

ISSN 2069 – 4008 (online: ISSN 2069 – 4016)

Annals of “Ștefan cel Mare” University of Suceava

**PHILOSOPHY, SOCIAL AND HUMAN
DISCIPLINES SERIES**

2018

VOLUME II

**Co-editors:
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“Ștefan cel Mare” University of Suceava Press

**Annals of “Ștefan cel Mare” University of Suceava
Philosophy, Social and Human Disciplines Series**

Bogdan Popoveniuc; Marius Cucu; © Suceava : “Ștefan cel Mare” University Press, 2018

ISSN 2069 – 4008 (online: ISSN 2069 – 4016)

**Analele Universității “Ștefan cel Mare” din Suceava
Seria Filosofie și Discipline Socio-umane**

Bogdan Popoveniuc; Marius Cucu; © Suceava : Editura Universității “Ștefan cel Mare”, 2018

ISSN 2069 – 4008 (online: ISSN 2069 – 4016)

ANNALS
of
Philosophy, Social and Human Disciplines

(Annals of “Ștefan cel Mare” University of Suceava, PHILOSOPHY,
SOCIAL AND HUMAN DISCIPLINES SERIES)

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Ethical Figures

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2018

Volume II

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RESEARCH PAPERS

Two Mathematical Patterns of Vulnerability

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Abstract

Vulnerability: an ethical category. Vulnerability must not be considered as an equivalent for the weakness or for the precariousness, i.e. the state in which the most resourceless people are living – with regard to power, wealth and health – ; the strong are also vulnerable and they are potentially likely to be weakened. We will try to give its chance to an ethical category which, unlike person, personality, dignity, benevolence, non-malevolence, focusses on pleasures and displeasures, no more on the virtues of nursing people. Moreover the category of vulnerability is quantity-sensitive. We will expose two mathematical models that highlight this last point of view.

Keywords: *vulnerability, ethical categories, Bayes, calculations, Benthamian pathology.*

“I will only know at the end what I will have lost or won in that gambling den where I will have spent some sixty years a dice cup in the hand, testeras agitans (rolling the dice).”

*Felices quibus ante annos segura malorum /
Blessed are those whose life flows away safely and gaily
Atque ignara sui per ludum elabitur aetas. /
before age’s miseries, unconscious of their own condition.
Diderot D.¹*

*‘Mille piacer’ non vagliono un tormento’
Petrarch F., Sonnet 195²*

Notwithstanding the opposition of philosophy, ‘tis certain, this circumstance has a considerable influence on the understanding, and secretly changes the authority of the same argument, according to the different times, in which it is propos’d to us.³

David Hume

¹ Denis Diderot, *Éléments de physiologie* (Paris: Oeuvres, R. Laffont, 1994), 1317.

² Quoted by A. Schopenhauer, in *Le Monde comme volonté et comme représentation* (Paris: PUF, 1996), 1338.

³ David Hume, *Treatise of Human Nature*, Book I, Part. III, sect. XIII, ed. Selby-Bigge (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), 143.

At first sight, nothing is more foreign to the affective entities of pleasure, displeasure and pain than mathematical considerations, even though men have tried to compute pleasures and pains since Plato and Epicurus. Indeed, utilitarians were not the first to have that idea but they did not always quite clearly go beyond the simple ambition of computing, except maybe when the economists took over from the philosophers. I would like to see whether vulnerability, as we are approaching it, may be mathematically formalized in ways comparable to those to which the calculations of pleasures and pains, happiness and unhappiness are usually submitted. Vulnerability should be differentiated from weakness or from the frailty that results from it. Rousseau said, quite decisively, that “the strongest is never strong enough to always remain master if he does not transform his force into law and obedience into duty.” We are not going to directly adopt such a political framework as that of *The Social Contract* where this sentence comes from. Neither are we going to focus on the dressing up of force into law. Rather, we will put forward the fact that force *cannot but* be dressed up. Vulnerability is the necessity of change, its ineluctability, in the sense that whoever is assigned it does not entirely control the transformation, which is rather not in favour of the happiness, pleasure or interest of who must be subjected to it, no matter what he does. What is obvious at once is that, though there is no doubt about the fact that the weak is vulnerable (whether as regards wealth, health, power or intellectual capacities and, no doubt, many other areas), the strong may also be vulnerable. Such vulnerability may not be as directly manifest as that of the weak (precariousness), but it only takes on other forms.

From the outset, it is at least plausible that the necessary frailty of any force, whatever its degree, may be formalized in some way or other, provided vulnerability corresponds to the definition according to which the strong potentially faces a perspective of weakness and decline, which he may feel more cruelly than whoever is already weak and who, if the worst comes to the worst, has more often in himself bigger potential resources to redress the situation. The formalisations of vulnerability and those of pain and pleasure appeared approximately at the same time on two sides. *On the one hand*, under the names of *probability*, *chance* or *expectations*, mathematicians started to calculate random phenomena or events in all sorts of situations, most of the time based on the configurations of games, and even of money games. We are going to see why such a “probabilistic” model is very well adapted to a formalisation of vulnerability. Was it by pure chance that the first calculations served to model very concrete

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insurance issues?⁴ *On the other hand*, under the name of *Axioms of mental pathology*,⁵ Bentham developed the premises of a calculation, some refinements of which seem likely to be able to formalise the notion of *vulnerability*, including the idea just discovered that the strong's fear of collapse may run deeper than that of the weak. We will see how the asymmetry between pleasure and pain that the calculation allows to register makes it possible to go quite far in the formalizing of vulnerability, if such formalisation can be of any use, as we think it can.

The hidden face of probabilities could very well be another name for vulnerability

As long as one thinks that probability is an objective description of a situation and that it relates to things directly, it has no hidden face. If I have a one-in-six chance of getting an ace with a balanced dice, there is nothing hidden there, since I know I could have assigned that one-in-six chance to any other number between 2 and 6. The same applies to the division of the stakes, which Pascal deals with, and which establishes the tree of the possible paths to success or failure of each player, once the game has started and the players want to interrupt it and compensate the player who is winning. The calculation seems to be describing things and the calculation of the winning and losing combinations for each player that Fermat made underlines even more that "objective" side than that of Pascal, who assesses a situation in terms of the parts of the stakes the other players owe me or that I must give them. On the contrary, the notion of the hidden face of probability appears when one understands probability not as referring to things themselves but to a fraction of the certainty I have when I believe that such and such event will happen rather than not. If, for example, directly or based on testimonies, I have observed a certain number of times phenomena or events which are similar to A and which are subsequently related to phenomena or events which are similar to B, I estimate the chances that B might happen, given that A has happened, or even though A has not happened yet, or else, as B happens, I wonder what the chance was that A happen without me being a direct witness of it, then there is what could be called a hidden face of such type of probability based on which it is possible however to calculate as easily as on the others, though differently.

⁴ Grand pensionary De Witt won fame among mathematicians thanks to his work on the calculation of life annuity rents.

⁵ *Pathology* had not the sense it has nowadays in English of science of illnesses or troubles; it had the Greek sense of *logic of the passions*.

Bayes, an eighteenth-century mathematician and theologian who wrote *An Essay towards Solving a Problem in the Doctrine of Chances* – which was posthumously published in 1763 by one of his friends, R. Price, who was very famous among theologians, mathematicians and theoreticians of politics and politically active theoreticians – established a theorem, known as Bayes’ theorem, which computes the chance I have of being right (or wrong) as I assess the probability that a subsequence of a given type may happen, in a given situation, when I know that a certain number of subsequences of the same type have occurred. Probability is a rule here in the sense that it does not describe a situation but measures an attitude, a behaviour, the beginning of a decision, which I adopt quite freely – since it does not preclude any option – and it says what chances of success I have, if I take such and such option. The example that Price takes to explain how the rule works, that of my chances of being right when I count on the sun rising again tomorrow, is not quite plausible, since, first, it puts us in a situation in which there is abundant information, all pointing to the same direction, and, second, one remains contemplative. The interest of a rule, however, is to guide us in our actions, in case subsequences are not very numerous and do not seem to point to the same direction. The rule provides the way of measuring risk assessment in given circumstances. That is why it is especially well adapted to medicine, politics, markets and everywhere one cannot but take risks, if only because one takes risks even when one does not act at all, which is a risky option the soundness of which the rule will measure. When one talks of “subjective probability” in the case of the type of problems examined by Bayes, one does not mean, of course, that all options are worth the same, and that they depend on our mood, but that the calculation assesses the probability of any option that the player chooses in whatever situation in which he has a role.

Everyone understands that it is possible to complicate the use of that rule even further by combining it with the game theory, where the object upon which I calculate chances includes a bet that the other is making or that I imagine he will make as a stakeholder in the situation. It measures through reason what I want to do in a situation in which my will is an accomplice of other wills, or is opposed to them, which are acting in their interest or in interests that, if I want my action to succeed, I had better identify.

If we think that that rule expresses *vulnerability*, it is quite exactly because it stages risk-taking, whether big or small, and shows its chances of success provided what happens is in keeping with what I have calculated or wanted to happen, as well as establishes the chances of failure if I choose a risky option. Any action I

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decide or about which I think, may fail, and the margin that is left to failure, and against which I cannot do anything, is the limit of my control, and may be called *vulnerability*. Nothing may be done without the possibility that what I do not want to happen happens indeed, and nobody is ever in a situation in which they do not want anything.⁶ Doing nothing is wanting to do nothing, or wanting to let things happen. The necessity for one to act, together with the freedom of choosing the content of one's actions and the account reality holds us to constitute the very structure of vulnerability.

The rule happens in an uncertain world, which has no absolutely stable rules, where rules are crumbly, as Price shows in his astronomical example – the surest rules are still subjected to probability. It is such that the decision that has been taken, based on the information I had on the development of the situation at a given moment, may be good, even though the evolution of the situation seems to reveal (or will reveal) that my decision was in reality bad or even disastrous. The true and the false are not overhanging the situation in such a way that it cannot be assessed from an outside point of view. There is no exteriority of the situation in which I have to act and take decisions.⁷ Not only do they not overhang the situation, but they belong to it in order to constitute it, that is, to become the elements of the situation that participate in its evolution and in the building of a development or an outcome.

The name *hidden face* may be quite deceptive, for it implies that there is a position from which our situation would be fully revealed although no transcendence other than a fantasmatic one is possible there. Such ghostly transcendence may be seen even in scientists and even in the most atheist of them. In a way, though it is an unavoidable illusion, it has no place in probability calculations, which do not need to lean on an intelligence which would know everything at a given time or on the supposedly full knowledge of a situation, despite what Laplace and Kant said, though with a different meaning. It would be better to speak of an *uncontrollable other side* of the probability I assign to one of the projects I undertake. I am referring here to the uncontrollable residual part that my decisions can constitute, but without knowing how they constitute it, for there

⁶ This formulation may be considered as the generalization of the famous fragment of the *Pensées*: “We are so unhappy that we can only enjoy something which we should be annoyed to see go wrong” (Laf. 56, Br. 181, B. Pascal, *Pensées*, trans. J. Krailsheimer (London, New York, Victoria: Penguin Books, 1995).

⁷ That is the point that Kant does not take into account in probability. There is no sign of Bayesian probability in his work. He does not think that there can be any logic in probability and, quite strangely, calls mathematical *probability* only a probability over 1/2.

is always a distance between what I contemplate and think I want in an action – the objective I think I want to reach – and the result I get thanks to it without really knowing how I have got it, and which is nonetheless reality itself.

Hence the tale-like structure of probability problems, which, though formal, tell a story that players enact, while telling themselves another one. Such a constant misunderstanding among players on the one hand and between the players and the situation on the other hand, constitutes and tells the story of vulnerability. Bayes' *Essay* tells a story like the texts which explain the most formal aspects of the perspective seem to give a classical overview, while doing nothing else than telling mathematical patterns or letting them express themselves.

We will have to criticize those patterns, but first we must say why we are talking of schemas, which will be more obvious thanks to the analysis of the second example.

An axiom of Benthamian pathology

In a set of axioms which come after his *Pannomion*⁸ and which were written during his whole life, since a few of them date from June 1831 – Bentham died in June 1832 –, there is a strange remark upon which we would like to draw attention.⁹ Bentham shows that we are more unhappy when we lose something that is dear to us than we are happy when we win something that, for us, has the same value. Values being equal, it is more painful to lose something than pleasurable to win it. Of such a statement, which agrees with intuition, Bentham provides a more symbolic demonstration – a *figuration* would be the most accurate word to call it – which is of interest for us here.

