local area surrounding the ancestral home of the d'Urbervilles (Marlott, Trantridge Farm, Wellbridge), and since Tess does not stray too far from where she first hears the legend, it remains a familiar story to those around her. The essence of the legend that affects Tess in particular is that the ancient and lofty title "decayed" into a poorer family name, and it may be the Durbeyfields. The unreliability of the information narrated by the clergyman does not prevent the Durbeyfields from grasping at the relation to such a lofty title and wealth, and spreading rumours about non-existent upcoming nuptials.

Rumours and hearsay of "a transcendent conquest"

The second type of information begins to circulate in the novel as soon Joan and John Durbeyfield decide to publicly plan their way back to nobility and affluence by sending Tess to their rich 'relatives.' At this point, it is Tess's

parents who spread false information about their daughter, and damage her reputation by associating it with Alec d'Urbervilles, a known seducer from Trantridge. Tess, well-aware of her mother's propensity for gossip, warns her mother to "say nothing" of the "silly" idea of marriage "about parish" when Tess consents to work for the d'Urbervilles in Trantridge. However, "Mrs Durbeyfield did not promise. She was not quite sure that she did not feel proud enough, after the visitor's remarks, to say a good deal" (1993, p. 39). Joan Durbeyfield's excited talk about her daughter's "fine prospects" (1993, p. 21) to her acquaintances sets the foundation for the prejudice, speculation and then rumours about Tess and her gentleman.

Joan Durbeyfield has been talking "a good deal" (1993, p. 39) ever since Tess left to work for the d'Urbervilles months ago. What has been gossiped about in Tess's absence is not mentioned in the novel, but it is not difficult to fathom how Joan exaggeratingly constructs her own ideal future for Tess; how John repeatedly talks about the day his life changed when he first hears about the d'Urberville legend; and how the gossipmongers of Marlott speculate about Tess's fate, especially after hearing of Alec's scandalous reputation. When Tess finally returns to her native village and recounts to her mother what has happened to her, Mrs Durbeyfield, who is well acquainted with the "talk" (1993, p. 72) from Tantridge about Tess and Alec, is shocked to find that Tess has not managed to marry him. Joan Durbeyfield truly believed her own speculations about her daughter's future before anything actually occurred between Alec and Tess, and the alarming disappointment she feels is a result of her preconceived opinion colliding with the truth of Tess's story.

Her mother's disappointment in Tess's supposed failure is superseded with the society's reaction of her return. Hardy narrates that "the event of Tess Durbeyfield's return from the manor of her bogus kinsfolk was rumoured abroad, if rumour be not too large a word for a space of a square mile" (1993, p. 73). When something is rumoured to be true, it means that there are no facts established to verify the truth, merely hearsay. And in a small community, rumour is in fact "too large a word" for something so easily determined as Tess's return. In order to establish the span a rumour can reach, a line must be drawn from the first person who gossips about a certain piece of dubious information to the last person who hears and is interested in this information. All these people included along the line drawn, form the community concerned, either negatively or positively, in Tess's welfare. According to Hardy, this community is only "a space of a square mile," and rumour is definitely "too large" a word for the news of Tess's return: the news has not been repeated, communicated, or fabricated enough to gain the momentum of a rumour (1993, p. 73). The fact that the curious young women of Marlott decide to visit Tess "in their best starched and ironed" shows that they are

prepared to meet Tess based on the rumour of her "transcendent conquest" of a rich gentleman (1993, p. 73). This "transcendent conquest" is what they expect to hear: it is what her mother has been talking about for months, and it is this prejudice about Tess that gains her the respect of her fellow village women symbolized by their formal and clean attire worn in a visit to a woman they once considered an equal. That an unfamiliar "gentleman" with a "reputation as a reckless gallant and heart-breaker" is associated with Tess "len[ds]" her "a far higher fascination than it would have exercised if unhazardous" (1993, p. 73). The element of danger and risk is fascinating to those who have led safe and conventional lives within the protection of the social and moral conventions; a protection Tess soon loses after her return to Marlott. Her intriguing relationship with Alec only "lends" her a brief moment of interest among the people of Marlott because the danger they suspect her to have been in turns out to be true, and the gossip transforms from mere amusement and curiosity to malicious rumours.

The gossip about Tess and Alec is at first harmless and a source of entertainment, but soon turns serious and spiteful when Tess's predicament becomes generally known. "Malicious gossip," according to James C. Scott, "is by no means a respecter of persons," but it "is a respecter of the larger normative order within which it operates" (2007, p. 282). Tess's illicit relations with Alec and her consequent pregnancy must be talked about to show the result of disregarding proper conduct, and what has to be done to prevent the corruption of other young women in the village. Her 'fallen' reputation can no longer be debated when the evidence of her pregnancy becomes known. A fallen woman, as Tess clearly is in the eyes of the parish, must be shunned, and her treatment by the village acts like the malicious sexual gossip found by historians in Early modern communities, where the women of a parish, are responsible of "policing the boundaries of acceptable behaviour, for gossip might generate a collective pressure forcing offenders to move out or conform" (Capp, 2003, p. 59).

Tess begins to hear whispers about her condition on a Sunday morning a few weeks after her return to Marlott. She tries "to be as much out of observation as possible" in church and takes a "back seat" (1993, p. 74). However, the people in the church "whispered to each other. She knew what their whispers were about, grew sick at heart, and felt that she could come to church no more" (1993, p. 75). It is interesting to notice that the whispers start in church where the people can take a moral and religious high ground while looking down upon the 'fallen' woman. The ostracism of Tess is not due to a personal aversion to her as a person: it is shown as part of the community's mechanism of social and financial self-regulation. During the Victorian period, there were constant changes and amendments to the laws governing illegitimacy in Britain, and the financial responsibility for raising a bastard

alternated between the putative father, the Parish the child was born into, and the responsibility of the single mother[6]. Which Poor Law Hardy thought of using in the context of his novel is unclear, but in either case an illegitimate child in a parish is a liability whether it strains the finances of the parish or merely disrupts the relative serenity of the village with scandal. Once the people of Marlott witness the evidence of her illicit relations and realize the consequences of Tess's situation on the community, her banishment from the village becomes absolutely necessary.

The depiction of the women of Marlott as the protectors of the village's reputation and economic status is doubly reinforced in the end of the novel when John Durbeyfield dies. The women's whispers and gossip are replaced by direct insults and confrontation as the Durbeyfields begin to be "looked upon with disfavour" since they are "cottagers who were not directly employed on the land" and so "had to seek" somewhere else to live (1993, p. 309). Tess's unfavourable past only increases the village's wish to be rid of the "household" when the Durbeyfield's "lease ended" in order to keep the village "pure" "in the interests of morality" (1993, p. 310). "Some people of scrupulous character and great influence" observe Tess visiting her child's grave and rebuke her mother for "'harbouring'" her scandalous daughter (1993, p. 310). These individuals of "scrupulous character and great influence" are most likely women, like the women of early modern England discussed by Laura Gowing (1996), who have a "particular standing in neighbourhood social relations" because of their ability to gossip, slander, and condemn others as "brokers of oral reputation (1996, p. 123). The women of Marlott confront Joan about Tess's residence in the village, and since her husband is dead, Joan is now susceptible to be browbeaten without any fear of the consequences. So as Harrison (1990) states of working class families in the late Victorian period, the Durbeyfield's economic downfall after the death of John Durbeyfield destroys what is left of their respectable "status," and they are successfully ostracised by those concerned with the village reputation (1990, p.131). The Durbeyfields' standing in community, previously disdained because of John Durbeyfield's drunk boasting of higher

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6 "Following the 1834 Poor Law Amendment Act, the 1845 Bastardy Act amended a degree of the harshness of the 1834 Poor Law towards "single" mothers and their illegitimate children. In a further attempt to address the continued financial drain unwed mothers were to a parish, the Act stated that fathers had to legally support offspring until aged thirteen (this was later changed to sixteen). Following the terms of the Poor Law Amendment Act, when mothers were unable to prove the identity of the father, they were obliged to support the child, and if they were unable to do so they could send the child to the workhouse. The 1872 Bastardy Laws Amendment Act altered this by providing that a "single" woman might apply for a maintenance order from the father in respect of her illegitimate child before it was born" (Hansen, 2006: 20).

connections, is now thoroughly scorned by the community due to Tess's fallen status and the family's abject poverty.

Never "nearly forgotten": Tess's fallen reputation and tragedy

To return to the third source of information about Tess, it must be noted that all who observe Tess with her illegitimate child are authoritative sources because of their ability to repeat her history and reputation to others not present. According to Jörg Bergmann's sociological study of gossip, "gossip producers who have a firsthand knowledge about the event that they reconstruct seem to have a systematic advantage" as they are able to support the "accuracy" of their gossip with their own "observations" (1993, p. 102). In their break from occupational and social obligations, her fellow workers' resentfully attempt to destroy Tess's appeal by talking about her justly-deserved misfortunes as a consequence that befalls women too beautiful for their own good. Alpha Love-Bhabuta portrays "the field-women" as "the local commentators and distributers of justice who protect the sanctity of the community and its inhabitants from Tess's shameful past (2010, p. 21). Furthermore, these witnesses of Tess feeding her illegitimate child are not satisfied by their knowledge of Tess's history. They are curious about the vague details of the story surrounding her affair with the rich gentleman, and so begin to repeat gossip that insinuates she was not a willing partner with Alec and was overheard "sobbing" "one night last year in The Chase" (1993, pp. 79-80). The consistent talk and speculation about her past leads to Tess's seclusion, while she hopes that the people of Marlott will move on to another scandal more interesting than her own:

her trouble, never generally known, was nearly forgotten in Marlott. But it became evident to her that she could never be really comfortable again in a place which had seen the collapse of her family's attempt to 'claim kin' – and, through her, even closer union – with the rich d'Urbervilles (1993, p. 87).

The most important word in this passage is "nearly", she thinks her past is nearly forgotten, but it never really is. The community's memory of the past is unmistakable in the end of the novel when the village treats Joan and her family abominably as soon as her 'fallen' daughter returns home, and they are forced to leave the village because of Tess's never forgotten reputation. Tess must have known that the people of Marlott have not and will not overlook her "trouble", and that is what truly makes her uncomfortable to stay in her village. It is not the information about her personal lot that causes her to move on, but the class-based gossip about attempted (and failed) social mobility, showing that the society around Tess regards overreaching a far worse and unforgivable crime than illegitimate pregnancy. In this case, even if her "trouble", her 'fall', is completely forgotten in Marlott, she could still not bear to remain there because the village resents her family's empty boasts

about a connection to the aristocracy. After her child's death, Tess believes she could annihilate the past by escaping it. The novel's events following her escape from her village prove that it is merely a physical escape. What happens to her remains in her thoughts throughout the novel, burdens her with guilt and shame, and she is unable to hide from her past or the people who are familiar with it. It is the combination of two circuitries of information surrounding her, her fallen reputation and her unsuccessful attempt to realize the d'Urberville legend that form a collective pressure causing her to move out of Marlott, and into a new stage in the plot.

Tess is able to escape her 'fallen' reputation in Dairyman Crick's farm, and enter into a brief respite that, unfortunately, does not include her connection to the d'Urberville legend. This legend is repeated by Mr Crick the moment of their first meeting as a form of friendly gossip to welcome her to the farm. Nevertheless, this disregard of and disinterest in her scandalous past at the dairy does not keep her history far from the mind of the reader. Tess's own thoughts are constantly preoccupied with her past transgressions, and as her relationship with Angel Clare develops, her guilt about her history with Alec grows until she cannot think about anything else. Tess's obsession about her past mistakes and transgressions seems to be symptomatic of many Victorians who are described by Gertrude Himmelfarb as attempting to contain and control an "irregularity" "within conventional" morality (2007, p. 211). She is the only one preoccupied with the past while all the other dairymaids are more focused on the present, and on speculating where Angel's affections lie. And so when Tess's relationship with Angel is suspected by the dairy maids, gossip is a natural occurrence.

Retty Priddle, Izz Huett and Marian all hopelessly admire Mr Clare and Marian notices, after watching "him every day" that he will not marry any of them because "he likes Tess Durbeyfield best" (1993, p. 120). This is the kind of harmless gossip that Spacks (1985) tells us "exists only as a function of intimacy" and "takes place in private, at leisure, in a context of trust, usually among no more than two or three people" and is a "crucial means of self-expression" and "solidarity" (1985, p. 5). The dairymaids' gossip about what has occurred or what they have gathered during the day in the privacy of their bedchamber, and the fact that they are willing to share and trust Tess with their information renders her a part of their group. Tess is shocked to learn that "some lady" of Angel's "own rank" "looked out for him" and they dairymaids are convinced that "he is sure to marry her" even if he does not like the woman (1993, p. 130). The young women in fact "had heard so very little of this" but still "build up wretched dolorous dreams" of the lucky lady's "wedding preparations" (1993, p. 130). This kind of information based on little evidence leads to prejudice and faulty preconceptions about others. Tess, unfortunately, believes this dubious account and convinces herself that her relationship with

Angel is merely "temporary" and knows that "in the eyes of propriety" she is "far less worthy of him than the homelier ones whom he ignored" (1993, p. 130). These dairymaids continue to repeat gossip and spread rumors about Angel and Tess in their leisure time and their bitter resentment at being neglected by the man they care about only increases their envious yet harmless talk about the couple.

There is no scandal about Angel and Tess even after they frequently spend time together alone, since gossip about a person's reputation does not seem to concern anyone at the farm. The scene where Tess is leaning on Angel in the secluded house is interrupted by "Mr Dairyman Crick, Mrs Crick, and two of the milk-maids" (1993, p.173). Tess immediately jumps "to her feet, while her face flushed and her eyes shone in the firelight" and cries defensively that she "wasn't really sitting on his knee though might ha' seemed as if [she] was almost!'" but Mr Crick confesses that he saw nothing and frankly did not care where she was sitting (1993, p. 173). The reason no scandal emerges from Tess's behaviour with Clare, is because the witnesses do not "care" enough about her actions to talk about it or listen to stories about her. In comparison, the insinuating talk that circulates after Tess's work at the d'Urbervilles is fuelled by Alec's reputation as a seducer while it is Angel's strict morality and gentleman-like behaviour that helps keep Tess's reputation safe from wagging tongues. Mr Crick's dairy seems to be a space where one's scandalous past cannot reach and is inhabited by individuals unconcerned with disturbing the tranquillity of dairy life with fresh scandal.

In the honeymoon period at the ancient d'Urberville manor in Wellbridge, Tess's past affects her present more than anywhere else in the novel. This is not because of whispers or malicious gossip, but only because Angel learns her dreaded history. Tess's past is criticized in Marlott, but does not evoke the anger and the singular repulsion to her character that Angel Clare exhibits once he learns her secret. His extreme reaction to her history is unprecedented in the novel, and could be explained by his religious upbringing, the moral exactitude of his character, his affection for Tess, and also his indignation at being deceived by her outward purity. His intense repulsion of her past destroy the honesty and camaraderie of their relationship and their intended happiness. In addition, Tess's alleged descent from the d'Urbervilles adds to Angel's outrage because of his renewed yet "putative" contempt for old families (Garson, 1991, p. 137). Here both her reputation as a 'fallen' woman and the legend of her ancestors gain new damaging strength when they combine to alienate Angel further from Tess. So again these two sources of information combined create new reactions from the characters and lead to further developments in the plot and a new destination for Tess and Angel's relationship. Furthermore, this consequence of Angel's newly gained knowledge contradicts Tess's later statement about the trafficking of rumours.

After Angel and Tess separate, she does not return to Talbothays even if she knows a comfortable room will be available for her "out of sheer compassion" because it :

might bring reproach upon her idolised husband. She could not have borne their pity, and their whispered remarks to one another upon her strange situation; though she would have faced a knowledge of her circumstances by every individual there, so long as her story had remained isolated in the mind of each. It was the interchange of ideas about her that made her sensitiveness wince. Tess could not account for this distinction; she simply knew that she felt it (1993, p. 241).

Tess believes that the exchange of information about her past amongst people who think highly of her would make "her sensitiveness wince" (1993, p. 241). But really the only time the "knowledge of her circumstances" truly makes her personally suffer is when Angel keeps her history to himself and allows it to fester unspoken and firmly entrenched in his mind. According to Ian Gregor, Angel needs to love Tess as "a person with a past as well as a present" not only as an "image kept in being through the sheer intensity of his own immediate feelings" (1974, p. 194). His failure to do so, and as Michael Millgate states, his "rigidity and lack of charity" cause Tess "greater damage" than Alec, for while "Alec sacrifices Tess to his lust," "Angel sacrifices her to his theory of womanly purity" and "social law" (1994, p. 276). However, the "interchange of ideas" (1994, p. 241) about her could indeed be hurtful because it involves speaking and repeating aloud a past she would like to keep hidden. As they share this information with one another, rumours about why he deserts her would grow to unforseen proportions and she will be forced to escape the whispers and hurtful remarks once again. If the "story" remains "isolated in the mind of each" person, Tess will not have to endure hearing her despised history and scandal spoken about, and perhaps even gain a sympathetic ear to her troubles (1993, p.241).

The third space void of circulating damaging information is at the Flintcombe-Ash farm where her previously enjoyable milking days are replaced with rough labour in a "swede-field" with her fellow ex-dairymaid Marian (1993, p. 249). The only place she could find work is evidently one where Farmer Groby, the "Trantridge man" (1993, p. 182), is well aware of her past, but so indifferent to her feelings and needs that he does not bother her about it. His harshness and inconsiderateness cannot be compared to Mr Crick's cordiality and generosity to Tess, yet fortunately for Tess; they both do not care enough about Tess's history or behaviour to spread rumours about her. The reader becomes certain about Groby's discretion when the dairymaids, known for their proclivity to repeat news to one another as a way to bide the monotone and brutal nature of their work, do not repeat any information about Tess's past. In the Flintcombe-Ash farm, Tess discerns a

way to escape both her past with Alec and her fond memories of Angel through raw physical labour, where she becomes too exhausted to think about anything other than her harsh surroundings and poverty. Her mental reprieve from her 'fallen' history is all too short when she is again relentlessly pursued by Alec, forcing her to revisit all the unpleasantness of her former encounters with him. Consequently at Flintcomb Ash, she is, as Millgate describes it, "surrounded not only by cruelty and oppression, human and climatic, but by people who know different parts of her past and thus represent to her a conscious or unconscious threat" (1994, p. 268). Even if her past is not spoken of or constantly relived by Tess, Alec's nearness dwells forebodingly in Tess's mind.

The aforementioned locations were fortunate for the heroine because of the gaps in the circulation of information, but the last reprieve, Branhurst Court, differs as an isolated and uninhabited place suitably chosen for Tess's concealment after her murder of Alec. Angel and Tess are "thrown in a vague intoxicating atmosphere at the consciousness of being together at last, with no living soul between them" (1993, p.339). They are disconnected from responsibility, the past, and reality like "two children" (1993, p. 340) where they do not "think outside of now" for six days in "absolute seclusion, not a sight or sound of a human being disturbing their peacefulness" (1993, p. 342). The previous occasion where Angel and Tess are alone together does not exude the same tranquillity because Tess's unforgotten history was a malignant tumour draining Tess's strength and hope while swelling with Angel's vindictiveness under the cursed roof of the d'Urberville ancestral home. Tess and Angel are only able to fully accept each other in a place where they do not allow moral or social judgements, an empty mansion with no whispers or rumours, and so their relationship regains the dreamlike quality it possesses in the dairy farm. Reality interrupts their "profound slumber" in the form of the "old caretaker", who hurries to "consult with her neighbours on the odd discovery," resorting immediately to the gossip of her society to explain the curiously genteel "vagabonds" (1993, pp. 343-344). After Tess and Angel's ideal respite, the social consequences of gossip return in full-force as the highest form of social authority, the police, arrive to escort Tess to her final judgement.

With all the gossip, rumours, and legends circulating about her and her family, Tess rarely blames society for her misfortunes, but attacks Alec d'Urbervilles or bears the guilt herself. Her guilt can be clarified by Amanda Anderson's explanation of the impact of "fallenness" in Victorian culture. She highlights that by "blaming society for the rhetoric of fallenness", the "fallen woman" exhibits her "utter susceptibility to public opinion" and "internalizes" the "moral" censure to her own actions (1993, p. 58). Since Tess chooses to blame herself and Alec, she still possesses the modicum level of

imperviousness needed for her survival. Her misfortunes, however, are mostly the result of the social repercussions to her "fall", not the "fall" itself:

> Moreover, alone in a desert island would she have been wretched at what had happened to her? Not greatly. If she could have been but just created, to discover herself as a spouseless mother, with no experience of life except as the parent of a nameless child, would the position have caused her to despair? No, she would have taken it calmly, and found pleasure therein. Most of the misery had been generated by her conventional aspect, and not by her innate sensations (1993, p.80).

The narrator suggests that Tess's "despair" is caused by the "conventional aspects" of morality she has internalized from the social codes around her, and she would be less troubled if she only allowed her natural feelings to rule her life and pass judgements on her actions. Marjorie Garson claims that Hardy views Tess as "a natural creature and should not be condemned by society's arbitrary law" (1991, p.145), but should be following the "true standard of value" and "the natural order of things" (Paris, 1969, p. 63). The society in the novel elevates one tragic incident of Tess's life and makes it a representation of Tess's moral character, for as Bergmann states, one of the elements of the gossiper is to interpret the seditious behaviour or event as a "manifestation of a characteristic property that symbolizes the subject of gossip as a whole" (1993, p. 129). Bernard J. Paris highlights Hardy's belief that there is too great an emphasis on sexuality in establishing "moral judgements" and even though Tess is affected by her "sexual experience", "fundamentally…her self is the same" with numerous attributes to make her a moral and respected individual (1969, p. 61).

Conclusion

All the information circulated in the novel: the legend of the d'Urbervilles, the rumours spread before Tess's illicit relations with Alec, the reiteration of her scandal after the pregnancy, are means of control. The people who possess some kind of knowledge, true or conjectured, about Tess affect her in one way or another when they choose to talk about it, making it a form of control over her fate in the text. The same information heard by several people can lead to different reactions, and so it is not the knowledge itself that is damaging, rather it is how a person perceives this knowledge that leads to the consequences that propel the narrative forward. The same rumour can lead to unpredictably severe actions depending on the context, for Angel hears the rumour about Tess's ancestry the first time in humour, but finds it upsetting when he considers it in context with her scandal. Tess grants the society around her the power to control her life by allowing gossip to affect her decisions and by internalizing hurtful social judgements that inhibit her own individual development. The characters in the text base their judgements on

evidence that is never conclusive: even Tess's pregnancy does not inform the observer what actually occurs in the Chase with Alec d'Urbervilles. These judgements of society, according to D. H. Lawrence, lead to Tess's tragedy, because she is never "at war with God, only with Society" and yet she is "cowed by the mere judgement of man upon [her], and all the while by [her] own soul [she] [is] right" (2002, p.30)**.** Despite society's absolute condemnation of Tess's character, the reader is aware that her "soul" is not affected by malice and her actions were as a result of the circumstances that rumours and gossip propelled her towards. This is because the reader is free to make his own judgements and speculations about the uncertain gaps in Tess's story, while considering the consequences if information is spread incorrectly, something the characters in the novel rarely do.