Indeed, if I own an S sum and I lose a sum that is smaller than S which I will call DS , I cannot but relate that DS to the sum that remains and which will be written $(S - DS)$. On the contrary, when I win the same sum DS , and I cannot but relate it to the sum I now own, and which can therefore be represented by $(S + DS)$, I note that the relation which signifies my sadness, my disappointment or my disagreement, i.e. $[DS / (S - DS)]$, is higher than the relation that is supposed to express my joy, my happiness, or my pleasure at winning, i.e. $[DS / (S + DS)]$. Here is the form that expresses and even makes explicit the rationality of the axioms of pathology stated by Bentham and which I first enounced in the vernacular language to more directly address intuition. We have just demonstrated

⁸ The complete Code of laws that Bentham has throughout his life wanted to write.

⁹ *The Works of Jeremy Bentham*, éd. J. Bowring, vol. III (Tait, Edinburgh; Simpkin, Marshall, Londres, 1848), 224-230. That set of axioms is part of what is called the *Pannomial Fragments*.

thanks to a slightly formalized structure why an affect of disagreement or physical pain is, all other things remaining equal, more painful, more perceptible, more acute than an affect that is triggered by an object having the same value is agreeable.¹⁰ Such asymmetry according to which our pleasures are less perceptible than our despairs explains – at least partly – the reason for vulnerability and goes beyond a simple factual remark of a psychological character as may be found in Hume’s *Dialogues on Natural Religion* which supposedly shows there is more evil than good in the world, which results in damaging the idea of a divine Providence that provides men with happiness.¹¹ Men would necessarily be less disposed towards pleasure and happiness than towards displeasure and unhappiness, and the fate of happiness would more often be to worsen into unhappiness than the fate of unhappiness to reverse into happiness.

The subtlety of such a calculation, of which those are only the starting points, is due to the integration, in the very calculation of objective elements – production, exchange, consumption, which may be placed under the sign of interest¹² –, of passionate elements, which are usually believed to be more

¹⁰ To be more thorough, Bentham could have specified that there is no way of escaping this rule, since to experience pleasure, one must risk displeasure and pain, as Pascal very well saw, “We are so unhappy that we can only enjoy something which we should be annoyed to see go wrong” (Laf. 56; Br. 181; Pascal, *Pensées*).

¹¹ In Part X of *Dialogues concerning Natural Religion* which, together with part XI, makes a terrible list of all the evils that affect our lives, Philo immediately answers to Cleanthes who suggests that “health is more common than sickness; pleasure than pain; happiness than misery. And for one vexation which we meet with, we attain, upon computation, a hundred enjoyments” (ed. R. H. Popkin, Indianapolis: Hackett Pub. Company, 1986), 65: “[Your position] is extremely doubtful, replied Philo; you must, at the same time, allow, that, if pain is less frequent than pleasure, it is infinitely more violent and durable. One hour of pain is often able to outweigh a day, a week, a month of our common insipid enjoyments; and how many days, weeks, and months are passed by several in the most acute torments? Pleasure, scarcely in one instance, is able to reach ecstasy and rapture; and in no one instance can it continue for any time at its highest pitch and altitude. The spirits evaporate, the nerves relax, the fabric is disordered, and the enjoyment quickly degenerates into fatigue and uneasiness. But pain often – good, God, how often! – rises to torture and agony; and the longer it continues it becomes still more genuine agony and torture. Patience is exhausted, courage languishes, melancholy seizes us, and nothing terminates our misery but the removal of its cause – or another event, which is the sole cure of all evil, but which, from our natural folly, we regard with still greater horror and consternation.” (Hume, *Dialogues concerning Natural Religion*) A simple mathematical expression allows to at once, at least empirically, understand the necessity of that asymmetry. Schopenhauer never forgot those pages and echoed them in *The World as Will and Representation*, §§ 56-59 Book I, Chapter XLVI, entitled “On the Vanity and Suffering of Life” (Paris: PUF, 1966), 1345. In that text in particular, he emphasizes the fact that “Only suffering and deprivation can produce a positive impression and thereby reveal themselves: well-being, on the contrary, is nothing but pure negation” and “any pleasure is always reduced to half a pleasure” (Schopenhauer, “On the Vanity and Suffering of Life”, 1337, 1340).

¹² In Hirschmanian terms.

“subjective”, but which in reality may, as easily as the former, be included into equations.¹³ Even though Bentham distinguished passions from what would mainly motivate our behaviours, and even though his thoughts were more in line with philosophies of interest rather than of passions, he did not forget passions in his calculations and radically tied them to deeper motives.

However, the difficulty of this argument is directly linked to the fact that one can find an interpretation of it that will make it express on the whole the opposite. Let us suppose that, among an ocean of troubles, which I will call *S*, I can benefit from the solution to one of my troubles, noted *DS*. The schema of the operation could be written [$DS / (S - DS)$], since a trouble is removed. Conversely, if to a crowd of troubles *S* another is added *DS*, the schema of the operation can be expressed by [$DS / (S + DS)$]. The pattern which expresses relief is noted by a relation that is bigger than that which is supposed to represent the sinking into troubles or despair. Thus, the result that is obtained is the reverse of the previous one, which nonetheless seemed well founded and in keeping with the often noted intuition that an accumulation of disasters drives someone less to despair than to laugh. It is as if one could not believe it.¹⁴ Our confrontations of relations therefore do not directly express, thanks to their mathematical appearance, that, values being equal, happiness is more elusive than unhappiness.

Does that completely discredit any attempt at giving affective processes a mathematical turn, at least in the direction that Bentham pointed to, and consequently the formalisation of vulnerability that we are trying to conduct? We do not believe it does, but it is necessary to explain why on two levels. The *first* allows us to explain why we should talk of an *explicative pattern*. Perhaps would it be preferable to speak, like Kant, of explicative *schemata*.¹⁵ A *schema* is a sort of intermediary between what seems given by experience and the concepts thanks to which we want to think about that experience. A schema cannot find its own direction without a methodical idea supervising it, such precedence being exactly the function of the concept and of the judgment that uses it. In other words, the precious moment of the *schema*, the essence of which we borrow from Bentham and the name from Kant, is the representation of a necessary asymmetry between

¹³ Their fate is the same as that of those “small equations” which Laplace mentions to better adjust the ideal laws of Newton which globally work with what experience and observations make us modify.

¹⁴ Valéry notes it in his *Cahiers*, vol. II (Bib. de la Pléiade, NRF, 1974), 466: “Accumulated catastrophes make one laugh [...]. They lose any seriousness. Sensitivity gives in and reverses.”

¹⁵ I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. ed. P. Guyer & A. W. Wood (New York, Melbourne, Madrid: Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2000), 273.

pleasant and unpleasant elements, which is often noted, without any explanation of its motive being provided. Expressing something in mathematical terms, even broad ones, as we have just done, allows to make this “explicative engine” work, whatever its misfirings and malfunctions. The *second register* refers to the management of the small mathematical element we have just used. The affective dimension the symbolical meaning of which we have just expressed is not directly in harmony with the operation and development of what triggers it; it is in a relation with it, but going another way, it is out of sync with it, which does not mean that the one can work without the other. One could say, to use Hume’s words – Hume described the phenomenon of passions thanks to a double association – that the affective accompaniment of real, economic and political acts has its own reality, and that it is not only a reflection of it. That out-of-sync relation is what is of interest and what mathematics allows us to express, provided it is supported by a clever method.

One can understand for example that a fiscal policy of redistribution of the surpluses of the richest to the poorest is undoubtedly the best interest in democracy, at least what is best in line with its egalitarian dimension. A democracy is in danger when extremes, as far as wealth, power or advantages are concerned, move in opposite directions.¹⁶ One could then be tempted, if one had some political power and really wanted to make democracy happen, in a realistic and pragmatic way, to abruptly organise the economic equality of citizens. One would nonetheless be very likely to politically fail if one suddenly and brutally imposed such a measure. Though one should tend towards such equality, the realization of it must be negotiated so as to hurt as little as possible those who have to or must give money to the poorest, when one has realized that it is harder to give money than it is pleasant to receive it. One must make sure not to offend or drive to despair those who, in a situation, have a lot to lose, and are therefore the easiest to be upset, all the more so as in a democracy in particular, there will be no great gain, no electoral gain for example, for whoever takes that measure, from those who are never more than moderately satisfied.¹⁷ The laws of passions are not

¹⁶ Rousseau clearly highlighted the point at the end of the first Book of *Social Contract*.

¹⁷ Taking a more general example, Hirschman notes that if one were tempted, in order to determine the interest of interstate relations, to take into consideration only the trade balance, one would be quite mistaken, for there are beneficiaries on the two sides: “Many effects [that the parties expect from the exchanges] are political, social and even moral rather than purely economic” (<https://books.google.fr>) (*Les passions et les intérêts / The Passions and the Interests*, 51). That idea was supported, for example, by Montesquieu, quoted by Hirschman, *The Passions and the Interests*, 75.

those of interests. One should not mistake the one for the other, even though one should listen to each equally.¹⁸

Bentham was so attentive to that point that he renewed such advice about sharing power and not only wealth. It is undoubtedly sound to throw out those who have not been able to conduct the policy that would be the most useful to the greatest number, but there is no need either to offend the leavers by brutally depriving them of what was, until now, their livelihood. The unpleasantness of their departure should be smoothed out, in the name, once again, of the very axiom that must guide practice. The examples we have just given, though basic, show that the line of utility¹⁹ which must run along all the political, administrative and economic acts,²⁰ in reality results from the intertwining or twisting of two lines, one that would readily be attributed to ‘reality’ and the other to the affects, which obey other laws, and which one would be wrong to think are irrational or insignificant in any given situation. Affects are as important as what we have called the things themselves, and neglecting them and taking only things into consideration would be a very poor job indeed. Stuart Mill followed Bentham on that point, and put on trial the revolutionaries and reformers who, without any qualification whatsoever, wanted to impose what they thought was fair and severely punish those who had not fulfilled their function properly or had carried out a policy that was different from their own.

¹⁸ A. O. Hirschman, in *The Passions and the Interests*, showed that there should be no mixing up of the one and the other; and quoting from Cardinal Retz, he underlined that “a truly subtle politician does not wholly reject the conjectures which one can derive from man’s passions, for passions sometimes enter rather openly into, and almost always manage to affect unconsciously, the motives that propel the most important affairs of state” (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1977), 45. (That excerpt from the *Mémoires* (Paris: Gallimard, Bib. de la Pléiade, NRF, 1956), 1008-1009, is quoted with a footnote in the same page: “Elsewhere Retz writes similarly: «In the times... in which we live one must join the inclinations of men with their interests and draw on this mixture in order to make a judgment on their probable behavior.»” Cardinal Retz, *Mémoires*, 984. A strikingly similar opinion is expressed over a century later by Alexander Hamilton, another practicing (and reflective) politician: «Though nations, in the main, are governed by what they suppose their interest, he must be imperfectly versed in human nature who... does not know that [kind or unkind] dispositions may insensibly mould or bias the views of self-interest.» Cited in Gerald Stourzh, *Alexander Hamilton and the Idea of Republican Government* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1970), 92.”

¹⁹ This is Bentham’s word. The criticism of Article 6 of the 1791 Human Rights mentions the “curves and bends of the line of utility, which must be the sole object of the legislator” (Bertrand Binoche and Jean-Pierre Cléro, *Bentham contre les droits de l’homme* (Paris: PUF, 2007), 55. Of course such a line does not exist substantially speaking: it exists only as the law of the work of each stone in stereonomy.

²⁰ Just as the fictitious curves that run in the buildings that have been thought, in stereonomy, by Bosse and Desargues, and which are like the reason of their walls, windows, vaults, arches and roof.

Two Mathematical Patterns of Vulnerability

It is obvious here that it is not because utilitarianism considers affects as fictitious entities that it does not take them into account. They simply do not have the same role, and do not work, in its calculations, like the productions, exchanges or consumptions they go with. The concern for the greatest happiness of the greatest number is not necessarily related to disdain for the pain of the individuals it affects, even though they be minorities. The fall from grace of the powerful or of the one who used to be powerful should be arranged so that it is not too violent. Vulnerability therefore is expressed in those lines which act as a counterpoint, or, to use another metaphor, act the one towards the other as a double helix. Calculation is the connection of those two cursive lines, one of them representing the marked tendency of passions to become sad or disagreeable, to burden the actor. It is up to the politician, the administrator, the businessman or the doctor²¹ to be subtle enough to play upon that double helix when he undoubtedly has had the opportunity – and has seized it – to play upon it, or to have free rein to play upon it, knowing that one must act if one wants to somehow check the fate of affects which is overall to privilege displeasures over pleasures. There is undoubtedly, in the intertwining of voices, be they of reality or of affects, matter for stories which invent characters rather than events happening to ready-made characters. It is not

²¹ “Arithmetic and medicine – these are the branches of art and science to which, in so far as the maximum of happiness is the object of his endeavours, the legislator must look for his means of operation: – the pains or losses of pleasure produced by a maleficent act correspond to the symptoms produced by a disease.