In conclusion, my research has revealed an underpinning narrative of gossip in Hardy's novel, and shown how like in Victorian society, social judgement is almost inescapable when scandal occurs. The power of words and reputation were able to maintain a social order in the novel, where a Durbeyfield never in fact becomes anywhere closer to the elusive higher rank of the d'Urbervilles. For future research, the dialogues and conversations in the novel can be further examined to determine whether the techniques and the relational structure of gossip discussed by Bergmann are applicable in fictional societies. Though gossip has been researched in the fields of sociology, it is necessary for future literary academics and researchers to focus on this largely unexplored territory of characters' relationships and economies of information in novels and plays, for gossip is a publicly disdained world-wide practice that has existed and will continue to exist as long as there is privacy, curiosity, and social relationships.

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Defective Body Symbolism as a Countenance of Despotism in Hama Tuma's Selected Short Stories

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Abstract

Postcolonial Africa faces many governance problems chief among them being dictatorship. Literary artists try to expose the follies of the despots; however, such endeavours subject them to deep conflict with the political leadership who perceive them as malcontent voices of dissidence. Many literary artists consequently employ various literary devices to indirectly project such despotic socio-political settings to stave off the possibility of explosive confrontation with despots. This paper engages with Hama Tuma's twelve short stories that employ symbolism of the human body. The stories have been purposively sampled from the thirty four short stories in his anthologies: *The case of the socialist witchdoctor and other stories* and *The case of the criminal walk and other stories* to examine his dissident mettle. The critical analysis of these texts is hinged on the theory of hermeneutics of suspicion which is grounded in allegorical hermeneutics that significantly coalesces in the skepticism of Karl Marx, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Sigmund Freud. The trio perceived consciousness as false necessitating interpretation to unmask hidden meanings. The paper argues that Tuma disapproves of despotism and succinctly voices his standpoint by effectively deploying defective human body symbolism to express his contempt for despotism in Ethiopia. He exposes the flaws of despotic establishments through physical and physiological handicaps of the characters in authority or their surrogates while favourably presenting those characters that antagonize them.

Keywords: Dissidence, despotism, defective body symbolism.

1. Introduction

The African continent is bedeviled by many problems ranging from leadership incompetence, destructive wars to political chicanery and

corruption (Ogbeide, 2011). The strand of Africa's failure of leadership has largely been engendered by dictatorship which has led to several conflicts between the masses and the ruling class. Literary artists often craft their literary texts based on such experiences to the chagrin of the leadership. The rift between literary artists and the political rulers has been a constant since the childhood of humanity; when Plato conceived his Utopian State, the poets were the first casualties (Edmundson, 1997). In pre-colonial Africa, Ruganda (1992) posits, the traditional bard shared an uneasy co-existence with the rulers. The literary artists' trade of social critique has therefore existed since the orate society and the role of the modern African literary artist is only a perfected continuation of this tradition. The political elite and the literary artists are almost always at loggerheads because, to Ruganda (1992), both are merchants and manipulators of the performed and/ or the written word and both seek to capture the same constituency – the masses. In engaging with the socio-political misgivings of despotism, the despots often subsume the literary artists to have crossed the proverbial red line culminating in far reaching consequences for the artists including imprisonment, torture, exile, or even death. To avoid direct confrontation with the despots, literary artists adopt various literary devices when they set out to attack the despotic structures in the society. For instance, Mthatiwa (2012) demonstrates how through the use of animal characters Mapanje successfully exposes the evil, brutality, and viciousness of dictator Banda and the 'stupidity, fickleness, and untrustworthiness' (p. 5) of his close associates. Moreover, in his analysis of Niyi Osundare's *Waiting laughters*, Taiwo (2010) argues that the proverbs and elements of cumulative repetition from the Yoruba oral poetics are used by the writer to foreground the hypocrisy, insensitivity and injustice that characterize most despotic regimes in Africa.

The prevailing socio-political conditions of a given context therefore influence the linguistic choices that literary artists make in the course of crafting their texts. Ethiopia practices democracy but many local and foreign bodies often condemn it for being undemocratic (Demeke, 2014). She has been accused of illegally or arbitrarily detaining her citizens, lack of independence of the judiciary, unaccountable police force and lack of respect for the freedoms of association, expression, and assembly. However, the Ethiopian government is yet to demonstrate any significant progress in enhancing the citizens' freedom. The Human Rights Watch (2014) report observes that this government has amplified oppression on the people to the extent of possessing the technical capacity to eavesdrop on virtually every single phone call and Short Message Services in Ethiopia. It is against such a backdrop that Tuma writes and those critics who have discussed his use of style concur that he employs political satire quite effectively in a bid to convey his messages (Fantahun, 2006; Ogude, 2000).

Symbolism is another device that can be profitably deployed by an artist to engage with the despots. The term "symbol" is generally understood as anything which signifies something. Abrams (1999) posits that 'the term "symbol" is applied to a word or phrase that signifies an object or event which in turn signifies something, or has a range of reference, beyond itself' (p.311). In the same vein, Ricoeur defines symbols as 'all expressions of double meaning, wherein a primary meaning refers beyond itself to a second meaning which is never given directly' (Ricoeur 1998, p. 33). Consequently, a symbol may suggest a cluster of meanings. Since symbols constitute the revealing substrate of discourse (Ricoeur, 1974, p. 299) and hermeneutics of suspicion is characterized by a distrust of the symbol as a dissimulation of the real (Ricoeur, 1998, p. 6), symbols point to other meanings which though contextually suggested, may not be overtly given. A symbol then can be an object, a person, situation, action or event that has deeper meaning in context. They may contribute to an intrinsic system of meaning by allowing a writer to represent abstract ideas in personal terms consistent with the world they inhabit (Nabukonde, 2012). Symbols can therefore be deployed to concretize the images of the political leadership and contexts to voice dissidence. Using hermeneutics of suspicion, this paper argues that Tuma's symbols carry an apparent face that the despots willingly hawk to the citizens and the real side that the authorities would wish to hide from the public. In demonstrating how Tuma uses various human body defects to project despotic leadership in Ethiopia, this paper holds that these symbols express Tuma's spiteful attitude towards the despots hence the dissident mettle of the author. The material for this paper has been generated from twelve short stories including: 'The Case of the Prison Monger', 'The Case of the Criminal Walk', 'The other Son', 'Sheratonians', 'The Man with another Face', 'The Incurable Hedonist', 'The Coward who hid his Eyes', 'Death of a Renegade', 'The Case of the Presumptuous Novelist', 'The Case of the Socialist Witchdoctor', 'The Case of the Professor of Insanity', and 'The Anderibi Story'.

Defective Human Body Parts as a Visage of Despotism

The physical and physiological attributes of most characters in Tuma's short stories reinforce characterization. His descriptions of characters appear to project despotic leadership and those opposed to their regime in contrasting shades. While the traits and demeanour of those in positions of authority are skewed towards the negative, those characters that are antagonistic towards the leadership are favourably portrayed. Attributes like squinted eyes, height, body weight, beauty or ugliness have been used by the author to draw distinctions between the leadership and the ruled. On one hand, characters who occupy positions of authority; for example, judges, court prosecutors, security officers, heads of State, government ministers, political party officials and

their affiliates have been ascribed to ridiculous behaviour, physique, and looks hence pointing to the author's contemptuous attitude towards the leadership. On the other hand, the prisoners and the accused characters in court generally exhibit balanced physical traits and composure. Essentially, Tuma creatively uses certain disorders of the human body to highlight the deficiencies of the despots in such a way that despotic rule is equated to a malfunctioning human body.

Of Ugly and Handsome Characters

In consonance with Bakhtin's concept of the grotesque which is characterized by the exaggeration of the inappropriate to incredible and monstrous dimensions to critique socio-political vices (Bakhtin, 1984), Tuma deploys traits of ugliness and handsomeness to satirize authoritarian leadership. The rulers and their close associates are generally crafted as physically ugly. To begin with, majority of the characters in positions of authority are described as short and fat or plump thereby suggesting laziness and greed of the despotic leadership. In 'Prison Monger', the narrator cites St. Gebre the Poor's manuscript which he says 'read like a how-to-live-satisfied-with-an-empty-stomach manual' (Tuma, 1993, p. 116) to mock the authoritarian leadership since despite the manuscript having 'warned of how one can get fat and lazy by not exercising the mind' (p. 117), the leaders are brought out as fat insinuating their laziness and intellectual idleness. Similarly, in a veiled mockery of the justice system in the society depicted in Tuma's stories, the custodians of justice are portrayed as lazy, indolent, sycophantic and lacking in independence. The prosecutor in 'Criminal Walk' is described as 'a fat man with a sweaty face and a whining voice' (Tuma, 2006, p. 57). His sweaty face connotes someone who is either struggling or straining to perform his duty, perhaps, due to incompetence hence the anguish or unhappiness conveyed through his whining voice. Indeed, he can hardly remember what the accused is charged with until he refers back to a piece of paper. Besides, his proposed jail term of seventy six years for one accused of shoplifting sounds both unrealistic and unreasoned. Tedele, the chief prosecutor's deputy in 'The other Son' is described as 'a short and a plumpy man with a goatee that made him look ridiculous' (Tuma, 2006, p. 20). Through him, the author projects a dysfunctional justice system. His being short corresponds to his inherent deficiencies, ineptitude, and consequent submission to the authoritarian system. That he is also plump connotes a sense of softness that borders on indolence since he is unable to question why things happen the way they do around him. For example, while commenting on why Ato Mulu had been released even after being accused of killing a host of people including Abeje Biru, he says 'so many cases are pending and his may not have been that significant … the order for his release came from above

and who am I to object?' (p. 21). This means that the court system is clogged with many cases hence inefficiency. Moreover, suggesting that a murder case may have been insignificant projects a person who is "short" in conscience and sense of humanity. Tedele's ineptitude is further emphasized when he admits that his actions are dictated by higher powers and that his brief is limited to taking orders. In ridiculing such short and fat characters, the author exposes the justice system as compromised and ineffective and its existence in a despotic setup a mere façade. It hardly relies on the law but on individual prejudices and whims of the judicial staff to pass its judgment. After being insulted by judge Aytenfistu, the accused in 'Prison Monger' responds in kind referring to the judge as 'a fat pig' and an 'ignorant fool' (Tuma, 1993, p.122) who spends half of his time on the bench sleeping. Indeed, the judge loses his composure – becomes "short" in tempers – and serves the accused with a ten-year sentence hence granting the wish of the prisoner who has previously opposed the court's intention of sentencing him to freedom. The 'fat pig … ignorant fool' slur befits the judge, an agent of despotism, since he lacks diligence and has been outwitted by the prisoner to the extent that he recedes to redeeming his individual sense of pride at the expense of the law.