Experience, observation, and experiment – these are the foundations of a well-grounded medical practice: experience, observation and experiment – such are the foundations of a well-grounded legislative practice.

In the case of both functionaries, that of the *medical curator* and that of the legislator –, the subject-matter of operation and the plan of operation is accordingly the same – the points of difference these: – In the case of the medical curator, the only individual who is the subject-matter of the operations performed by him, is the individual whose sufferings are in question, to whom relief is to be administered. In the case of the legislator, there are no limits to the description of the persons to whom it may happen to be the subject-matter of the operations performed by him.

By the medical curator no power is possessed other than that which is given either by the patient himself, or in the case of his inability, by those to whose management it happens to him to be subject: – by the legislative curator, power is possessed applicable to all persons, without exception, within his field of service; each person being considered in his opposite capacities – namely, that of a person *by whom* pleasure or pain, or both, may be experienced, and that of a person *at whose hands* pleasure or pain, or both, may be experienced.” (*The Works of Jeremy Bentham*, ed. J. Bowring, vol. III (Tait, Édimbourg; Simpkin, Marshall, Londres, 1848), 224.

Note that, in that preamble to the discourse on axioms of mental pathology, it is less the money that has been won and lost which serves as a privileged pattern than health that can be preserved, recovered or lost. Simply, calculations would be impossible if, instead of using money, the universal mediator, one used health and its disruptions. The latter must nonetheless be thought of behind the calculations that are being made with money.

because the story has a mathematical appearance that it is not a story. There exist stories outside literature. There is, in problems and their solutions, a tension that belongs to stories, and a problem which does not “tell” any story is not interesting. There are, in mathematics, accompanying curves, fictitious lines of all sorts, as in architecture or music, where, without being materialized by any note, a median voice can play its part.

There is so little contradiction between the calculation and the language that literature is interested in, that such a double helix we have mentioned could easily be compared to a phenomenon of echo, the one being built as an echo to the other. Maybe echo is the essence of language, in the sense that, without it, speech would always seem to be emitted by a subject and would not appear to be what belongs to no subject in particular, being thus more objective. Like the poet and the architect, the politician, the administrator and the businessman have to build that echo, which is however what is the least controllable.

Obstacles to the previous calculations

However, one’s enthusiasm being dampened by the few counter examples I have given to the double association of the affects and elements of political economy, one could think that such a mathematics of vulnerability is only imaginary and desired, that it only puts into formulas or even only gives the idea of formulas of what will never have even the appearance of a fragment of science. Undoubtedly, economists have tried that conceptual polyphony, Albert Otto Hirschman in particular.²² However, we must if not make a detailed inventory of all the obstacles that must be overcome to reach such a result, at least give a short list of them and ask ourselves if in principle, there is a decisive obstacle to the mathematical formulation of that double associative helix. There seems to be one, and quite a decisive one, which Kierkegaard spotted, and which is a jeweller’s scale, for Bayesian and utilitarian approaches, in which the author of *Philosophical fragments* was not however directly interested, and by which previous research is partly compromised, which is not a real problem in itself since there are always only partial solutions in mathematics as elsewhere, but which nonetheless is worth our stopping a little to examine them.

²² Hirschman, the author of *The Passions and the Interests*, subtitled *Political Arguments for Capitalism before Its Triumph*, who died in 2012, wrote in that book in 1977: “Cardinal de Retz, with his insistence that the passions are not to be counted out in situations where interest-motivated behavior is considered to be the rule, appears to have had the better part of the argument than either Keynes or Schumpeter” (Hirschman, *The Passions and the Interests*, 135).

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The ordinary arguments, which are here only quickly listed, and which can be opposed to a mathematization of an affective principle like vulnerability, were extensively developed by Bergson who, at the end of the 19th century, questioned Fechner's psychophysiology which quantitatively treated sensations and the excitations that triggered them, and questioned the fact that the ones may be used in the same equations as the others. It is easy to answer, first, that it is not absurd to say that a sensation can be felt *more or less* strongly, and, second, that putting sensations and excitations in the same equation does not mean that they are being treated the same way. Moreover, let us not forget that the object of psychophysiology is rather to speak of a fictitious space, of a difference, between sensations, rather than of sensations in a substantial sense. What psychophysiology talks about in mathematical terms has no direct correspondent in experience and relates to it only via fictions. It is quite obvious that by attacking Fechner, Bergson indirectly attacked Bentham's utilitarianism, which, it is true, is not one of the targets of *Essay on the Immediate Data of Consciousness*, but which was on the contrary deliberately mentioned in his lessons at Clermont-Ferrand or Henri IV high schools, which were delivered at the same time as he wrote his PhD.²³ Bergson's arguments, or at least their critical part, must have made quite an impression since some authors, who are little inclined to philosophize about "duration", renounce a cardinal treatment of sensations and affective experiences and prefer an ordinal treatment of pleasures and pains, in all likelihood to avoid the criticism of treating felt entities as quantifiable things. That was the case of George Moore, who, in *Ethics*, ordered pleasures rather than add, subtract, multiply or divide them. It is quite easy to show however that it was not so difficult to substitute to such a little practicable order a cardinal interpretation, which does not commit a direct realistic ontology and which is easier to treat, in economics and in other human sciences, than preference orders. Using the same style of opposition, some authors have insisted on the irreducible difference between "feeling" a sentiment and the logical or mathematical structure that would be used to account for it. It is true that it is not difficult to agree to that provided the criticism of the phenomenologists of affectivity does not go beyond negating the opposite party who supports the possibility of identifying – up to a certain point – a sentiment to a structure or to a situation, for as soon as it posits its own difference with the point of view of structures, it only yields very plain and poor tautologies, which are so devoid of interest that they immediately make one regret structural analyses which

²³ Henri Bergson, *Cours*, I, Clermont-Ferrand, 1887-1888 (Paris: PUF, 1990), 61-64; 163; *Cours*, II, Lycée Henri IV, 1891-1893 (Paris: PUF, 1992), 59-76.

have at least the merit to put on the same level the analyses of affects and those of some human sciences like economics, sociology, ethnology, or history. It is only because one is prejudiced that one thinks that vulnerability focuses on what is the most “felt”, of the least “structural”, of the most “individual”, “ordinal”, of the least “cardinal”. The two examples we have chosen already allow some circulation between categories that counterbalance that prejudice, all the more so if we can invent the mathematical form that best suits our needs.

If one looks at less massive criticisms of the mathematization of issues of affects, then one faces the objection of a reduction of passions, and pleasures and pains especially that are supposed to underlie them, to situations of gains and losses of money, which happen in a general game pattern. When one thus transforms money and money games into paradigms of what happens in real affective exchanges – provided such exchanges are real – does not one distort the analysis one wants to subject them to? It is clear that the attitude one has when one plays is not the attitude one would have in a real situation, that one takes, for example, more risks in a game where the stakes are strictly limited than in reality when no limit is set from the start. It is no less clear that if money allows to avoid focusing on falsely isolated subjects, even though it realizes some intersubjectivity, which itself is problematic but in a different way, it would not be possible to account, through it, for all the affective situations. However, through the representation by money, what is symbolized is the gain and the loss, which have a real affective meaning.²⁴ Thus, when one considers such – more or less fictitious – use of money and that of the privileged sequences of the game theory as paradigms in order to think about affectivity or one of its principles, such as vulnerability, one has what is called a *pattern* or a *schema*, that is, a tool that should not be applied with systematic blindness which would exempt one from using any method, but, which, on the contrary, requires a discerning judgment, that is, the consciousness of the limits of the use of the tool in “given” circumstances.

²⁴ We do not have enough time here to consider a point that derives from what Hirschman saw in *Les passions et les intérêts / The Passions and the Interests*: in order for money to be called thus to measure passions and passions and interests, it has had to be rehabilitated and – as Hirschman quoted from Hume (*Les passions et les intérêts*, 64) – it must be a time when love of gain is deeper than love of pleasure, which is the essence of capitalism and of the “enjoyment” of its added value (of its “more pleasure”, as Lacan would say), or at least the time must be that of those who think thus and have the power to impose that rule on the others.

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The main obstacle: the impossibility to think the “decisive instant”

Had we managed to answer, somewhat satisfactorily, all the previous objections against mathematizing methods which we think could be implemented, there would still remain a difficulty which might not be foreign to those that have been raised and which is related to the insufficient, or even non-existent, treatment of the *instant* by the mathematically-inspired methods we are interested in to deal with vulnerability, and which has appeared as the necessity of the decline in the forces – including the strongest – as well as that which could check that decline if they want to remain forces. Such ultimate objection can be found, as we have said, in Kierkegaard’s *Philosophical Fragments* which oppose the Greek incapacity to *think the instant* and the modern demand to put it at the core of ethical systems, which may not be done through mathematics.

Russell dared to say that no one had ever answered Zeno’s paradox – in particular the fourth of them, based on Aristotle’s account – which makes it impossible to seize the instant when movements cross one another, that we are still, as regards that instant, *either* in the presages that prepare it, *or* in the aftermath;²⁵ what is missing most is the *decisive instant* as Kierkegaard called it in a thesis in which, strangely enough, he agreed, at least on that point, with the great logician who nonetheless had no particular esteem for him.²⁶ What was Kierkegaard’s objection towards the ethics of his time²⁷ – which is still ours overall – and which reveals in them the greatest difficulty?

The following: That ethics, be it Bayesian, or utilitarian in its critical part, is never in the end about the game of deliberations, but leaves aside the instant of the decision which works as a blank in this game. All the philosophies of ethics only

²⁵ After analyzing the three main paradoxes of Zeno that are in Aristotle’s *Physics* and which he thought were not solved before Weierstrass, Dedekind and Cantor, Russell analyzed more rapidly the fourth and took Zeno’s side, refusing to suppose that, when there is a movement, the mobile “will be in a neighbouring place at the next instant”, simply because “there is no next instant”. “When a body moves, all that can be said is that it is in one place at one time and in another at another”. “Even though philosophers often tell us that when a body is in motion, it changes its position within the instant”, “to this view Zeno long ago made the fatal retort that every body always is where it is; but a retort so simple and brief was not of the kind to which philosophers are accustomed to give weight, and they have continued down to our own day to repeat the same phrases which roused the Eleatic’s destructive ardour” (B. Russell, *Recent Works on the Principles of Mathematics*, 1901, in: *The Collected Papers of Bertrand Russell*, ed. G. H. Moore vol. 3 (Routledge, London, 1994), 371-2. Zeno’s fourth argument is better analyzed in § 334 of *The Principles of Mathematics* (Routledge, Londres, 1992), 352. In that paragraph, the “continuity” of the philosophers is refuted. Curiously enough, Kierkegaard should not be counted among them.

²⁶ There is not the slightest trace of Kierkegaard in Russell’s *History of Western Philosophy* nor even, I think in the whole of his published work.

²⁷ Which he links all to socialism, even though they have explicitly denied it.

manage to be ethics of deliberation. They never reach a thinking of decision, except for that which Kierkegaard thought of, and those which take Zeno's arguments seriously. Even those who praise "decision makers" show, by creating that word, which seems to designate indifferently a function, a position, or a character feature, that they do not understand what is at stake in a decision. The time of decision is that of an instant that has nothing to do any more with that which was dreamt of so much as long as it still had to be overcome, and which will be referred to once it has passed without our having time to seize it. Abortion is not reasoned about, when it is not here yet or when it has occurred, in the same way as at the moment when one acts and performs it. One does not get a patient to sleep definitely, even though one has taken every precaution regarding the consent of the interested party, as one would discuss the merits of that sedation before one performs it, as one will refer to it after the patient has died. One does not talk of the value of a life in the same way as one takes away that life. The medical act is intertwined with instants in which all the construction of time perspectives that some mathematics allows – and which we have just started to get a glimpse at – is disrupted and invalidated. It is impossible that the measure be the same at the moment when one kills someone and when their death is only being considered. In order to point out to a problem, more than to solve it, Kierkegaard called that time *instant*,²⁸ to which he added the adjective "*decisive*" in *Philosophical Fragments*.