Tuma also lampoons the elite who have been compromised by the despots. The 'plump' doctor in 'Criminal Walk' who is in charge of the *Weyin Test* - a battery of blood tests and psychological questions to determine one's ethnic identity - is said to have acquired many years of training in the USA and Israel. Despite his many years of training, his conscience allows him to administer an oppressive test meant to domesticate ethnicity and consequent disintegration of his country at the behest of the authoritarian leadership. Likewise, Dr. Alex, a local based elite who openly expresses hatred for his foreign based colleague elites is described in 'Sheratonians' as 'a short flabby university professor … once a radical intellectual' (p. 153). The description implies that the professor has lost his intellectual edge and sense of organization. The phrase 'once a radical intellectual' succinctly suggests a bygone phase. It is indeed reported that Dr. Alex's 'students enjoyed hearing him lecture in a slurred voice' (p.155) insinuating that he had become ineffective after trading his firebrand intellectual mettle for drugs, alcohol, women, and the dictatorial regime. The author bemoans the commitment of the intellectuals who lose their focus on positive values of the society and instead support the oppressive regimes at the expense of their principles. Like Dr. Alex, such scholars lose their independence and become errand boys of the authoritarian rulers as the narrator says of Dr. Alex 'he became the behind the scene political advisor of the new rulers in addition to teaching at the run down university in the city' (Tuma, 2006, p.154). The descriptions of these characters therefore convey a lot more meaning than just height or physical

attributes thereby suggesting the deficiencies of the despotic systems that these characters align themselves to.

The description accorded the leadership and their close associates often functions to mock such characters. In 'Another Face' the Prime Minister is troubled by the sight of Mengistu, a former dictatorial Prime Minister, whenever he looks at himself in the mirror. Although he wants to distance himself from the dictator image, his conscience betrays him by consistently presenting Mengistu's face in the mirror. He summons his close confidant and tribesman, Mulugeta, and asks him whether his face has changed. In a bid to appease his boss, Mulugeta reassures the PM by saying 'we all change, the lean and hungry look we had in the forest is long gone' but the PM quickly reprimands him 'I am not asking you to state the obvious' (Tuma, 2006, p. 140). This interlocution intimates that they have both gained body weight as a result of their privileged position and the Prime Minister's sentiment affirms that one becoming fat while in a position of leadership is not news. Indeed, in most African societies heavy body weight is associated with power and privilege. The leadership is therefore crafted as selfish, greedy, and corrupt especially when Mulugeta says that not long ago they had 'lean and hungry look' yet the narrator now reports almost sympathetically that one morning the Prime Minister 'woke up alone in his bed and dragged his plump body to the sumptuous bathroom of the palace' (p. 139). His movement is painted as clumsy, strained, and cumbersome due to overweight. The author further deploys hyperbole to mock the avarice of the leadership by drawing a parallel between the Prime Minister's voluminous body mass to the unnecessarily exaggerated luxurious palace bathroom to laugh at the wastefulness of the selfish and authoritarian leadership. His body weight obstructs his movement just the same way his otherwise cosy bathroom has the mirror which keeps tormenting him with the image of Mengistu. His cumbersome body weight is oppressive and restrains his movement the same way despotism stifles the freedoms of the masses. The defiant mirror corresponds to Nietzsche's supposition that the first cause of an individual's tribulations is ingrained 'within himself, in guilt, in a piece of the past' (GM III, p. 20). It presents the PM's unconscious which is a reservoir of one's experiences (Harris, 1992) and is aware of the fact that this leader is as good a dictator as his predecessor although he would like to hoodwink the public with a false conscious.

The main character in 'Incurable Hedonist', Shasho Mamo, whose lifestyle only compares to the government officials is described as 'a dwarfish man, plump with a pot belly, protruding eyes, a bulbous nose, a neck with an underdeveloped goitre' (Tuma, 1993, p. 125). He is therefore short and fat in a very ugly way that readily projects a scaring and haunting image of the despotic leaders hence expressing their destructive potential. His fatness equates to one suffering from goitre and so greed makes him pass for a sick

person. Mamo is accused of living a luxurious life akin to that of the leadership. The author proffers a common charge sheet for both Mamo and the authoritarian leadership. The hedonist knows nothing but pleasure hence the attributes of "dwarf" and "fat" are deliberately used by the author to deride a government that is unable to attain the ideals of democracy but is instead blinded by the pursuit of its own economic and emotional satisfaction at the expense of the masses and this is what defines the ugliness of the despotic State. Nietzsche has argued that the drive to self-preservation is but a disguised form of the will to power (WP, 774) and when Mamo is finally charged with the crime of being a pickpocket, he parallels a government that is driven by self preservation through stealing from its unsuspecting victims to sustain its body mass – power. Similarly, the narrator talks of Sewyew in 'The Coward' in Tuma (2006) as a man who was 'short and plump, with a nose like a parrot's beak over a perpetually pursed slit of a mouth' (p. 69). Indeed, Sewyew is "short" in many ways. He lacks independence and strives to appease the authoritarian leadership at all cost. He bootlicks the authorities, domesticates the prejudices of the leadership and even readily marries a wife from the right family always hoping for political favours. Being a close associate and an employee of the State, his behaviour is prototypical of the leadership and how it unfeelingly exploits members of the public. His greed and selfishness making him a beneficiary of corrupt government deals like his scholarship to study in Germany and later a job with the government lends credence to his being described as plump. Most importantly, in spite of him being described as ugly, he still deludes himself that he is handsome. This spells the hypocrisy of the despotic leadership who are conscious of their misrule but still strive to front a false image to the public.

The author plays with the binaries of handsomeness and ugliness to express his disdain for the authoritarian leadership. Since the leadership is aware of its ugliness, it attempts to conceal it and pass for what it is not hence hypocrisy. While the adjectives 'short' and 'fat' are derogatorily deployed to connote deficiencies and limitations of the leadership, 'tallness' and 'slight build' suggest handsomeness and are associated with those championing the cause of justice and good governance. Indeed, some characters are short but aspire to be perceived as tall; for example, the Renegade in 'The Death of the Renegade' 'walked tall and proud though he was short and had a slight physique' (Tuma, 1993, p.150). From this description, the character projects a false conscious and actually in the story he begins as a fighter for the democratic space in his country – hinted in the symbolism of his athletic body – but later embraces the despots hence his wanting height. The prosecutor in 'Presumptuous Novelist' engages the accused who is a literary artist on one of his stories entitled 'The King who Wore Platform Shoes'. The story is about an excessively rich and powerful king who is however unhappy because he is

short. Consequently, he wears platform shoes but this still does not remedy his feelings of inadequacy. He then decides to liquidate all people taller than himself and this leads to a rebellion of the tall. The king's height is symbolic of his limitations as a leader which continues to unsettle him hence his envy for the tall. His excessive riches that do not make him happy suggest the vanity of greed and subsequent unchecked accumulation of material wealth. The platform shoes are pieces of other temporary and ostentatious solutions that the leadership resorts to but which are equally hollow and cannot bring any meaningful satisfaction to the leadership. The author uses the King's obsession with physical dominance to critique the loss of focus and the wrong perception of leadership by those in power. The failures of the king stir feelings of insecurity and consequent futile attempts at repressing his opponents. From a Marxian standpoint, the rebellion of the tall symbolizes the joining of hands by the masses to revolt against the selfish and oppressive leadership.

Both the King who wore platform shoes and the Renegade above aspire for tallness. The author seems to associate tallness with the standard values and norms of democracy. Characters who are opposed to despotism in Tuma's short stories are generally cast in the positive light; for instance, Gudu in 'Prison Monger' improves his life by consistently outwitting the authoritarian system and is described as 'a healthy, athletic figure indeed' (Tuma, 1993, p. 67). Often such characters are crafted in the mould of handsomeness. Another example, Yibabe Yitbarek, the accused in 'The Case of the Socialist Witchdoctor' is described as a tall and thin middle aged man with a fuzzy Afro and his 'handcuffed wrists … did not seem to have done any hard labour at all, other than holding a pen or perhaps the flute.' Besides, he had a round, cherubic face and 'it was obvious that this lucky devil needed no love potions to ensnare the ladies' (p. 36). The author portrays Yibabe as an attractive handsome man. He is thin, tall, and has a round face which is antithetical of the despotic leadership brought out as short, fat, and with a face dotted with bulbous features. Yibabe's hands proffer an intellectual who is most probably a literary artist – either a writer or a musician who vaguely identifies with the African continent as suggested by his hair do. In the story, he antagonizes the dictatorial government pointing out failures of the leadership. He is accused of having made people to believe that he is a witchdoctor who, like Nietzsche's ascetic priest 'who knows hidden things' (GM III, 20), has solutions to the problems of the desperate masses but he insists that the people thronged his "shop" because 'I gave them sober advice and counseled them to live better. If they flocked to me … you should question the situation which made them go to such an outlet' (Tuma, 1993, p. 47). The people's desperation to the extent of seeking the intervention of a witchdoctor is, according to the accused, occasioned by the hopeless atmosphere created

by authoritarian leadership. His argument is therefore a direct indictment of dictatorial leadership in his society. Even when the characters who oppose despotism are diminutive in size, the author avoids the use of the adjective short to describe them. In 'The Professor of Insanity', the accused is reported to have made thousands of the masses to act insane rendering the situation absolutely difficult for the authorities to contain. The narrator describes the professor of insanity as 'a small, round shouldered man … a face a little bit angular yet square enough to suggest honesty, small mouth, full lips' (Tuma, 1993, p. 85). In 'Prison Monger', the defence attorney to the accused is described as 'a small man with a haunted look on his face' (Tuma, 1993, p. 59). The adjective 'small' appears to have been deliberately used instead of 'short' not in the sense of inadequacy or deficiency but to draw a parallel between the might of the authoritarian leadership and the effect of the efforts by the common citizens to access justice in society. The fact that the author projects those opposed to authoritarianism positively (handsome) while the leadership itself is negatively described (ugly) clearly exposes the idiosyncratic leaning of the author – he disapproves of dictatorship and indirectly says so in the very unkind but sometimes flattering images used to describe the authoritarian leaders and their sympathizers.

The Shewrara Image as a Projection of Despotic Indifference

Majority of Tuma's characters who occupy positions of authority are brought out as physically or physiologically challenged and these challenges speak to the failures of the leadership. The main character in 'The Coward who Hid his Eyes', Sewyew, is squint eyed; a condition that is termed a *shewrara* in his vernacular. Like the despotic leadership in the story, he hails from the privileged class and ethnicity and he considered himself superior in 'looks, class, ethnic origin and intelligence' (Tuma, 2006, p. 70). Much as he considers himself handsome and irresistible, the narrator suggests otherwise by contemptuously describing him as 'short and plump, with a nose like a parrot's beak over a perpetually pursed slit of a mouth' (p.69). The meaning of the word 'handsome' is relative; nevertheless, Sewyew's description hardly fits within the frame of someone who is handsome. He believes he belongs to nobility yet his actions are largely speckled with ignobility particularly what he does in his private spaces. The narrator says in Tuma (2006) that Sewyew patronized the bars and brothels of the City, went alone to the dark, small kiosks owned by extremely poor women 'almost all smelling of butter and sweat, who charged a pittance for a night of sex' (p.70). While Sewyew publicly fronts an image of nobility, his private sexual escapades paint him as immoral, exploitative, and disrespectful towards both himself and the helpless women folk. He actually reveals that he hated himself for stooping too low especially in his sexual liaisons but it made him happy that he was avenging

himself against the powerless prostitutes. His craving for vengeance against the prostitutes is also illusory since he does not say exactly why he hates the prostitutes whom he gleefully patronizes. It is therefore a cover up intended to sanitize his unbridled sexual immorality. Since he does not hide his alignment to nobility, his character brings to the fore a leadership that is hypocritical and careless about the plight of the underprivileged masses and would unconscientiously trample on the rights of the masses. It is often difficult to tell where a squint eyed person is looking at any one time and so they are able to steal glances at someone unnoticed. Hence, they can pretend not to have seen anything at all while they have actually taken in so much. Sewyew's eye sight is thus used to symbolize his hypocrisy – he both ignores the social ills around him and denies whoever he really is. The narrator notes that Sewyew was simply indifferent to the plight of the suffering poor in the society. His squint eyes are therefore symbolic of his indifference which prevents him (the ruling class) from noticing the plight of the suffering masses. The narrator laments about Sewyew's attitude reporting that he 'never considered himself one of the masses or a kin to the serfs … his heart did not beat for the downtrodden and he shed no tears for the impoverished (Tuma, 2006, p.73). It is ironical that he did not want to be associated with the suffering masses yet he visited the women (prostitutes) from this class in the dark for cheap sexual satisfaction. Sewyew's personality is symbolic of a conceited and hypocritical despotic leadership recklessly determined to exploit its citizens whom it has neither respect nor feelings for.