The real ethics should start, for him, from that instant, which cannot be compared to any other, for it is not possible to represent it, unlike the others, and even to think about it. Kierkegaard pointed to the place where to look deeper into the ethical question.²⁹ Maybe he even showed the equivalent of a topology of it, but then, having only communicated the intuition of it, provided it can be communicated, has he shown what its structure could be?

Our analogy with the perspective has but a very partial value. We know the rules of perspective. They give us, when they are expressed in a painting, the illusion that the painting, drawn or painted from a point of view that it imposes upon us, could have been made from a thousand other points of view which are

²⁸ "And now, the instant. Such an instant is of a particular nature. Undoubtedly it is short and fleeting, as is any instant, passing as any other into the following instant. Nonetheless, it is the decisive one, nonetheless, it is full of eternity. Such an instant must have its own name. Let us call it the fullness of times" (S. Kierkegaard, *Les Miettes philosophiques* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1967), 50.

²⁹ "The instant in time must have a decisive importance, so that in no point of time and eternity I could forget it" (*Riens philosophiques*, trad. K. Ferlov, J. Gateau (Paris: Gallimard NRF, 1948), 54) or, later on, "For a temporal starting point not to be nothing, the instant in time must have a decisive importance."

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contained as *possibles* in it. However, such *possibles*, far from being able to be exteriorized, have no meaning other than based on the painting as it is, in its partiality, and not the reverse, although it presents itself as a possible that has been chosen among a huge range of other possibles. A possible has been chosen and it exists in a sudden way. *Mutatis mutandis*, the same is true for time, as for space, with the crucial difference that if, when looking at the painting, one can *reproduce* the crucial and lightning point of view where it is supposed to locate us to look at what it represents, one could not give back the precise instant of will. The seriousness of life does not repeat itself: it “gets ahead of itself” or glides into the “aftermath” which – with prevision – does not have the same properties as the fleeting instant which is impossible to set. The construction of temporal perspectives, which the strategies of deliberation and the consequences one gets from the advent of a decision are, is much more fictitious than that of space perspectives, for the real entity that is being referred to to anchor it or to found it has much less reality. It is as if the reality it is possible to “recapture” in space emptied at once by briefly appearing in time. The instant is the abyss of all deliberating constructions.

Conclusions

Kierkegaard, in *Philosophical Fragments*, opposed the point of view of the Greeks, whom he accused of not knowing or omitting the *instant* and of neglecting its precious and frail ethical value, and the modern point of view which he defended by stressing the instant,³⁰ which, for us, does not have its philosophy or its ethics yet, except perhaps in the Old and New Testaments. Antinomy is of a huge interest. However, presented thus historically, it is debatable. Because the Greeks were conscious of it even though they could not – despite their mathematical and logical skills – remedy that issue. There is no Zenonian ethics that I am aware of, but one could not reproach Zeno for not seeing where the difficulty was. However, to move onto the opposite side of the Greek thesis, the

³⁰ “So if the *instant* must have a decisive signification, without which we would only speak Socrates’ language, whatever we say, and how strange soever our prolixity be, and even though as we do not understand ourselves, we imagined that we went much farther than that wiseman who is so simple, the judge and incorruptible arbiter of the god, men and himself [...] thus the break happened, and man cannot go back and will not find any joy in recalling what his memory presents him with, and even less will he be capable, with his own forces, to draw the god to his side again.” Kierkegaard, *Les miettes philosophiques*, 52. And, later on, “While all the pathos of the Greek thought is focused on memory, the pathos of our project focuses on the instant” (Kierkegaard, *Les miettes philosophiques*, 53).

Hebrew Bible and the New Testament do think about the instant,³¹ but have they been more able to produce an ethics? I am not talking about morals, since morals do not need to be expressed, whereas it is as much an imperative duty for ethics as for the law that cannot but be enounced. Has Kierkegaard gone beyond the intuition of a science that must still be built, if that is possible?

One could even push one's suspicion even further: Is not such a way of pointing to the *instant* as an ethical requirement, under the pretext of moving on to a religious level, a pure and simple return, beyond ethics of the interest and the useful, to a temporality of passions – of some of them at least, if one admits that they are not all of them peaceful ones and that there may be some violent ones? Who does not know that it is possible, in one instant, in one look, in one word – good or bad – for a meeting, to reverse the perspective of a whole life or of several decades? Do anger and love operate as boredom or hope, which can accommodate to the longtime of calculations?

Kierkegaard is nonetheless right, in an apagogic way, against the thesis he attacks at its weak point: the requirement to say, the patterns of which can be enounced in mathematical terms, can only have an application during the time of deliberation, which is almost all the time, if one thinks of it. But there only needs, within that wholeness, one instant for the whole building to become suspicious, for no one knows what the decision is, what it will be or was, especially if one has not taken it oneself, and even if one had to take it or had taken it, for it leaves no other trace than the need to justify oneself or to forget, than the happiness or misfortune to have ushered in a new world. It is difficult to have, in mathematics, or in the *langage* of calculations, another discourse than that of the preparation and that of the assessment of what has changed. The discourse of the double helix, one movement being the echo of the other,³² that we have had, allows nonetheless to explain how mathematics can eclipse the crossing moment the elision of which was an object of astonishment for Zeno, and can give it the status of an illusion, as if it had never existed and never could: lines can never cross, nor movements contact, even though there were no point of view, no perspective, no projection that would allow one to make them appear as not crossing or contacting.

The instant of the decision being removed, which is a disastrous elision for ethics, does not however affect the possibility of the discourse on pains and sufferings, passions, interests and preferences to be on a par with the calculations

³¹ The archetype of that collusion of the instant of death and the instant of the decision is, obviously, in Kierkegaard's reflection, what Christianity has called "Abraham's sacrifice".

³² As when a voice seems to be gone backwards by its double.

of the economist and the politician to whom it gives another line of readability. That knowledge could very well be radically oriented towards practice: they are nonetheless as theoretical as mathematics or physics, since they are not concerned with Kierkegaard's *instant* and are defenceless faced with the suddenness of decisive events they leave unthought when they are supposed to happen. That is precisely why a research of the mathematical objects of vulnerability can be of interest. Far from it being inhuman to calculate, including affective questions when what is at stake is to compare them and to relate them to different economic fields, which are so important for ethics and for the sciences it needs, one must recall that the person who wrote on the pediment of his school that "nobody may enter unless he is a mathematician" dared affirm in *Epinomis* that we are being more fundamentally made for *numbers* than for *language*.³³

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³³ "If one withdrew number from mankind, one could never show any wisdom. Never again, the soul of that living being that man is, would acquire the virtue as a whole, given that he would lack reason." "If we should deprive human nature of number we should never attain to any understanding. For then the soul of that creature which could not *tell* things would never any more be able, one may say, to attain virtue in entirety; and the creature that did not know two and three, or odd and even, and was completely ignorant of number, could never clearly *tell* of things about which it had only acquired sensations and memories. From the attainment of ordinary virtue – courage and temperance – it is certainly not debarred: but if a man is deprived of true telling he can never become wise, and he who has not the acquirement of wisdom – the greatest part of virtue as a whole – can no more achieve the perfect goodness which may make him happy. Thus it is absolutely necessary to postulate number; but to show why this is necessary would need a still further argument than any that has been advanced" ("Epinomis," 977 c, in *Plato in twelve volumes*, XII (Cambridge (Massachusetts), Heinemann W., London: Harvard University Press, 1986), 439-441.

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The Ethical Nature of the Norm

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Abstract

The domain of ethics deals with the antagonisms between “good and evil, right or wrong, correct or unjust, virtuoso or vicious” etc. However, ethics is not the only area where these terms can be used, but as a norm, most ethical systems have been grounded in negotiating and consolidating these debates. Ethics has been transposed into many areas of activity, social and / or professional, so over time, according to Harry Redner, ethics have been born on account of the relationship of feelings: love vs blame (religious or moral ethics), patriotism and glory vs. disgrace and disapproval (civic ethics), respect and veneration vs. rejection and humility (ethics of responsibility). These types of ethics over time have mixed up and can be “distinguished according to the external guarantees that they rely on to ensure social conformities.” These external guarantees, according to Harry Redner, are conventions, norms and laws. Even though they seem to be identical, there are some details of difference that are worth mentioning to understand the analytical assembly.

Keywords: *words: norm, ethics, law, social conventions, responsibility*

In this paper, my interest is to present the ethical nature of the norm, to analyze, clarify and demonstrate that the ethical norm is different from the other types of norms, with some of its own characteristics. For its identity, it is important to find out how a norm responds to ethical questions: *should? Can?* Ethical norms base their existence on the agent’s ability to understand that it is an obligation for him to do what he can if he is demanded. This necessity imposed by the ethical norm, as opposed to other norms, does not entail penalties specific to the laws. The ethical norm is formed precisely by the understanding the role of the individual in a collectivity and the obligations that he behaves in a manner that allows him to integrate or retain membership in a group, community, etc. The ethical norm comes to emphasize to the individual the environment from which he comes and the obligation to respect his traditions and culture by applying the ethical norm in relation to others.

According to Edmund Husserl, law and norm are not synonymous, though they are “connected.”¹ Laws, unlike norms, are those methods, elaborations and political-social constructions that are imposing sanctions by external means.² Laws express a “necessity that is purely theoretical and contemplative” being the design of interactive foundations. Norms, “describe how things should be in order to be as they are.” By laws, “thinking and affectivity” is expressed, instead the norms refer to “experience and decision”.³ In order to better understand this distinction, Husserl proposes a moral analysis of the relationship between “must” and “ought” that we will reiterate on the difference between ethical and non-ethical norms. For “ought” and “must”, account must be taken of the “validation given to them”, which must be accepted in a broad sense, as well as “recognition of existential values”. We start from the statement that “something *is* and *can be*, because its parts are combined in such a way as to make it what it is”. The example given by Husserl through the analysis made by Susi Farrarello, refers to the fact that “one square is square because it has four sides”. In the relationship between norm and law this is interpreted as follows: “Norm: a square is a square if it has four sides. The law: a square has four sides.”⁴ Here, an assertion that I have proposed in the previous chapter is most easily observed. I was saying that *if* always accompanied morality and the presence of *if* in defining the norm suggests linking it to morality; unlike the law, thus demonstrating once again that what is legal is not necessarily moral.

Unlike the aforementioned external guarantees, a rule “does not deliberately support what is not true”, being merely “a simple prescription.” Instead, a norm is not “just a prescription for conduct” based on a rule, but the norm must be seen as a “general directive that can be challenged.” Because the rule can be challenged, the arguments of its construction must be validated, substantiated and justified.⁵ Justification is what I think makes the difference between norm and *social convention* (as in manners and etiquette). In the case of

¹ The network of rules and traditional rules governing a community is in fact the identity expression of that community. These include laws, codes of ethics, standards and practical conventions, non-legal ethical rules, etc. the differences in the social doctrine are taken into account in the specialized doctrine, making a clear distinction between these social instruments of conduct. More details see Geoffrey C. Hazard jr. and Angelo Dondi, *Legal ethics. A Comparative Study*, (California: Stanford University Press, 2004), 292-293.

² Harry Redner, *Ethical Life, The Past, The present of etchical cultures* (INC, Lanham, Boulder, New York, Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2001), 131-133.

³ Susi Farrarello, *Husserl's Ethics and Practical Intentionality*, Bloomsbury Studies in Continental Philosophy (Bloomsbury Academic, 2015).

⁴ Farrarello, *Husserl's Ethics*.

⁵ Redner, *Ethical Life*, 132-133.

a social convention, participation is often voluntary, and once accepted it does not imply absolute obligations. Unlike the norm, where these conditions are accepted, they must be assumed and respected. This is why conventions are based on community acceptance,⁶ without the need for justification for their operation. Violation of a social convention attracts at most a disapproval from the community. In many cases, social norms are confused with social conventions, the difference is a sensitive one, but is characterized by the degree of compulsion and, implicitly, the quantification of sanctions in case of violation.

Social norms are seen as those rules that translate people's beliefs about attitudes and behaviors that are considered expected by that community or society. An important type of social norms are the legal norms that are characterized by the fact that they are recognized by a law.⁷ By law, a "justice-to-duty relationship" is required, so that a legal norm is required by the condition that one party in specific circumstances is engaged in "a social activity designed to meet the expectations of another / other parties".⁸ Norms can be differentiated based on their functions and the sanctions they impose. Social norms are and can be seen as customary, while legal norms are those legalized customs, while the laws being adopted have a strong institutional character and more serious coercive measures.