Through Sewyew, the author invites the despots back to reality so that they are able to appreciate their failures. For instance, one of the prostitutes paid Sewyew back in kind by asking him whether he was a *shewrara* and, in utter surprise, he shouted at her 'what do you mean cross eyed?' (Tuma, 2006, p.70) This question jerks him back to reality and rallies him to 'see straight' and stop his pretence. After the pricking question, he hurriedly jumped off the bed and rushed to the small cracked mirror on the cracked mud wall. Both the cracked mirror and wall are symbolic of the biting poverty in this house which had not occurred to Sewyew until the moment he is asked the disturbing question. Moreover, the cracks on the mirror and the wall are also symbolic the exposure of Sewyew's conscious cover up. Just like the despotic leadership, he had been living a lie deceiving himself that he is perfect. The narrator reports that soon after the reality lay bare right in front of him, 'he could tell the woman had spoken the truth. His eyes were a little odd; he had to admit they were cross. He decided there and then to wear dark sun-glasses and never to take it off' (Tuma, 2006, p 71). His decision to permanently wear sun-glasses further reinforces his attempt to tuck away the reality. Hiding behind dark sun-glasses shows the inner fears and anxieties of the regime. The leadership is tough on the surface but weak deep within. Subsequently, it

adopts an array of strategies to cover up its soft underbelly for fear of being unmasked for whoever they really are and consequently dethroned.

Sewyew's spirited efforts at living a lie exposes him to severe ridicule particularly in Germany where he bought more fashionable dark eye-glasses which of course he never removed from his eyes lest he revealed his real self. His first girlfriend, Ursula, had burst out laughing when he undressed and still kept his glasses on. Consumed by hatred and unconscious rejection for self, he became cruel and beastly with Ursula. Sewyew comes out as masochistic especially because he decides to bed Ursula not just to make love to her but make her life a taste of endless pain. Sewyew even named his genital organ *Jegnaw* 'the patriot' and with the sadistic passion of a despot proceeded on a sexual romp of its own kind which, according to him, was aimed at redeeming the Ethiopian honour. The narrator says 'that he used his penis like his forefathers had wielded their spears against the invading troops of Benito Mussolini' (Tuma, 2006, p. 69). His objective was to hurt as much as possible. True to his mission, while in Germany, he used and abused Ursula before sending her away, then Helga, Getrude, Anna and so on until he left the country. His feeling of nobility after such senseless sexual adventures connotes an attempt at compensating for his feeling of insecurity and inadequacies. Ideally, it is all vanity to purport to achieve pleasure by harming or abusing others sexually. His talk of patriotism is only a smoke screen for his selfish and inconsiderate character. Sewyew's sexual exploits are symbolic of the blind extravagance of the despotic political class who, driven by greed and selfishness, proceed on plundering the country without regard for the citizenry.

The author crafts Sewyew in the mold of the opportunistic, cowardly and spineless political elite who consciously renege on their tenets so long as they gain materially. Sewyew's privately scoffed at the radical citizens and dismissed Marxism as gibberish. Indeed, 'what others would call cowardice, he named caution, his opportunism was presented as tact and his tendency to be servile as politeness and good upbringing' (pp.73-74). Sewyew therefore rationalizes all his actions suggesting that he is conscious of his drives and fears which he deliberately keeps away from the public arena even as he presents a false script about himself. He is therefore a double faced opportunist that is prototypical of the despots who project different faces depending on the circumstances. For example, Sewyew himself is appointed to certain positions in government when the authorities need his services but he is equally a victim of torture when the circumstances demand it.

The despotic leadership has a high affinity for Western ideals often at the expense of their own African traditions. Sewyew is an example of those people that are alienated and full of ethnic pride. He spoke English and German as foreign languages but spoke none of the local languages save for

his mother tongue. The speaking of the two foreign languages gave him 'class' which automatically put him above the masses while his mother tongue, he assumed, would reinforce his primitive racial pride setting him above the average ethnicities in his country. The character of Sewyew is therefore symbolic of the leadership that elevates the foreign cultures at the expense of the local traditions. They however deny the fact that alienation has white washed their own being rendering them hypocritical. In addition, the sense of ambiguity evident in the Ethiopian autocratic government is insinuated here; in spite of lacking a colonial history, influential people in government circles seem to be drawn to the Western culture as is witnessed in Sewyew's liking for foreign languages at the expense of the local tongues.

The Wendagered Space and the ambivalence of Ethiopian Despotism

Human beings are ordinarily born either male or female unless there is a birth defect. In '*Anderibi*' the main character who doubles as the narrator is born dotting both male and female sexual organs and accordingly referred to as a *wendagered* – a hermaphrodite which basically occupies the in-between space half-way from both the male and the female genders thereby 'constituting a wild anatomical fantasy' (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 345). Encrypting the *wendagered* space, at its nascent stage, is quite a teasing affair. It is difficult to conclude whether there is more of the male than the female (a He-woman) or the reverse (a She-man) or still if it is an alloy of the antimonies of male and female sexes in equal ratio (a male-female). The narrator says that the mother always reminded 'him' that as a *wendagered* 'he' was peculiar, 'a male-female, a He-woman, a She-man. She warned me never to piss, relieve myself or be nude in the presence of other children' (Tuma, 2006, p. 44)

Although the narrator is neither expressly male nor female, he carries, or is made to carry himself as a boy during his childhood thus illustrating the preference for sons in the society represented in the story. In another attempt to curve out the *wendagered* space, the mother decides to give the child a gender neutral name *Gero* 'which was neither a boy's name nor that of a girl's, and thereby safe by being something you cannot pin down to one category' (p.45). By naming the child *Gero,* the mother consciously conceals the sexual orientation of the child. Besides, the name *Gero* and its neutrality is a conscious move to rebrand *wendagered* for the purposes of achieving acceptability or belonging hence conformity which is a requisite in a dictatorial system. This therefore highlights the society's preference for conformism. The question of identity is further reified as slippery and fluid. It is something that the child needs to keep to himself and unknown to others yet this is who he or she is hence hypocrisy. There is in this case a confused sense of identity which typifies the Ethiopian despotic regime. Through a children's play song, the *wendagered* is invited to identify itself in Tuma (2006)

'Wendagered who are you really/ Do you stand or sit to pee, who are you/ Can we see?' (pp. 44 – 45). Ogude (2000) argues that in Ethiopia, 'Mengistu's legitimacy seems to have lain in its association with the Russian Communist State' (p. 88). Socio-politically therefore, the *wendagered* signifies the despotic government's ambiguity especially in its adoption of a revolutionary ideology that leans on Russian socialism. The regime ends up with a laughable mongrel approach to leadership that is stuck somewhere between these foreign ideologies and home grown dictatorship. The song above projects a citizenry that, in its curiosity, may be perceived as both unfeeling and sadistic. However, the author in this case presents a society that is faced with an amorphous kind of leadership and in their attempt to understand the rulers, they have to invade even their most private spaces and will not relent until they clearly fathom it for themselves. The attempt of the despots to pass for democrats is therefore a flop since the author mockingly implies that the result of their effort, captured in the image of a *wendagered,* remains vague. Due to humiliation and a barrage of epithets hurled at him, *Gero's* mother took 'him' out of school when 'he' began 'his' sixth grade telling 'him' that she did not want 'him' to waste away or kill 'himself' because others made 'him' suffer. Though the mother's move can be construed to have been informed by love and care for her child, it also suggests the removal of the dictatorial regime due to the pressure from a persistent public as is reflected in the mother's decision to take the child out of school in a bid to evade the prying society.

Through the image of the *wendagered*, the author further exposes a society that mistreats the powerless. *Gero* is persistently mocked and abused by his age mates. Tired of derision and burning with the desire to conform, *Gero* joins the bandwagon of the cruel, sadistic and malevolent gang led by Mesfin who personifies the authorities. *Gero* only achieves this by lighting a torn piece of cloth and setting a mouse's tail on fire before setting it free to the amazement of the gang. Henceforth, he gained the respect of the gang and he became just plain *Gero* dropping the tag of *wendagered* among the age mates. The fate of the mouse in *Gero's* hands and his subsequent invitation to the hall of fame by his sadistic peers is symbolic of the common citizens' plight in the hands of the cruel rulers in this society who torture and maim citizens to acquire and sustain recognition and power. The author therefore satirizes the level of callousness and exploitation of the masses by the despotic leadership in society.

The despots are roundly derided through the experiences of *Gero*, the prostitute. The leadership is brought out as dependent on the citizenry although they abuse their relationship with the masses through their untamed greed culminating in the exploitation of the common citizens. It is ironical and indeed sarcastic that they prized the *wendagered* in the dark and in private but shunned her in public. She loudly laughs at the hypocrisy of the men who

approached her with awe and readily paid much money for just few minutes of pleasure with her yet 'on the street, none of them gave me any sign of knowing me at all, passing by with hurried walks, eyes cast in any direction but towards me' (Tuma, 2006, p.49). Among the men accused of hypocrisy here is Mesfin, the ex-bully of the street who had now become a *kebele* chairman, among a host of other *kebele* chairmen. They are men who wielded power in the society and hence they personify the ruling class with all its instruments of power. Since the powerful clothe their pursuit of self-interest in the garb of morality and justice (Leiter, 2001), they endeavour to provide a false front to the public. As a way of showing his unquestionable authority in his society, Mesfin engineered the arrest and temporary detention of *Gero* and warned her that prostitution was a vice that the leadership was determined to wipe out because it was a sign of bourgeois decadence. The outward moral firmness and warning to *Gero* and even her temporary detention are only a perfectly coated scheme to subdue *Gero* into submission. Indeed, Mesfin's words in public completely contrast his actions under the cover of darkness and the narrator reports that Mesfin himself sneaked and slept at her place to her consternation. When Mesfin did not visit her place, the other powerful officials did yet they did not pay for her services. The 'prostitute' symbol is also ambiguous. On one hand, the position of the prostitute is symbolic of vulnerability and it shows how the powerless are exploited and oppressed by the hypocritical ruling class. The rulers understand that their happiness depend on a submissive and powerless citizenry. The ruled, just like *Gero*, at times are conscious of their being exploited but due to their powerlessness decide to remain loyal even when they inwardly detest such actions. On the other hand, the 'prostitute' tag which is symbolic of the exploited ordinary citizens is brought out by the author as possessing certain hidden powers over the despotic leadership. The leaders heavily rely on the masses for their survival as is suggested in their flocking of *Gero's* house in a bid to quench their sexual thirst. The author therefore projects a submissive and exploited populace that has the ability to usurp the powers of the despotic regime albeit in subtle ways.