From Habermas' perspective, not all norms have universal validity, since not all norms manage to derive their strength from "universal interests or even general, defined in a consensual way". Although it may be said that all social norms have some ethical content, in fact not all social norms are ethical norms.⁹ For example, "not telling a lie" is an ethical norm that can be rewarded or sanctioned through coercive law or mechanisms established by social relationships. It is important to note that these types of ethics that I have presented above (religious / moral, civic, and responsibility) base their identity on these "external guarantees" (laws, norms, conventions) and types of sanction

⁶ Redner, *Ethical Life*.

⁷ Tushar Kanti Saha, *Textbook on Legal Methods, Legal Systems & Research* (New Delhi: Universal Law Publishing, 2010), 38-39.

⁸ Hamish Ross, *Law as a Social Institution* (Oxford-Portland Oregon: Hart Publishing, 2001), 138. See also Eric A. Posner, *Law and Social Norms* (Cambridge Massachusetts, London, England: Harvard University Press, 2000). Another difference to be considered is the content and formal character of the legal norm in Matthias Baier, "Relations between Social and Legal Norms," in *Social and Legal Norms. Towards a Socio-Legal Understanding of Normativity*, ed. Matthias Baier (Routledge, 2013).

⁹ Jane Braaten, *Habermas's Critical Theory of Society* (Albany: State University New York Press, 1991), 33-38.

on which manages to impose it gradually and contextually. Harry Redner argues that all types of ethics use all three types of guarantees, “depending on the social and cultural character of their origin.”¹⁰

Always an ethical norm can be perceived, interpreted and transposed by reference to a moral value.¹¹ That can be specific to an individual or a group, but the norm that is being formed is far more extensive in terms of quantity. The moral value “guides actions by default”, the ethical norm being “explicit, expressed in less abstract terms”. Some ethical norms are grounded “only on certain moral, prior and independent to it”.¹² Moral desideratum is crucial for the existence of the ethical norm that establishes the content, the limit of their strength and their effectiveness. Ethical norms are not only built socially but also politically. That does not mean that they are alternatives to power, but reflects the political power and the interest that has determined them. For a moral value to take the form of an ethical norm “must be moved from the abstract field of morality into the concrete one of political action.” In terms of collective agreements and not abstract values, ethical norms take their force from the “consensus of the actors involved and their degree of assumption.”¹³

In order to better understand the difference between ethical norms and other norms, it is necessary to mention the specific methods of analysis, so we can understand how an ethical norm is different. The analysis of these concepts has to be done in two ways: the explanatory and normative. The *explanatory* deals with the “element of analysis” as it is, in its entirety as “a sum of realities”. Instead, the *normative* takes into account “the rules that define the element under consideration”. In Wilhelm Wundt’s differential analysis, in the explanatory dimension there is an identical value for each of the component elements. The explanatory mode deals with their absolute value, instead the normative manages the “relative value”. Explanatory mode is used by history, psychology, or exact sciences, but instead logic, ethics, aesthetics etc. are the normative field.¹⁴

Natural law was the one by which the concept of norm in natural sciences was introduced. Logic, aesthetics, ethics, etc. are grounded and can be

¹⁰ Redner, *Ethical Life*, 132-133.

¹¹ For an analysis of the midpoint where ethics is the moral language see John M. Rist, *Real ethics. Reconsidering the Foundations of Morality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

¹² Cathal J. Nolan, *Principled Diplomacy: Security and Rights in U.S. Foreign Policy* (Wesport: Greenwood Press, 1993).

¹³ Hedley Bull, *The Anarchial Society. A study of order in world Politics* (Palgrave MacMillan, 1977), 55.

¹⁴ Wilhelm Wundt, *Ethics: The facts of moral life* (New York: Cosimo Classics, 2006), 5-13.

characterized by the existence of facts, the norm having the role of “generalizing the facts”, the analysis of the norms can be achieved only by “examining the facts to which they are related”. As a result of these conditions, ethical characters are evaluated through the “voluntary actions of the subjects”. That is why the difference between ethics and logic, as proposed by Wilhelm Wundt, is given by the analysis of what “ought” to be done. In the field of ethics, “ought” have a direct link with the object under consideration, it is even formed from it, while for logic, “ought” is an analytical and procedural tool for “moral interpretation”. Thus, ethics is the “normative source of norms,” while morality is “the original source of normativity”.¹⁵

Normativity¹⁶ is the one through which “what is needed is expressed by “ought” and transmitted in the form of “must”. In an analysis conducted by Edmund Husserl and commented by Susi Farrarello, any ethical norm is “grounded in *ought* and express the *need to be*”. In the field of ethics, normativity assumes that “you accept and want the methods” determined by the fact that you “accept and want the premises”. Through norms, in the field of ethics, “necessity is grounded” by the possibility of “manifesting its own *fiat*”.¹⁷ Therefore, ethical norms are “those rules that express the practical necessity of desire: wanting / accepting methods means wanting and accepting the premises.”¹⁸ The ethical norm is not about accepting the result, as long as the result is the one from which starts. Desire is the result and to achieve it you must accept the necessary methods, but also the premises.

The identification and implicit quantification of an ethical norm can be achieved from Kant’s distinction between “ought” or “can”. This debate is resumed by Felix Oppenheim, analyzed and interpreted by Ian Carter, who tries to determine whether *ought* implies *can*. The purpose of the analysis is to determine to what extent “if you *ought* to do something, it also means you *can* do it” and this determines the difference between an ethical norm and a non-ethical

¹⁵ Wundt, *Ethics*, 5-13.

¹⁶ More on normative policy theory see Andrew Hurrell, “Norms and Ethics in International Relations,” in the *Handbook of International Relations*, ed. Walter Carlsnaes, Thomas Risse, Beth A. Simmons (London, Thousand Paks, New Delhi: SAGE Publications, 2002), 138-144.

¹⁷ Latino *fiat* means “a command or an act of will that creates something without effort.” According to the Bible, “the world was created by fiat”, the Merriam-Webster Dictionary at <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/fiat>.

¹⁸ Farrarello, *Husserl’s Ethics*.

norm.¹⁹ Turning to the moral conditional aspect, if I *ought* to do *implies* that I *can* do it, that means I *must* do it. Thus, *ought* + *can* = *must*. This highlights a necessity, which means an acceptance of the imposed conditions and the effects it produces, projecting us into an ethics analysis. But in order for the analysis to be complete, and to conclude that we are dealing strictly with an ethical norm, we can not neglect the analysis of what it *implies*.

Felix Oppenheim argues that a norm to be ethical, we should consider to what extent *implies* means *assume* or *impose*.²⁰ If *implies* is perceived as *assume*, then *ought*, *assumes* that I *can*, so I *mustn't*. If I *ought* to do something, and I assume I *can* do that, it does not generate that and I have to do that. *Assuming* suggests an assumption that there is the possibility but not the certainty that I can do that, so it does not establish a binding and a *must*. As a result of uncertainty about what I can do, it should not lead to necessity, so we do not have an ethical norm but a non-ethical one. Instead, if *implies* we see it as *impose*, then *ought*, *impose* that I *can*, so I *must*. It is understood that what I *ought* to do, necessarily means that I *can* do it, that is why I have to do. Therefore, an ethical norm is determined, because *ought implies can* then I *must*, in accordance with the above-mentioned condition established by Edmund Husserl, that any ethical norm is grounded in *ought* and express the necessity of *must*.

From Habermas' perspective, ethical and non-ethical norms are distinguished by the "procedure by which their legitimacy is proven". For Habermas, ethical norms are "universally valid" and their validation procedure is "universally useable". Non-ethical are those adopted by groups, where consensus is needed, and they are representative to protect certain interests, which does not allow them to have a universal character.²¹ The ethical norm, in contrast, "defends and sustains universal and generalizable interests and needs" implies the existence of a common and general interest that leads to this universality. This universality can not be specific to a norm that represents only partial interests.²²

¹⁹ Ian Carter, "«Ought» implies «Practical Possibility»," in Ian Carter and Mario Ricciardi, *Freedom, Power and Political morality. Essays for Felix Oppenheim* (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 80-82.

²⁰ Carter, "«Ought» implies «Practical Possibility»".

²¹ Braaten, *Habermas's Critical Theory*, 33-38

²² In a coherent normative order based on a Neo-Aristotelian theory, Habermas argues that: "Every valid norm is dependent on all the situations in which it is applicable, so its meaning is contextually changed" in Jay M. Bernstein, *Recovering Ethical Life: Jurgen Habermas and the Future of Critical Theory* (London & New York: Routledge Publishing), 226. About the Aristotelian Ethics see Susanne Hill, *Two Perspectives on the Ultimate End*, in May Slim, *The Crossroads of Norm and Nature. Essays on Aristotle's Ethics and Metaphysics* (INC., Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1995).

That is why ethical norms must have the characteristic and “ability to represent generalizable interests” whose confirmation is to be achieved by “rational consensus”.²³ The ethical norm is perceived and identified as “rational action or in accordance with the appropriate purpose and reason”.²⁴

General interests and universality are specific to each ethical norm. Are these characteristics of the ethical norm also found in international norms? Are there international ethical norms, or all international norms are also ethical? To begin with, I propose to mention the characteristics of the international norm to see if it is ethical. According to David Thor Bjorgvinsson, the development of international law and international norms²⁵ has four broad features: it can be seen lately that the number of normative acts, agreements, conventions, treaties, etc. have increased significantly and are being continuously adopted. Also, the international norm has come to be found in almost all areas, and this is not limited to issues of trade and security. Moreover, international norms have acquired many forms, with functions and techniques that have evolved with the “adoption and implementation of treaties”. One of the most important features of the international norm is that the process of building it is no longer just on the appreciation of states. Currently, more and more non-state actors are involved in the adoption of international rights and obligations. We can see that the international norm began to take different functions, its fields of activity are varied.²⁶ The international norm has developed a tradition of being evolutionary and adaptable, becoming the main communication tool. But does this tradition have an ethical character?

Terry Nardin states that it is unnatural to “talk about international norms as an ethic tradition.” What he wants to say is that any international norm is a tradition just by “the foundation of guidance that it offers”, but that does not automatically mean that this tradition is ethical. We have seen in Chapter I that the relationship between norm and morality is a symbiosis, and ethics is the rational justification of morality. So the norm is an institution to which we make “ethical judgments, and it is not in itself a source of such judgments.” But Nardin argues that if we were to consider the analysis of international norms by filtering

²³ Braaten, *Habermas's Critical Theory*.

²⁴ John Peterson, *Introduction to Thomistic Philosophy* (University Press of America, 2013), 99.

²⁵ See Council of Europe, *Treaty Making (Conclusion des Traités)* (2001), 1-2, with explanations in Jorg Polakiewicz, *Treaty-Making in the Council of Europe* (Council of Europe Publishing, Editions du Conseil de l'Europe 1999) and Rudiger Wolfrum and Volker Roben, eds., *Developments of International Law in Treaty Making* (Germany: Springer Publishing 2005).

²⁶ David Thor Bjorgvinsson, *The Intersection of International law and domestic law: A theoretical and Practical Analysis* (Massachusetts: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, 2015), 1-2.

these definitions from ethical judgments, “we only identify stipulated grounds that these reasoning would not be ethical.” As we have seen, the norm implies “the application of principles of conduct”, as well as morality and ethics “is concerned with duties and obligations.” For this reason, the international norm “belongs to a tradition of reasoning and ethical judgment in international relations”.²⁷ However, Hoffman argues that international norms or international organizations can not be regarded as ethical codes. Being determined by political factors, this mean they have fragility and limitation. Hoffman believes that politics can not have an ethic of responsibility,²⁸ so politics “can not control what happens to other actors.” The limits imposed by politics in relation to the international norm suggest its moral inferiority.²⁹ That is why the international norm born out of this limitation of politics is in antithesis with the character of universality and the generalizable interests promoted by the ethical norm. But does this mean that international law has nothing to do with ethics?

Ethical principles are implemented in society through the rules and mechanisms that organize behavior, and these include culture, law, or continuing social experience.”³⁰ Continuing social culture and experience is of major importance in creating the ethical norm and determining its empirical character. However, in the debate between naturalist and positivist theory, the latter succeeded in imposing itself as the main theory in the construction of the norm. The reason is that naturalistic theories have failed to explain, by rejecting and denying their identity, the situation of norms built without a moral character. Positivist theories, irrespective of their type, deny the major impact of morality on the norm’s formation. The only essential element, which positivists have failed to explain convincingly, is related to the fundamental human rights, strongly anchored in natural law, and permanently on the main agenda of

²⁷ Terry Nardin, in David R. Mapel and Terry Nardin, “Convergence and divergence in international ethics,” in Terry Nardin and David R. Mapel, *Traditions of International Ethics* (Cambridge Studies in International Relations, Published by the Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge, 1992), 3-8.