Conclusion

This paper has critically analyzed how Tuma uses defective human body parts to indirectly register his scorn towards the despots in the Ethiopian society. The paper opines that Tuma's descriptions of his characters' physique, temperaments, behaviour, and looks appear to project despotic leadership and those opposed to their regime in contrasting shades. While the traits and demeanour of those in positions of authority are skewed towards the negative characterized by various challenges like shortness, laughable fatness, squinted eyes and general attributes of ugliness, those characters that are antagonistic towards the leadership are favourably portrayed coming out as handsome, tall,

and possessing athletic body structures. This paper has argued that through certain symbolic disorders of the human body Tuma indirectly but effectively chides the failures of the despots in society by creatively highlighting the deficiencies of the despots in such a way that despotic rule is equated to a malfunctioning human body.

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Teachers' Knowledge of and Attitude Towards Incorporating Computer Assisted Language Learning in EFL Classrooms

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Abstract

This study's aim was to explore the teachers' knowledge of, and attitudes towards, Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) at Salalah College of Technology (SCT), Oman. A questionnaire was used to collect the data from 40 EFL teachers (16 males & 24 females) in the academic year 2016-2017. They were randomly selected using a stratified sampling technique to investigate first, the influence of gender, as well as the impact that years of teaching experience played on the teachers' knowledge of and attitudes towards CALL, respectively, followed by the correlation between the teachers' knowledge of and attitudes towards CALL, and finally the predictability of CALL knowledge based on the teachers' attitudes, gender and years of teaching experience. A metric known as the 'Mann-Whitney U Test' showed statistically significant differences between male and female teachers in their knowledge of CALL. Moreover, the sample independent t-test results showed no statistically significant interactive effect between the teachers' attitudes towards CALL and their years of teaching experience. A Spearman's rank order correlation coefficient indicated no noticeable significant correlation between the participants' CALL attitudes and CALL knowledge. Finally, a model for predicting the participants' knowledge of CALL from their attitudes, years of teaching experiences and gender was developed. The model as a whole contributed only as much as 6% of the variance in the knowledge of CALL. However, the findings revealed that gender significantly contributed to the prediction of the knowledge of CALL. Thus, the model suggested other possible variables to check their predictability of the teachers' knowledge of CALL.

Keywords: Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL); English as a foreign language (EFL); knowledge; attitude; EFL teacher gender, teaching experience.

1. Theoretical and Conceptual Background

Language teaching is a dynamic and active process in the educational field. Therefore, teachers are required to find effective teaching techniques that are commensurate with the rapid rate of technological developments around the world. Integrating computers technology into the process of teaching a language is a constructive strategy which facilitates language teaching and helps teachers improve their teaching skills. Hence, CALL is highly recommended in educational institutions to teach the knowledge and skills students need. Furthermore, it helps teachers accelerate their students' learning. According to a definition provided by Chapelle and Jamiesen (2008:1), CALL is 'the area of applied linguistics concerned with the use of computers for teaching and learning a second language'. A lot of educational institutions all over the world are trying to reform their educational systems in order to bridge the present technological gap that exists in the curriculum (Buabeng-Andoh, 2012). The reforming process needs to include the successful implementation of technologies like computers in different educational curriculums, to help teachers implement productive methods of teaching (Tomei, 2005).

1.1 Factors Influencing Teacher's Attitudes Towards and Knowledge of CALL

A significant number of factors influencing the teacher's attitudes towards and knowledge of CALL have been identified by researchers. For example, teachers' implementation of CALL might be influenced by attitudes towards it. There may also be organizational factors, and personal factors like age, gender and years of teaching experience (Clausen, 2007; Alshumaimeri, 2008; Ambusaidi, 2010; Mahdi & Al-Dera, 2013). Alshumaimeri (2008) revealed a positive correlation between a teacher's attendance during training for CALL, and a positive attitude towards the use of CALL approaches to learning in Saudi Arabian classrooms. However, two main factors were considered in our study as they are ssential in determining the teachers' attitudes towards and knowledge of CALL.

1.2 Gender

Although some studies revealed that gender differences did not influence teachers' knowledge of CALL, a lot of studies indicated that gender influenced the effective incorporation of CALL in teaching. For instance, many researchers argue that male teachers tend to use computers in language teaching, as they were more competent in computer skills (Mahdi & Al-Dera, 2013; Kay, 2006; Volman & van Eck, 2001). However, the situation was different in a study reported by Breisser (2006). The findings revealed that females' competence of computers improved, while males' knowledge of computers remained unchanged during the period of the study. The study was

in agreement with a previous study conducted by Yukselturk and Bulut (2009). They had argued that the gap between male and female teachers has been reduced over the past years.

However, some recent studies showed that the gender variable did not have any sort of influence on teacher's CALL knowledge (Kay, 2006, Norris, Sullivan, Poirot & Soloway, 2003). They claimed that there was no gender difference regarding computer attitude and ability.

1.3 Teaching experience

A great number of studies have shown that the individual levels of teaching experience influence teachers' attitudes towards incorporating CALL in their classrooms. Many of these studies in the area of CALL have revealed that the amount of teaching experience had a great influence on the attitudes of teachers towards CALL and the effective implementation of CALL (Wong & Li, 2008; Lau & Sim, 2008; Giordano, 2007). Furthermore, Gorder (2008) conducted a study about the correlation between teachers' experience and their attitude towards using computers in their classrooms. The findings indicated that a positive attitude towards using computers in teaching correlated significantly with the teachers' experience and competence in working with computers. Conversely, Baek, Jong & Kim (2008) found that new teachers have a more positive attitude towards implementing CALL into their teaching compared with older teachers. Similarly, Russell, Bebell, O'Dwyer, & O'Connor (2003) argued that experienced teachers have a less positive attitude towards CALL, although they were highly competent in using computers and different programmes in comparison with new teachers. These differences were attributed to two main causes, which were that new teachers lack confidence and they focus on familiarizing themselves with their new school's system and preferred style of classroom management.

On the other hand, some competing studies have revealed that teaching experience did not influence the teachers' integration of computer technology in their classrooms (Granger, Morbey, Lotherington, Owston and Wideman, 2002; Niederhauser & Stoddart, 2001). This collection of findings found no difference between the experienced and new teachers in terms of their attitudes towards the implementation of computers in their teaching.

With regard to the Omani context, most of the studies conducted in the area of technology enhanced learning were about the students' attitudes towards, and their motivation to learn through, the new technology. However, a supplementary focus has also been given to teachers' knowledge of and attitudes towards CALL. Moreover, the few studies about CALL have been focused on teachers in general, regardless of the differences in gender or years of teaching experience. Therefore, my study aimed to find out and describe teachers' knowledge of and attitudes towards CALL and the influence of

gender and teaching experience on it. The study was carried out at SCT, Dhofar Province, Oman. English is the language of instruction in all departments of the college, so students are expected to have a good command and knowledge of English. In the last few years, the college has implemented an ambitious programme to develop the quality of English language teaching among its teachers. The programme concentrates on providing more classes in which students are encouraged to work and study in designated laboratories and participate in exercises through the Moodle software system.

We were highly motivated to conduct this study as we recognized throughout our prior work experiences at the college as lecturers, that understanding the mentioned issue will allow teachers to enhance their language teaching approaches. Moreover, it will help curriculum designers decide appropriate CALL training programmes for the teachers, which will improve their attitudes towards and knowledge of CALL in Omani EFL classrooms.

1.4 *Aims of the Study*

The purpose of this small-scale study was to investigate knowledge of and attitudes towards the integration of CALL in EFL classes held by the Foundation Programme teachers at SCT, Oman. The study shed light on three main points:

1.   The relationship between EFL teachers' knowledge of and attitudes towards incorporating CALL in EFL classrooms.
2.   The impact of the background variables such as gender and years of experience on EFL teachers' knowledge and attitudes towards incorporating CALL in their classes.
3.   The probability of predicting EFL teachers' levels of knowledge of CALL based upon the following variables: their attitudes towards CALL, gender and years of teaching experience.

1.5 *Operationalization of Constructs*

What follows is the operationalization of the constructs which were measured in order to achieve the objectives of this study throughout a set of multi-item questionnaire instruments:

1.   Knowledge of the use of CALL in EFL classrooms: EFL teachers' ability to properly answer 20 closed, multiple choice questions based on their knowledge of the incorporation of CALL in EFL classrooms. A high mean score unquestionably revealed high levels of knowledge of the use of CALL in EFL classrooms, and a low score demonstrated low levels of knowledge.
2.   The attitude EFL teachers have towards the use of CALL: EFL teachers' self-reported responses to 20 statements regarding the use of CALL. For each statement the respondents were required to clarify their level of

agreement on a 5-point Likert scale (5=strongly agree, 4=agree, 3=neutral, 2=disagree, 1=strongly disagree). The higher score indicated a high positive attitude towards CALL and vice versa. However, the negative items were reversed to ensure internal consistency and eliminate the possible impact of directing the respondents to respond in a certain way.

3.   Background Data: Respondents' background data were collected on:

A.   Gender: Respondents were requested to choose a male or female box.

B.   Years of teaching experience: Participants were requested to select from the following categories: 10 years or less, or more than 10 years.

The initial intention was to divide the years of teaching experience into five groups; 5 years or less, 6 to 10 years, 11 to 15 years, 16 to 20 years and more than 20 years. However, it was found that almost half of the participants in the study had more than 10 years of experience and no teachers had less than 5 teaching years. Consequently, it was decided to reduce the possible divisions or categories of possible teaching experience to two: 10 years or less and more than 10 years.

1.6 The Hypotheses

All of the following hypotheses were tested along with their variables as follows:

•   H1: EFL teachers of differing gender will hold significantly different levels of knowledge of CALL.

•   H01: There will be no statistically significant difference between the levels of knowledge of CALL held by EFL teachers of different gender.

•   H2: EFL teachers with 10 years of teaching experience or less will hold significantly different attitudes towards CALL than EFL teachers with more than 10 years of experience.

•   H02: There will be no statistically significant difference between the attitudes towards CALL held by EFL teachers with 10 years of experience or less, and more than 10 years.

•   H3: EFL teachers' knowledge of CALL will correlate significantly with their attitude towards CALL.

•   H03: There will be no statistically significant correlation between the knowledge of and attitudes towards CALL held by EFL teachers.

•   H4: EFL teachers' knowledge of CALL will be predictable based upon their attitude towards CALL, gender and years of teaching experience.

•   H04: EFL teachers' knowledge of CALL will not be statistically predictable based upon their attitude towards CALL, gender and years of teaching experience.

Table 1. Independent and Dependent Variables

Hypothesis	Independent Variables	Dependent Variable	Variables
1	Gender	Knowledge of CALL	
2	Teaching experience	Attitude towards CALL	
3	-	-	Knowledge of CALL Attitude towards CALL
4	1. Attitude towards CALL 2. Teaching experience 3. Gender	Knowledge of CALL	

2. Materials and Methods

A survey questionnaire was conducted to achieve the objectives of my current study. According to Creswell (2009), questionnaires are the most appropriate quantitative instrument when the focus is on describing attitudes or trends of population by studying a sample of that population.

2.1 Participants and Sampling

The population of the study consisted of all the 106 Foundation Programme teachers (42 males and 64 females) at SCT. A system of random stratified sampling was employed to ensure that the gender factor would be represented in the same sample proportion that it existed in the population. A total of 40 teachers (16 males and 24 females) from the Foundation Programme participated in the study. In order to comply with the established stratified random sampling procedures, two lists were generated, one including all male teachers and one including all female teachers. Consecutive numbers were assigned to each of the teachers in each list. Then, 16 male and 24 female teachers were chosen randomly from the two lists of males and females.

2.2 Design of the Research Instrument

The questionnaire included three main sections. The first section was designed to attain demographic information such as the participants' gender and years of teaching experience. The second section was developed on a five-point Likert scale, with 20 attitude measuring statements (3 negatively phrased statements and 17 positively phrased statements). Then, the knowledge questionnaire included 20 multiple choice items to measure the participants' knowledge of CALL. The questions were about the teachers' knowledge of implementing computer software programs in their teaching.

2.3 Validity of the Research Instruments

Content validity was explored to assess the validity of the items in both the attitude and knowledge instruments. First of all, the instrument was compared to existing instruments in the area of CALL. Secondly, the questionnaire procedures and the feedback which were obtained from the

academics and teachers helped to overcome any possible problems related to the instruments.

The following is a brief description of the development of the questionnaire (see Appendix A):

1. Exploratory interviews: Interviews with four EFL teachers who are currently doing their PhDs at the University of Exeter provided a great opportunity to elicit their attitudes towards and knowledge of CALL in their respective contexts.

2. Consultation with academics: Three academic colleagues who are interested in CALL were consulted about the study: (a) an/the IT coordinator at the Foundation Programme at SCT; (b) The head of programmes in the English Language Centre at Salalah College of Technology in Oman; (c) A senior lecturer at Salalah College of Technology. Through email communications, all experts reported saying that both instruments were valid. However, the first and the third experts recommended to remove the qualification variable, as most of the participating teachers are the holders of a Master's Degree. Also, the first expert recommended deleting the items no. 9 and 38, as they were asked about the same issues in their other prepared statements. Furthermore, the second expert from Salalah College of Technology suggested making some changes in the phrasing of the items no 4, 6, 9, 23, 25 and 41 to avoid neutral and extreme items (Appendix B).

3. Literature searches: A great number of books, journals, dissertations and academic websites were investigated for existing CALL test instruments.

4. Question construction: The knowledge and attitude instruments were designed based upon the information gained from the above-mentioned stages.

5. Pilot distribution: A pilot version of the questionnaire was sent by e-mail to a colleague at SCT. Then, the questionnaire was given to four EFL teachers (non-sample) to ensure that all problems in the questionnaire would be handled appropriately.

2.4 Reliability of the Research Instruments

After checking the validity of the instruments, a Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used to confirm the internal consistency of the instruments. It was used to measure the reliability of the instruments accurately, where 0 indicates no reliability and +1 reveals optimal reliability.

2.5 Reliability of the attitude scale

The questionnaire statements of numbers 8, 18 and 20 were recoded as they were negatively phrased (See Appendix A). Then, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the attitude scale value was 0.788, (Table 2 below). It is recommended that a workable Cronbach alpha should be above .7 (Pallant,

2016). Such a level indicated an acceptable internal consistency reliability maintained by this instrument.

Table 2. *Reliability of the Attitude Scale*

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.788	.823	20

2.6 Reliability of the knowledge test.

The reliability of the knowledge test questionnaire was measured. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.678, which was less the recommended critical value, as presented in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Knowledge Questionnaire's First Reliability

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.678	.691	20

However, the item 26 showed a negative correlation with the other items in the questionnaire. Therefore, it was removed from the scale. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient was measured again to be 0.703, indicating a high reliability, as shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4. Knowledge Questionnaire's Final Reliability

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.703	.714	19

2.7 Data Collection Procedure

At the very beginning of the study, ethical approval was sought from the Graduate School of Education (Appendix C). After that, a copy of the letter and a copy of the questionnaire was sent to the administration of the SCT to gain permission from the college. Then, the Director of the Foundation Programme sent an e-mail to all academic staff asking them to facilitate the researcher's mission in carrying out his questionnaire at the college.

Prior to handing out the questionnaire, the researcher himself visited the Foundation Programme in December 2016, met the teachers in their end-of- term meeting and briefly informed them about the purpose of the study. Then, the researcher told the participants about the procedures of the study and the protocols they should employ in answering the questionnaire. Specifically, the participants were informed to respond to the attitude questionnaire first before responding to the knowledge test to avoid the potential influence of the test difficulty on their responses. Moreover, the participants were told that they could withdraw at any time, and all their information would be kept confidential to ensure a positive participation rate. The teachers were requested to read each statement carefully, then tick only one box for each statement that best showed their attitudes toward and knowledge of the

statement. Then, the researcher left the meeting room, requesting one of the teachers to collect the research instruments to avoid any influence on their responses. These procedures encouraged a high rate of responses, which was 100 % of the selected teachers. A total number of 40 teachers participated in completing the questionnaire during their meetings.

2.8 Limitations of the study

This study has a number of limitations. These limitations can be attributed to both the sample and the instrument applied in collecting the data. For instance, the small number of participants in the study may not be representative of the whole population. The results of this study can only be generalized to contexts and participants who share the same or similar features or characteristics of the sample and context of the present study. Thus, it has the negative effect of limiting the value of this research to this sample only. The contribution of the study may be extended to other EFL contexts, such as Saudi Arabia, Yemen, or any other county within the Gulf region, or even anywhere else around the world.

The small number of teachers did not allow me to fully develop the design of the instrument. This study was limited to only two factors that might influence teacher's attitudes towards and knowledge of CALL, which were the gender and the teaching experience. The current and sole available CALL option at SCT, a Moodle-based CALL system, is only supported by Microsoft Office-based applications which may be regarded as a limitation, as other CALL systems include more modern and various software-based applications. Future research in this area could investigate other aspects like the learning environment, the culture and the students, as well as increasingly complex and modernized CALL tools available.

2.9 Statistical Analysis

The statistical package for the social sciences (SPSS) was used to run the statistical analyses of the research data. The data was entered into the SPSS and was coded. Descriptive statistics such as mean, median and standard deviation were run to analyse the collected data. Furthermore, inferential statistics were used to test the research hypotheses at the point ($p=.05$). Reliability of both the attitude and knowledge scales were checked. Then, the normality tests were run to decide whether to use parametric or non-parametric tests (Field, 2013). Four statistical tests were used to test the four hypotheses of the study: an independent sample t-test, a Mann Whitney U test, and, finally, a Spearman's rank order correlations and multiple regression.

3. Results

3.1 Tests of Normality

After checking the reliability of the research instrument and obtaining the total knowledge and the total attitudes scores, the totals for both scales were computed separately and the total knowledge were computed without the deleted item number 26. Then, the normality test was conducted to assess the normality of the data distribution on both instruments. As reported by Field (2013), Shapiro-Wilk was conducted to assess the normality of the distribution of data due to the small study sample size included below 50 participants (n=40).

3.2 Tests of normality of the attitude scale

It can be seen from the histogram (Figure 1) below that there is a negative skewing of the data and a normal distribution has been observed. The degree of negative skewing is -.112 and Kurtosis is -.197, which places them not far from zero.
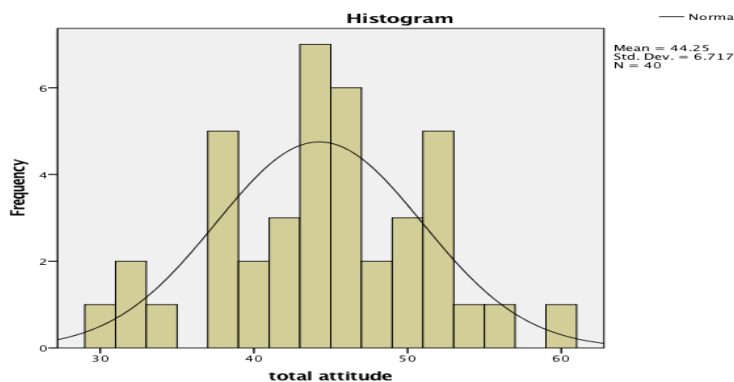
***Figure* 1.** Distribution of the Scores of the Attitude Scale

However, because of the subjectivity of the eyeballing judgment, the Shapiro-Wilk Test was conducted to make sure that the data are distributed normally. The Sig. value for the test was .836, which indicated that the data were distributed normally.

Table 5. Test of Normality of the Attitude Scale

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	Df	Sig.	Statistic	Df	Sig.
Total Attitude	.094	40	.200[*]	.984	40	.836

Nevertheless, the Sig. value for the total attitude scores was 0.836 ($P>0.05$), which demonstrated a normal distribution of the research data on

the instrument. Therefore, the parametric tests were used to test the research attitude null hypotheses.

3.3 Tests of normality of the knowledge scale.

The histogram below (Figure 2) indicates a moderate skewing of the data. This can be confirmed through critically examining the data, which shows that the degree of skewing is .432 and kurtosis is - .817, which places it a far statistical difference from zero.
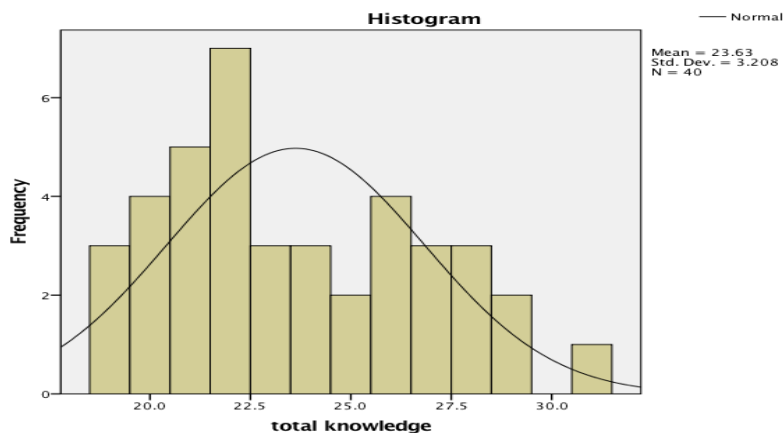
Figure 2. Distribution of the Scores of the Knowledge Scale

The normality of the knowledge scale was also checked through the Shapiro-Wilk test. The Sig. value for the data was 0.049 ($P<0.05$), which showed a non-normal distribution of the data. This might be attributed to the small number of participants in the sample. Thus, the non-parametric test was used to test the research knowledge null hypotheses

Table 6. Test of Normality of the Knowledge Scale

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	Df	Sig.	Statistic	Df	Sig.
Total knowledge	.169	40	.006	.944	40	.049

3.4 Testing the hypotheses

The participants in the study demonstrated general positive attitudes towards CALL (m=44.25, sd=6.717) (Appendix D). Similarly, they revealed a reasonable knowledge level of CALL (m=23.63, sd=3.208). Then, inferential statistics were run to test the four hypotheses of the study. After obtaining the normality of both the knowledge and attitude scales, it was decided to use parametric tests for the attitude scale and non-parametric tests.

These tests were conducted for the reliability/validity of the knowledge scale. An Alpha of .05 was applied to all statistical tests.

3.4.1 H01: There will be no statistically significant difference between the levels of knowledge of CALL held by EFL teachers of different gender. (Rejected)

As the knowledge scale did not reveal a normal distribution of the data, the non-parametric Mann-Whitney *U* Test was conducted to investigate whether there was a statistically significant difference between the level of knowledge of CALL held by teachers of different gender.

Table 7. Mann-Whitney U Test

	Total Knowledge
Mann-Whitney U	252.500
Wilcoxon W	603.500
Z	.346
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.044
Exact Sig. [2*(1-tailed Sig.)]	.045

Table 8. Median of Knowledge Test by Gender

Gender	N	Median
MALE	14	22.00
FEMALE	26	24.00
Total	40	23.00

The statistics from Tables 7 and 8 demonstrated that there were statistically significant differences in the knowledge of CALL of males (*Md*=22, *n*=14) and females (*Md*=24, *n*=26), *U*=252.5, *z*= 2.010, *p*= .045, medium effect size r=.0317, suggesting that the null hypothesis be rejected.