²⁸ In the last decades, in the feminist approach, the concept of ethics of care has become more and more distinct from other types of ethics, in the sense that it makes use of the universal experience of the girge that you can have with the outside. It supports the establishment of strong links with individual origins and involves certain behaviors, often unconscious, that produce long-lasting effects in their relationships. From the point of view of this type of ethics, even global relations need to be harmonized in a more familiar way. For more details see Virginia Held, *The Ethics of Care: Personal, Political and Global* (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 2006).

²⁹ Stanley Hoffman, *Duties Beyond borders, The limitis and possibilities of ethical International Politics* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1981), 33-34.

³⁰ Walter L. Battaglia, *Ethics and Social Conscience* (Davis: California Expert Software, 2006), 230-246.

international politics. The ethical norm has a moral desideratum that does not overlap perfectly with the norm of legal positivism.

Samuel Fleischacker argues that positivist application in the construction of the norm is an inadequate environment for the development of the ethical norm. Although the positive law tries to incorporate moral elements, it will shade the ethical norms that have a strong cultural character. We must be aware of the distinction between culture and nation or state in order to determine changes in the state through culture. The choice of the ethical norm is vital if the inconsistency of the law fails to convey the moral, cultural and social values and principles. And it is the ethical norm that expresses them, being the one underlying the continuous transformation or even the social revolution. Positive law recognizes and encourages the use of coercive measures, which often prove to be ineffective in the face of general ethical principles.³¹ Considering these natural law and legal positivism differences, but also the versatile dimension of the international norm that belongs to a tradition based on reasoning and ethical judgment in international relations, constructed by the moral inferiority of politics, the dilemma that arises is about the place of the international norm in this equation.

Eric Voegelin argues that international law is perceived, analyzed and interpreted from an institutional point of view, this approach being placed between the ethical norm and positive. Both the ethical norm and the international norm “are not declarations of legislative bodies that seek to guarantee their validity.” In contrast to the ethical norm, the authority of an international norm is not “rooted in private experiences and value judgments,” but rather based on “precedent or other similar rules.” Indeed, international norms, Voegelin argues, have no empirical characteristics in common with positivist norms.³² That is why the international law, and the international norm, is placed between the ethical norm and the positivist norm, having a special character, representing in fact an institutionalized experience.

The form of a *bridge* or a *link* of the international norm is also identified in the relationship between justice and ethics. This relationship has led to two different approaches to the way international justice has to be analyzed. Some theorists claim that international norms on the one hand and ethics on the other

³¹ Samuel Fleischacker, *Integrity and Moral Relativism* (Leiden-New York-Koln: E.J. Brill, 1992), 171-172.

³² Eric Voegelin, John von Heyking and Thomas W. Heilke, *The collected works of Eric Voegelin, Volume 8, Published Essays 1929-1933, Dickinson's theory of sovereignty and the pure theory of law* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2003), 42-44.

hand have different relationships with global justice, with different perspectives.³³ Jan Gorecki remarks the fact that “human nature justifies ethical norms,” as used to explain and justify moral behavior. That is why, when it comes to global justice, first of all “universal human needs” and later “ethical perceptions expressed in universally valid rules” must be considered. Thus universal human needs and desires “justify moral claims and their acceptance is a precondition for their fulfillment.” In these considerations, the norm only then appears as the secondary premise.³⁴

Both the ethical norm and the international norm can be defined as “collective agreements of conformed conduct of actors”. They have both prescriptive and descriptive features. Restrictive international norm represents a confluence between normative concerns reflected by moral value judgments and rationalist theories about conduct in foreign policy. In the field of security, ethics had minimal implications. The ethical nature of the norm has, over time, been used outside the field of security studies,³⁵ being concerned only with areas of interest and power. However, human rights standards are anchored in beliefs about the proper treatment of individuals, and have a strong ethical character. But that does not mean that in their construction, power and interest did not play an important role.³⁶ Cathal J. Nolan exemplifies those norms or rules (such as *jus in bello*) that were built postwar by the interest of powerful states “have not lost their fundamental value because the content of these norms can not be explained by interest or power”.³⁷ That is why international norms are a bridge between ethics and international relations.³⁸

In this sense, Walter L. Battaglia argues that the ethical norm is a “vague concept”. He argues that ethical norms have an evolutionary character being considered “moral maxims applied at the level of cultural organization”, a model that various theories have tried to explain. *Utilitarianism* claims that the normative network “produces moral maxims and ethical norms established by ourselves”, and conventionalism is based on “observing feedback from others.” The normative network promoted by *contractualism*, “does not guarantee or

³³ Steven R. Ratner, *The Thin Justice of International Law: A moral Reckoning of the Law of Nations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

³⁴ Jan Gorecki, *Justifying ethics, Human Rights and human Nature* (New Brunswick (USA) and London (UK): Transaction Publishers, 1996), 28-32.

³⁵ Thomas Ward, *The ethics of Destruction, Norms and Force in International Relations* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2001), 4-10.

³⁶ Cathal J. Nolan, *Principled Diplomacy*.

³⁷ Ward, *The ethics of Destruction*, 28.

³⁸ Ward, *The ethics of Destruction*, 4-10.

assure that the norms produced are in fact the right ones,” and *consequentialism* is more concerned with “the effects produced by intentions, not by ethics because “you have to do what it works”.³⁹

No matter how they have formed and or regardless of their structure, each ethical normativity is divided into *formal ethics* and *ethics of content*. *Ethics of content* refers to that type of ethics that seeks to identify moral norms that have a universal character and defined content. By *ethics of content*, we maintain that action is ethical only if it is accomplished through this universal moral norm. A criticism of this approach is that it would not exist such specific ethical norms.⁴⁰ Every norm with a well-defined content must find its specific validation in a certain discipline. This denotes that “ethics refers to a number of norms that have not been grounded in a particular discipline.”⁴¹

It is important to analyze the force that these ethical norms have, precisely because of their specificity. Until their application to a particular field, and in a certain context, they are nothing more than generalization, “a conglomeration of principles.” Only through psychology, legal philosophy, or sociology can these be transformed into ethical norms, so the “universality ethics of content” in the method of analysis and application can not be accepted. Formal ethics, and implicitly what constitutes the ethical norm, starts from the idea that what “ought” is “found in consciousness” as “single individual action”. “The will is active, an act of individuality,” and according to Kantian theory, a rule that applies to an act of will, must be justified in the idea of becoming a universal conduct, because “the will in itself prescribes the law in itself”.⁴²

Despite ethical theories, normativity is a continuous process, having an evolutionary character and always willing to transform. Ethical practices become norms when they come from culture, become integrated into the culture as a model of social behavior. This together forms an ethical system, and many such systems have been formed throughout history, depending on the culture underlying them. Moral maxims, ethical principles and the systems developed for them are “the result of cultural education”. When a value is respected and its application is considered, then it must be demonstrated how this value will be

³⁹ Battaglia, *Ethics and Social Conscience*.

⁴⁰ More about the consistency of ethics see Allan W. Wood, *Fichte's ethical thought* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016). Fichte talks about the concepts of individuality and recognition that give rise to another type of norm, other than the ethical norm. (Wood, *Fichte's ethical thought*, 262 et seq.)

⁴¹ M. Bakhtin, *Toward a Philosophy of the Act*, trans. and notes Vadim Liapunov, ed. Vadim Liapunov and Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1993), 20-26.

⁴² Bakhtin, *Toward a Philosophy*.

applied. This is the role of the ethical norm, which can be generally applicable. Agents influence each other, and the values of an agent and the justifications he proposes demonstrate how these moral judgments are being applied. Thus, normative networks explain how “moral judgments become ethical norms”.⁴³

Conclusions

The moral norm, unlike the ethical norm, consists of individual and collective values and convictions. I consider morality and moral norms keeps to the human being as a rational being, having those common beliefs with other people, and together defining humanity. Instead, ethics depend on the individual's beliefs and conduct as a member of a political or social entity. Even if there are opinions that they are similar, identical, I think there is a difference, even if a sensitive one. I believe that the ethical norm refers to specific cultural cases, to specific organizational cultures, whereas moral and moral norms have an individual and universal character. Thus, morality starts from the individual and the elements common to all individuals determine a character of universality. Basically, what I meant is that moral values are personal, but many of them are archetypes having a form of universality. These determine certain collective actions that we can find, for example, in the form of *jus cogens*.

Instead, ethics and ethical norms take into account certain habits and traditions specific to a group, community or society. Ethics is about culture, history, anthropology, and sociology. There are those practices and behaviors that can only be attributed to certain cultures, groups or communities and societies. An example I have been thinking of is that “not stealing” implies a universal moral norm, since any rational person is aware that he must not take the goods of another. This moral norm is found from tribal to secular or religious, democratic or non-democratic communities and societies. But at any of these structures, a moral norm can be interpolated, analyzed and applied as a different ethical norm. In some cultures, “do not steal” has a general character, or it may mean that you do not steal as long as your physical or mental integrity is not jeopardized. The ethical norm puts into practice certain universal moral values, in the form of general principles, determined by the characteristic of the socio-political entity. The *moral norm is man's conduct*, instead the *ethical norm is the citizen's conduct*. The ethical norm also includes the moral norm, as it can be built on it.

⁴³ Battaglia, *Ethics and Social Conscience*.

Does that suppose an ethical norm can be immoral or amoral? Under no circumstances, as long as moral values determine ethical principles and moral universality cannot be contradicted by a particular ethical system.

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The Nature of Exile in Naomi Shihab Nye's Poems: Does She Remember the Land?

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Abstract

Naomi Shihab Nye is an American Arab poetess, who lives within the Arab diaspora of Texas in harmony with other Diasporas. Her tie with Palestine is a tie of 14 years stay. Her sympathy with her father, Aziz, becomes the inciting element for her poetry. Besides, her mother, who is an exiled German, has a great effect on the visionary aspect of the nature of her exile. Nye's reaction to what is happening in Palestine seems to be very paradoxical and challenging in explanation. Her "peaceful" revolt seems to be against Zionism and the ideology of racism, rather than the loss of Palestine. Though she is far from her father's land, she does not consider herself as a stranger – an other in America, where her father and some other intellectuals installed after the Nakba (War of 1967). These exile writers found this new land tolerant and accepting the melting pot. Such friction between their own culture and the cultures of other diasporas make them reconstruct another identity, which seems to exclude them from both their home and the host country – America. This in-betweenness is a home within literature – a home conceived with art, and where the self-reveals its nature and philosophical outlook through language.

Keywords: *Naomi Shihab Nye, Arab Anglophone literature, Exile, Homemaking, Art and Identity.*

Introduction

Home and exile are two interrelated themes, which pre-dominate the American Arab poetess Naomi Shihab Nye's works. Her 14 years stay in Palestine does not really have a strong impact on the visionary aspect of her exile and notion of home. Nye seems to be different from the rest of the Arab diaspora of Texas. Thus, her art becomes different and the way to look at Palestine seems to be different too. Her sympathy with her father, who has lost his land and who died in exile, becomes the fulcrum around which her poetry revolves. Nye does not react as another in Texas, where she lives in harmony with other diasporas, but she is

rather against the ideology of Zionism exercised by Israel in Palestine. Her poems are words of tolerance and universal peace, where everyone and every confession could find a place to live without constraints of any sorts. But how can she re/construct, artistically, an identity and a space, where she acknowledges her own existence as a Palestinian and an Arab? To what extent is she able to represent in her poems the sense of loss and exile?

Self-Exile within Art: A World Within a Word

The act of writing is an act of self-discovery, which is dialogically related to one's own past, present and expectations. But being exiled, writers frequently include races and spaces within the mould of their artistic creation. El-Sayed El-Aswad points out that "Narratives imbue the past with personal and collective significance and construct present and projected life worlds. This means that individuals' sense of entities is an upshot of their subjective involvement in the world. Narrative mediates this involvement. Personal narratives shape how people attend to and feel about events."¹

The critic Philip Metres in his article, "Introduction to Focus: Arab-American Literature," points out that diversity in culture produces diversity in the Arab artistic creation. This cultural variety affects their unity and disperses their efforts to unite at least politically. He writes: "They do not adhere to one political body and do not have one single culture. Besides, they face racism, xenophobia and marginalization. And, more particularly, Arab-American literature returns to the paroxysm of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the Lebanese Civil War, Islam, and patriarchy/ homophobia."²

And so, Arab American writers are parted between two driving forces: one that pulls them to their homeland, and the other that pushes them to the new geography they live in: America. They seem to be lost, dispossessed and exiled in both spaces. There is **No** literal space to live in due to Israel, and there is no easy location in this new geography, which holds new cultures, which impose, unwillingly, a new mode of behaviour and new manner of living different from theirs. So, what remains for them is the (re)creation of their homes in poetry and fiction.

¹ El-Sayed El-Aswad, "Narrating the Self among Arab Americans: A Bridging Discourse between Arab Tradition and American Culture," *Digest of Middle East Studies* (Fall 2010), 238.

² Philip Metres, "Introduction to Focus: Arab-American Literature," *Focus* (November-December 2012), 3.

So, at the margin, as most of diasporas, Arab American writers feel that identity is not fixed – related to soil, tradition and people – but in essence, it is an on-going construction that overlaps with all the social, cultural, moral, and ethnic elements that surround them. Lisa Suhair Majaj raises such controversial matter and wonders:

*What kinds of "home" are possible for Palestinians in the U.S., especially when return to the geographical space of Palestine remains precluded by political and military realities? Is home a physical place, an emotional state; is it found in history, in memory? Can homes be created or recreated through writing? Are definitions of home altered by the experience of exile, whether literal or metaphorical?*³

On the other hand, the Arab critic Elmaz Abinader, in his article "Children of Al-Mahjar: Arab American Literature Spans a Century," has positioned that all Arab American writers, whatever are their modes of artistic expression, are emotionally and spiritually linked to their homelands and their cultures, than the new life in America. He writes: "Arab American writers are going beyond stories and poems that are linked to the homeland and heritage. Their expressions explore new vistas – related to years spent living in the United States – and domestic political and social issues that affect their everyday lives."⁴

To develop such issue of exile versus artistic creation, the focus is put on the contemporary Palestinian American poetess Naomi Shihab Nye. Through her poetry, Nye tries to (re)construct a home of her own. Though her vision is not similar to that of her father, she, nonetheless, acknowledges from him the importance of living in a universal home, where peace reigns, regardless of race, ethnic and religion. The nature of her exile is not forced; it seems to be soft, kind and free. Lisa Suhair Majaj states that the Palestinian American writers, among them Nye, reconstruct a home nuanced and related to the way they conceive it. She writes:

*Tracing the ramifications of exile and the need for homecoming, they not only give voice to their Palestinian identities, but also seek to forge understandings of home nuanced enough to contain all facets of their identities: as Palestinians, as Americans, as writers and as women. [...] But "return," in their work, signals a return not just to Palestine or to Palestinian history, but also to new visions of home and selfhood – grounded in history, memory, resistance, and the transformative power of the imagination.*⁵

³ Lisa Suhair Majaj, "Visions of Home: Exile and Return in Palestinian American Women's Literature," *ThaqafatEng Side* (14 February 2004), 251.

⁴ Elmaz Abinader, "Children of Al-Mahjar: Arab American Literature Spans a Century," *Electronic Journals of the U.S. Department of State* 5, 1 (February 2000), 13.

⁵ Majaj, "Visions of Home," 251-252.

In-betweenness is a home / exile within the self: It is introvertive and more inner because the writer cannot create real physical home in America, a kind of Palestine within Texas. In the words of Edward Said: “Exile is strangely compelling to think about but terrible to experience. It is the unhealable rift between a human being and a native place, between the self and its true home. [...] What is true of all exile is not that home and love of home are lost, but that loss is inherent in the very existence of both.”⁶ So, exile is only possible as a return within the self since the return to Palestine seems, for the time being, impossible. Majaj maintains that:

*Americans in general and Arab American writers in particular have long identified a deep sense of homelessness as one of the most salient features of Arab-American experience. Pointing toward a history of invisibility and/or exclusion within American culture, and describing lives marked by experiences of marginalization and negative stereotyping, many identify the process of embracing Arab-American identity, after years of trying in vain to “assimilate,” as a form of homecoming.*⁷

Majaj extends further claiming that: “The writer who negotiates exile, of whatever sort, is seeking not just a return to a particular geographical or emotional space, but is seeking to recreate the self in relationship to the world. If homecoming is a movement, a journey, homemaking is an act of creation.”⁸

N. S. Nye seems to consider exile as a home within, and the only way to make it possible is through art. She fashions it through the ingredient of her father’s land, culture and aspirations. “A traveler in the world able to make home where she goes, Nye is conscious of the tug of gravity rooting her in Palestine, yet conscious too of the tug of her US context.”⁹ As Nye suggests in a poem entitled “Fuel,” being of mixed heritage does not mean fragmentation; it can also mean “leaving nothing out.”¹⁰ In an interview, when the journalist Melissa Tuckey asks her whether she crystallizes her land and home in her poetry, Nye replies: “I think poetry is huge for all culture, even though sometimes it feels discreet, subtle, somewhat underground. Where are we without our voices? I hope the breath keeps billowing, like wind. I hope more people breathe it and speak it.”¹¹

But Nye tries to soften the blow by recreating a world of/with words – Palestine through art. Martin Farawell states that:

⁶ Edward W. Said, “Reflections on Exile,” *Cultural Critique* 1 (Autumn, 1985), 137-138.

⁷ Majaj, “Visions of Home,” 253.

⁸ Majaj, “Visions of Home,” 254.

⁹ Majaj, “Visions of Home,” 263.

¹⁰ Naomi Shihab Nye, *Fuel* (New York: BOA Editions, 1998), 60.

¹¹ Melissa Tuckey, “Interview with Naomi Shihab Nye,” Saturday, July 18, 2009, <http://www.salemsshalom.blogspot.com/2009/7/interview-with-naomi-shihab-nye.html>.

The Nature of Exile in Naomi Shihab Nye's Poems

*A poet could avoid the dilemma by taking the position that poetry shouldn't be "political." But Nye's poems are attempts to stay connected to the world and to others. She refuses to abandon the attempt despite the violence and injustice she must therefore bear witness to. It is almost as if she discovers how we are connected through the act of bearing witness.*¹²

Nye's love of Palestine is the love of someone, who is not offensive, repulsive and wanting. It is rather a universal love that joins the whole fragments of the world together: East with West, South with North, and Jews with Arabs. She seeks for a world where all the exiles, those who denounce violence, despotism and hatred, can live together regardless of their race, culture and ethnic: an exile, who excludes Zionism, chauvinism and the like. Farawell maintains that: "Love requires that we give our attention to another, however difficult it may sometimes be. We must love them, with all their human flaws and foibles, and not some idealized, false image. Nye reminds us that loving the world, and one's own country, requires the same quality of attention."¹³

To reach such world of exiles, Nye uses food as a symbol of belonging and identity. Though she leans more to Palestinian food, she likes the food of others. Exchanging food means laying the ground of a "world of another-own": the world of the in-between. Lorraine Mercer and Linda Strom state that:

*Her poems convey the idea that through observing the lives of others, we begin to dissolve the imaginary boundaries separating individuals, cultures, and countries. Nye's focus on food and its link to the histories of marginalized, often forgotten people, underscores the notion that our connections to each other must extend beyond the boundaries of self and of geographical space. She illustrates the need for connection beyond the self through her focus on the domestic space, often a kitchen in which the daily rituals of cooking and eating enlarge understanding and compassion for a world beyond the boundaries of the individual.*¹⁴

Nye tries to annihilate the barriers that exist between her and the other. *She* and *the other* should melt into *one*. No foreignness should exist: the stranger should no longer remain a stranger. Familiarity is the corner stone of friendship. And so, Nye transforms anger into kindness. She makes of the difficult moments a means of departure to the world of peace and harmony. She herself acclaims that: "I know we need to keep warm here on earth / and when your shawl is as thin as

¹² Martin Farawell, "Poetry Fridays: Naomi Shihab Nye," *The Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation: Imagine a Better New Jersey*, July 31, 2009, blog.grdodge.org/2009/07/31/poetry-fridays-naomi-shihab-nye.

¹³ Farawell, "Poetry Fridays."

¹⁴ Lorraine Mercer and Linda Strom, "Counter Narratives: Cooking Up Stories of Love and Loss in Naomi Shihab Nye's Poetry and Diana Abu-Jaber's *Crescent*," *MELUS* 32, 4 (Winter 2007), 35-36.

mine is, you tell stories.”¹⁵ Ibis Gomez-Vega claims that Nye is a peace-maker poet that speaks for the soul of people. She writes: “[Nye] reminds her readers that before you know what kindness really is you must lose things, feel the future dissolve in a moment like salt in a weakened broth.”¹⁶ This idea is very illustrative in “Half and Half” in *Words under the Words: Selected Poems*. In this collection, Nye marks her transcendental philosophy, which reckons pardon for any exiled individual, whose motif of exclusion is only claiming a land on which he lives among other people. She writes:

*Before you know kindness as the deepest thing inside,
You must know sorrow as the other deepest thing.
You must wake up with sorrow.
You must speak to it till your voice
Catches the thread of all sorrows
And you see the size of the cloth.*¹⁷

Her poem “Different Ways to Pray” signals the visionary aspect of exile. Exile is not physical: the physical is only a means of departure. It is rather transcendental and exclusively based on different beliefs and creeds. Nye writes:

*Wrapping themselves in new white linen
To ride buses across miles of vacant sand.
When they arrived at Mecca
They would circle the holy places,
On foot, many times,
They bend to kiss the earth
And return, their lean faces housing mystery
While for certain cousins and grandmothers
The pilgrimage occurred daily,
Lugging water from the spring
Or balancing the baskets of grapes.
These were the ones present at births,
Humming quietly to perspiring mothers.
There were those who didn't care about praying.
The young ones. The ones who had been to America.*¹⁸

This poem “explores the different ways people achieve self-awareness and revere the world. Poems document the new level of thinking and responding that

¹⁵ Naomi Shihab Nye, *Red Suitcase* (New York: BOA Editions, 1994), 26.

¹⁶ Ibis Gomez-Vega, “An Essay Review: The Art of telling Stories in the Poetry of Naomi Shihab Nye,” *MELUS* 26, 4 (Winter 2001), 248.

¹⁷ Naomi Shihab Nye, *Words under the Words: Selected Poems* (Portland, OR: The Eighth Mountain Press, 1995), 67.

¹⁸ Naomi Shihab Nye, “Different Ways to Pray,” in *The Heath Anthology of American Literature: Contemporary Period: 1945 to the Present*. 2977-2978, 5th Edition, ed. Paul Lauter (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2006), 2978.

results from getting to know oneself.”¹⁹ It is the sense of prayer, which is the essence of interconnection between people. We diverge in beliefs but we pray for the same motto. “Handed me one perfect pink rose, / because we had noticed each other, and that was all.”²⁰

The world, Nye wants to reproduce artistically, lies in the words she chooses for her poetic composition: the world is the word. With words, she creates space for all people of the globe, mainly those who are prevented of their real land and real space. In her poems and interviews, she speaks about Middle-East food and flora: she often refers to the fig tree and mint, which are so specific to her father's homeland. She even plants mint in Texas trying to reproduce Palestinian environment and climate in America. Rosemary and Reisman point out that: “That herb represents soothing and refreshing qualities that comfort and sustain Nye, transporting her emotionally to places and people she loves. She plants mint in her garden, even when climatic conditions are unfavourable, indicating her determination to pursue what she values.”²¹

Nye uses the herb mint to notify peace, forgiveness and mainly reconciliation, after violent clashes. In other words, mint softens rages of war and hatred and unites opponents more than differentiating between them. But, paradoxically, this mint is not kept out-there in Palestine: it is brought – here – in America. This means that she brings her father's culture in America as a symbol of difference, but also as a cultural contribution in the American diasporas. But Nye does not really know how this herb (mint) is used and prepared in Palestinian manner. This symbolises that she is stranger to her father's culture. Probably, it is only through her inciting father not to forget the homeland that she is reproducing Palestinian land, rites and tradition in Texas.

Nye is, somehow, stranger to all what is Palestinian; yet, she is fascinated by it. She feels that it is a duty to write about Palestine, the homeland of her father. Rosemary and Reisman maintain that: “Nye, who lacks memories of the mint snowball except for what her mother has shared, feels estranged and disconnected from her past and suffers an emptiness that she fears cannot be filled. She perceives the mint snowball as an unattainable ideal.”²² Her ignorance of the recipe of mint implies her ignorance of her Palestinian cultural background.

¹⁹ M. Rosemary and Canfield Reisman, eds., “Nye Naomi Shihab,” in *American Poets 3* (Pasadena, CA: Salem Press, 2011), 1440.

²⁰ Nye, *Words under the Words: Selected Poems*, 43.

²¹ Rosemary, “Nye Naomi Shihab,” 1442.