3.4.2 H02: There will be no statistically significant difference between the attitudes towards CALL held by EFL teachers with 10 years of experience or less, and more than 10 years. (Failed to reject)

A two-tailed independent-sample t-test was conducted to compare the teachers' attitudes towards CALL based on their years of teaching experience. Levene's test for equality of variance was .385 > .05, and the equal variances were assumed.

<div align="center">**Table 9.** The Effect of Teaching Experience on the Teachers' Attitudes</div>

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
								95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
TOTAL ATTITUDE	F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error	Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	.771	.385	.286	38	.777	.655	2.295	-3.990	5.301
Equal variances assumed			.272	21.099	.788	.655	2.409	-4.354	5.665

The statistics in table 9 revealed that there were no significant differences in scores between the group of teachers with teaching experience of 10 years or less (M= 44.69, SD=7.43) and the other group with more than 10 years of experience (M=44.04, sd=6.48); t= .286, df=38, p=.777(two-tailed). The magnitude of the difference in the means (mean differences= .655, 95% CI from -3.99 to 5.30). As p > .05, the null hypothesis was accepted.

3.4.3 H03: There will be no statistically significant correlation between the knowledge of and attitudes towards CALL held by EFL teachers. (Failed to reject).

The relationship between the two continuous variables, knowledge of CALL (as measured by the knowledge test) and CALL attitudes (as measured by the CALL attitude questionnaire) were investigated by using a Spearman's rank order correlation coefficient (Table 10). Spearman was applied, as one of the continuous variables (knowledge) was not normally distributed (Pallant, 2016).

<div align="center">**Table 10.** Spearman's Rank Order Correlations</div>

			Total Attitude	Total Knowledge
Spearman's rho	Total Attitude	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.058
		Sig. (2-tailed)		.724
		N		40
	Total Knowledge	Correlation Coefficient	.058	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.724	
		N	40	

Based on Table 10, there was no statistically significant correlation between the teachers' attitude scores and their knowledge test scores, *rho=* .058, *n=* 40, *p= .724* >.05, indicating a failure in rejecting the null hypothesis. Stated simply, this indicated that the correlation was not big enough to conclusively show that it was present in the population as a whole.

3.4.3 H04: EFL teachers' knowledge of CALL will not be statistically predictable based upon their attitude towards CALL, gender and years of experience. (Failed to reject)

Preliminary analyses were conducted to ensure that there was no violation of the assumptions of normality, multi-collinearity, linearity, and homoscedasticity. The correlations among the independent variables were tested and were below 0.7. Hence, as stated by Pallant (2016), all variables were retained in this model (See Appendix E). The tolerance values were almost .99 for all independent variables which were less than 0.10, and their VIF values were approximately 1 which were below the cut-off of 10. Thus, according to Pallant (2016), the multicollinearity assumption was not violated (See Appendix F).
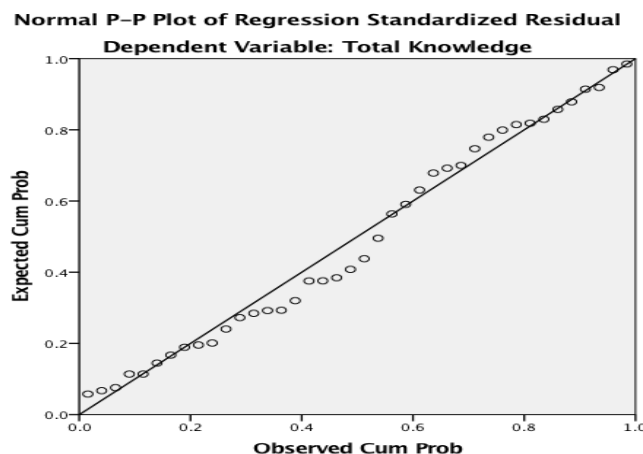

Figure **3.** Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual for Dependent

As observed in figure 3 below, the distribution of the knowledge test scores tended to follow a reasonably straight line from bottom left to top right. Therefore, there were no major deviations from normality (Pallant, 2016).

3.4.5 Variable: Total Knowledge Test

As presented in figure 4, most of the scores were concentrated in the centre (along the zero point), which showed that the standardized residuals, are mostly rectangularly distributed. Therefore, it was found that the assumptions of outliers, normality, linearity, homoscedasticity and independence of residuals were not violated (Pallant, 2016).
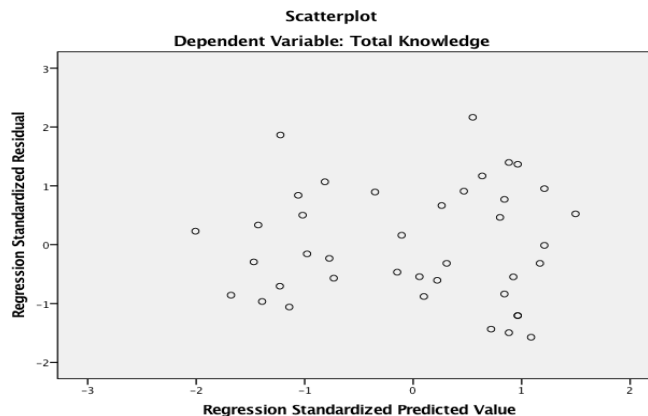
Figure **4.** Scatterplot of the Standardised Residual: Total Knowledge

However, Mahalanobis distances, which were produced by the multiple regression program, were inspected to check the outliers. The matching critical value was 16.27, as the analysis model had three independent variables (Tabachnick and Fidell's, 2013 as cited in Pallant, 2016). The maximum value found in the data file was 7.35, which did not exceed the critical value (See Appendix G). Thus, the case with this value was not deleted from the analysis. Furthermore, to check if there was any major problem in the analysis model, the maximum Cook's Distance was 0.208 (See Appendix G), which was less than 1, suggesting no major problems in the analysis model of this study.

A multiple linear regression was calculated to analyze the predictive value of hypothesis 4. The regression equation was found (F (3,36) = 1.824, p = .160 > .05), with an adjusted R^2 of .06. The adjusted R^2 value of .060 indicated that the model predicted only 6 % of the variance in the dependent variable (Tables 11 & 12). Therefore, the model as a whole did not show a significant fit with the data. Neither of the variables (Teacher's attitudes towards CALL; Beta= .100, p =.526 and teaching experience; Beta= .128, p = .417) made a significant contribution to the prediction of the total knowledge score (Table 13). Therefore, it can be inferred that the independent variables of attitudes towards CALL and teaching experience made no statistically significant unique contribution to this prediction (p > 0.05). However, the gender variable made the strongest and the only statistically significant unique contribution to the prediction of the teachers' knowledge (Beta= 1.037, p=0.044), indicating a unique contribution of 10.5 % to the explanation of the variance in the teacher's knowledge (Table 13).

Table 11. Model Summary of Predictive Values

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.363[a]	.132	.060	3.111

Table 12. *ANOVA*

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	52.964	3	17.655	1.824	.160b
Residual	348.411	36	9.678		
Total	401.375	39	Total		

Table 13. Coefficients for Independent Variable in the Prediction Model

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B		Correlations		
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Zero-order	Partial	Part
(Constant)	16.488	4.131		3.991	.000	8.109	24.866			
Total Attitude	.048	.074	.100	.641	.526	-.103	.199	.121	.106	.099
Gender	2.168	1.037	.326	2.091	.044	065	4.270	.327	.329	.325
Years of experience	.865	1.053	.128	.822	.417	-1.271	3.001	.103	.136	.128

According to the findings, although teachers' knowledge could be predicted based on their gender, teacher's knowledge of CALL could not be predicted based upon the prediction model as a whole. Therefore, the findings indicated failure to reject the null hypothesis.

4. Discussion

The results of the data showed a number of important findings. Firstly, the study revealed reasonably positive attitudes towards and knowledge of CALL among EFL teachers at SCT. This did not come as a surprise, as most educational institutions all over the world tend to encourage their teachers to make use of technology in teaching (Buabeng-Andoh, 2012). A large number of studies indicated that language teachers tend to have generally positive attitudes towards CALL (Yüksel & Kavanoz, 2011; Alshumaimeri, 2008).

Another issue that this study sought is to investigate the gender differences in relation to teacher's knowledge of CALL. The findings of the study revealed a significant difference between male and female teachers. The males did better than females in the test, which was a reasonable finding. This

difference can be attributed to the fact that men are more interested and competent in using computers than females (Mahdi & Al-Dera, 2013; Kay, 2006; Volman & van Eck, 2001). This might be the most interesting finding of my study, so it needs an extensive amount of follow-up work and investigated in more depth.

Clearly, the years of teaching experience were not exhibited as a significant variable when investigating teacher's attitudes towards CALL. This might be considered a quite ambiguous point, as it would be expected that experienced teachers' attitudes would change to be more positive compared with the new teachers (Wong & Li, 2008; Lau & Sim, 2008; Giordano, 2007). It could be related to the limitations of the study such as the small size of the sample or the insufficient test power (Pallant, 2016). Moreover, other factors are expected to influence teacher's attitudes towards CALL, so those factors also need to be investigated in further research.

Furthermore, the Spearman's rank order correlation test revealed no statistically significant correlation between teachers' knowledge of CALL and their attitudes towards it. Nevertheless, this result did not follow the findings of other related studies, which revealed that there was a positive relationship between CALL attitudes and knowledge of it (Ambusaidi, 2010; Alshumaimeri, 2008; Clausen, 2007). A larger sample size could have given a significant result. Therefore, a larger sample size would be necessary to show that it was definitely present in the whole population.

The last point that this study aimed to examine was the possibility of predicting the participant's knowledge of CALL based on their attitudes in this domain, gender and years of teaching experience. The prediction model was statistically able to contribute to the prediction of 6% of the variance in the teacher's knowledge of CALL (See Table 10), However, gender was the variable that most significantly contributed to this prediction as compared to the other variables in the model (See Table 12). This means that the teachers' knowledge can be predicted based on their gender. Accordingly, it can be related to hypothesis 2, which revealed a significant relationship between gender and the knowledge of CALL among teachers. Therefore, including other possible variables in this model would be a good idea for a further prediction of the teachers' knowledge of CALL.

5. Conclusion

To conclude, the main aim of this small-scale study was to identify and investigate teacher's knowledge of and attitudes towards CALL to improve teaching strategies and bridge the gap between the learning process and the technological revolution all over the world. The findings of this study cannot be generalized and its limitations should be taken into consideration for further

studies in the future. However, the results were analysed and discussed, so some tentative conclusions can be drawn.

Most previous studies in the area of CALL were about the integration of CALL in the classroom. Investigating the attitudes and competence of CALL requires more studies, especially the factors that might influence the implementation of CALL, like the factors related to the educational environment and the academic level of the students in working with computers. Therefore, further research and studies are recommended in this particular field in order to explore the main factors that influence the teaching process with new technologies, as well as to circumvent the process of applying CALL in any educational context.

The benefits this research could provide, and the benefits of additional CALL training are, first of all, not only determined by any individual researcher, but rather to the individual stakeholders who are the most directly responsible for providing such training available to any and all faculty at their respective institutions, and second of all, the stakeholders at large, who would be the deans and administrative faculty of colleges and higher institutions around the world. The benefits may apply to any and all faculty or teaching staff that happen to teach at any institution of learning where CALL may be adapted, or expanded upon. Whether or not it is proven that a given group of individuals are more or less favorably inclined to CALL does not necessarily infer that having the opportunity to receive such instruction in the future will carry no advantages. The benefits of CALL may certainly help those who are favorably inclined towards it, or efforts like it, the most, but CALL will be made available to any and all of those whose individual subject departments determine that CALL is necessary, and the decision to allow CALL to exist, or to be used in even more cases, will be made by a large group of people, after sufficient pressure is brought to bear upon them, from various quarters.

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