²² *Ibidem*, 1442.

Nye seems to be parted between two driving forces: Palestine (the father) and America (hospitality). She tries to compensate her sense of loss and indecisiveness through a world recreation: she uses and fuses both worlds (father and hospitality) within a new world, which unites these twin poles of her identity and being. In her article “Images of Palestinians in the Work of Naomi Shihab Nye”, Marcia G. Kutrieh underlines such uneasiness of Nye in recreating a new universal world, which holds some ingredients of her father’s blood and tradition. She writes: “In regard to Nye and her view of Palestinian men and women, we as readers, follow her journey to elucidate deep structure, clarify ambiguities, and sort out contradictions while enriching her understanding with new meaning, reflected, of course, through her text.”²³

Nye does not write to respond to the realities of her home and Palestine, but, rather, she looks at them from afar: Mass media. Thus, her poems are not as forceful and revolting as those of her compatriot Mahmud Darwish. They are rather cries of someone, who hates violence and wants a universal peace. In “Blood,” she laments:

*Today the headlines clot in my blood.
A little Palestinian dangles a truck on the front page.
Homeless fig, this tragedy with a terrible root
is too big for us. What flag can we wave?
I wave the flag of stone and seed,
table mat stitched in blue.
I call my father, we talk around the news.
It is too much for him,
neither of his two languages can reach it.
I drive into the country to find sheep, cows,
to plead with the air:
Who calls anyone civilized?
Where can the crying heart graze?
What does a true Arab do now?²⁴*

Nye looks differently to the problem of Palestine; so, she writes differently. Through her poems, she tries to make the reader think and be in favour of her visionary quest of universalism. In his article “The Healing Power of Art,” Donna L. Miller points out that: “When we hear people’s stories, when we share intimate aspects of self and culture, when we accept new ways of knowing, we can reduce ignorance, grow hope, and diminish hate.”²⁵

²³ Marcia G. Kutrieh, “Images of Palestinians in the Work of Naomi Shihab Nye,” *JKAU: Arts & Humanities* 15 (2007), 5.

²⁴ Nye, “Blood,” 2980.

²⁵ Donna L. Miller, “The Healing Power of Art,” *The ALAN Review* (Summer 2012), 30.

Through her poems, Nye wants to connect individuals together and makes them understand humanity and the world she wants to recreate in art: it connects people together with peace, kindness and wisdom. A world for everyone, who denies his space and race and, yet, he believes in one race and one space: humanity and universality. "As we individually escape into artistic creation," Miller maintains, "we discover potential; art renews our hopes and gives us reason to dream. Art provides a place to battle the demons in our lives and to survive the fight."²⁶ In the same vein, Safa'a Abdulrahim states that Nye believes a lot in words. She shows her sense of loss: loss of the father, the land of the father and more importantly, the sense of being far from Palestine. She writes: "Her faith in the power of words to renew and uplift the spirit is the fuel that feeds her soul."²⁷

In her doctorate dissertation entitled "Transformative Acts: Arab American Writing/ Writing Arab America," Lisa Suhair Majaj is driven by Nye's poetry and its growing interest for readership because of the way she transforms, through language, her father's loss into an everlasting now. She writes: "I was struck by how her poetry grew quietly in threading, so that everything felt linked and expanding. And I was captivated by the subtle insistence, in almost every poem, on the value of different perspectives, different ways of seeing and being in the world."²⁸ Majaj acknowledges the rich background of Nye. She seems to tell us that Nye is more than a Palestinian. She has visited many spaces and places and brushed up with different cultures of the world. Majaj writes:

*Moving between her Palestinian and American heritages, the multiple cultures of the southwest where she resides, and the different countries to which she travels, her poetry explores the markers of cross-cultural complexity. While honoring the specificity of culturally rooted lives, Nye also emphasizes the liberating possibilities of border crossings. [...] Nye grounds selfhood upon the recognition and articulation of differences.*²⁹

Such selfhood, a self within words, manifests only when the external constraints make it react, kindly, through the amount of emotional intensity that words, in which it dwells, enable it to express. The poem "Kindness" speaks about sympathy and solidarity of those who suffer and who do not have a place of peace and tranquillity. Nye invites every exiled to see these sufferings and feel the humiliation in the same manner the oppressed people feel it:

²⁶ *Ibidem*, 31.

²⁷ Safa'a Abdulrahim, "Between Empire and Diaspora: Identity Poetics in Contemporary Arab-American Women's Poetry," PhD in English Studies (University of Stirling, June 2013), 124.

²⁸ Lisa Suhair Majaj, "Transformative Acts: Arab American Writing/Writing Arab America," PhD in American Culture (The University of Michigan, 2012), 44.

²⁹ *Ibidem*, 126.

*Before you learn the tender gravity of kindness,
you must travel where the Indian in a white poncho
lies dead by the side of the road.
You must see how this could be you,
how he too was someone
who journeyed through the night with plans
and the simple breath that kept him alive.³⁰*

Connection between people ensures communality and makes them near to one another and share the same motto: live with and for *one-another*. This is what Nye seems to tell the reader. Her universalism makes her link the sufferings of the other with her own, as a human being rather than as a Palestinian.

This sense of loss and forgetfulness, but of belonging and togetherness, hovers over her poem “For Lost and Found Brothers.” There are many evidences, which demonstrate such philosophy of exile in Nye’s poetry. Exile does not mean being absent from the feast of life, but, rather, reformulating the world on her own shape: connection. In this poem, she writes:

*For you, brothers.
For the blood rivers invisibly harbored.
For the grandfather who murmured the same songs.
And for the ways we know each other years before meeting,
how strangely and suddenly, on the lonely porches,
in the sleepless mouth of the night,
the sadness drops away, we move forward,
confident we were born into a large family,
our brothers cover the earth.³¹*

Home and America

Being in America, Nye seems to lose vivacity and nostalgia to her homeland – Palestine. Probably, she sees her duty to revive what her father lost as land more than herself. In a reply to a question by Kathleen Herndon, about her awareness of her homeland, she replies:

I travel all the time. I see people everywhere, and I think Americans are profoundly open-hearted people, Americans of all backgrounds. Whatever their personal feelings about what’s going on right now, whatever their political convictions, whatever their background, whether they’ve traveled or lived in the Middle East as you and I have, whether they’ve never been there or never want to go there, there’s still a sense of openness and kindness and acceptance that I find. It was just this back and forth, this merging of cultural exchange, but I didn’t think of myself so much as an Arab-American when I was a kid. Just the same, I do think the world leads us into identities,

³⁰ Nye, *Words under the Words: Selected Poems*, 45.

³¹ *Ibidem*, 51.

*and I don't think it's bad to have those, if people try to give you an identity like, "you're a western writer," "you're a woman writer."*³²

In another interview when James Blasingame raised the notion of home and borderlands, Nye explains her position, which is quite paradoxical. It is probably due to the short lived time (14 years) she, so young, spent in Palestine:

James: Some of the book's poetry deals with Borderlands and how some young people are residents of two cultures but accepted by neither. Can you explain how that is, please?

*Naomi: It is true that some people who live in Borderland situations feel at home in neither place, but it is also true that some of us end up feeling at home everywhere.*³³

Being American, but consciously felt different because of being *not white* or *not quite white*, Nye wants to have a world without tension, a world where she could live being herself and being sympathetic with others, who are not white – or quite white – but who are likewise Americans. Such vexed relationship to American citizenry is rendered complicated by the problem of racial ambiguity. Ibis Gomez-Vega states: “Although she shares her father’s Palestinian ancestry, she does not recognize it as a marker.”³⁴ Whatever is her Americanness, the place she gets in America is diasporic and essentially based on ethnicity and race. Her recognition of being so has made her think of an in-between world, which becomes a niche of exile for her. In her poem “Arabic,” in *Red Suitcase* collection, she writes:

*I thought pain had no tongue. Or every tongue
at once, supreme translator, sieve. I admit my
shame. To live on the brink of Arabic, tugging
its rich threads without understanding
how to weave the rug ... I have no gift.
The sound, but not the sense.*³⁵

But being unable to speak Arabic correctly, she is not seen by a common Arab as non-Arab. Tanyss Ludescher points out that: “Arab American women writers face their own particular set of problems. When Arab American women criticize the patriarchal nature of their society, they are often accused of

³² Kathleen M. Herndon, “On Life, Art, and politics – A Conversation with Naomi Shihab Nye,” *Conversation* 25, 1 (Fall 2008), 26.

³³ James Blasingame, “Interview with Naomi Shihab Nye,” *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy* (September 2010), 67.

³⁴ Gomez-Vega, “An Essay Review,” 251.

³⁵ Nye, *Red Suitcase*, 86.

abandoning their own culture and adopting Western modes of thought.”³⁶ In the same vein Anissa J. Wardi *et al.* maintain that:

*Cultural and ethnic beliefs are inextricable from one's worldview and thus the speaker of "Home" is caught in a liminal space, poisoned, as he is, between his Arab worldview of family and an American worldview, which encourages independence and individuation. The multiple registries of movement literalize the speaker's tensions, as the family's immigration to America has resulted in the father's inability to live in accordance with his inherited worldview.*³⁷

In the same context, the critic Gomez-Vega in his article “Extreme Reality: Naomi Shihab Nye’s Essays and Poems,” claims that Nye is safe in America and does not have the same feeling of war as those who live in Palestine. She looks at the war from afar, and, thus, she does not reproduce faithfully the intensity of sufferings and sorrows the Palestinians undergo. She writes:

*Her poetry reflects the realities of the war-torn ancestral homeland and the peaceful life that she leads in the American Southwest where she lives with her husband and child in relative safety. [...] Although war rages across the ocean in the land of her ancestors, the American Southwest provides safety, solace, peace, a space where a poet can think about the state of the world and hope to effect change.*³⁸

And so, exile seems to be very special for Nye. It is not of the land she did not live in. She is identified more with America than with the Arab world. That is why her exile is not intense and intensive. She mollifies her father’s anger rather than her sense of loss of Palestine. Majaj points out that:

*Exile, moreover, exists in relation not only to the lost homeland, but also to the complex and contradictory space of the present. Situated at a remove from both Palestinian and U.S. culture by virtue of their dual; identities, Palestinian-Americans may find themselves not only exiled from the geographical homeland they may never have set foot on, but also excluded, politically and culturally, from U.S. identity.*³⁹

Diversity of/in culture is a rich heritage, which is communal to all Americans of the diasporas. R. William Ferris points out that: “In the stories they tell from different points of view, U.S. authors of a multitude of backgrounds build bridges of understanding over which all of us can cross into each other’s worlds.”⁴⁰ The long-time home of Naomi Shihab Nye is no doubt San Antonio

³⁶ Tanyss Ludescher, “From Nostalgia to Critique: An Overview of Arab American Literature,” *MELUS* 31, 4 (Winter 2006), 106.

³⁷ Aniss J. Wardi and Katherine Wardi-Zonna, “Memories of Home: Reading the Bedouin in Arab Literature,” *Ethic Studies Review* 31 (Summer 2008), 69.

³⁸ Ibis Gomez-Vega, “Extreme Realities: Naomi Shihab Nyer’s Essays and Poems,” *Alif* 3 (2010), 109.

³⁹ Majaj, “Visions of Home,” 253.

⁴⁰ William R. Ferris, “An Introductory Comment,” *Electronic Journals of the U.S Department of State* 5, 1 (February 2000), 5.

(Texas) – it is a kind of melting pot, which fuses together different races, from Latinos and Blacks to Lebanese and Palestinians, and other ethnics. Poems of her collection *Is This Forever or What? Poems and Paintings from Texas* do reflect such background and show Nye's ties to such place, its people and its culture, more than the place of her father's land – Palestine. In "San Antonio," she writes:

*I remembered the old men
in the west side café,
dealing dominoes like magical charms.
It was then I knew,
like a woman looking backward,
I could not leave you,
or find anyone I loved more.*⁴¹

In her article, "Wandering Poet – Naomi Shihab Nye," Lauren Newkirk Maynard seems to excuse Nye's acknowledgement of her belonging to San Antonio than to Palestine due to three reasons: the first one is that Nye was born and spent almost all her life in San Antonio, with its people and diversity of culture; the second, Palestine seems to be so far because she spent (as a teenager) no more than 14 years, as a visitor more than a settler; the third, Palestine is at war-time: thus, no peace possibility is ever given to her to visit the land of the father.⁴²

Space location is the key of Nye's search. She is lost between her father's land through blood – Palestine – and her birth place America, which has influenced her identity formation. In her doctorate thesis about Nye, Wafa Youcef Al-Khatib writes: "Naomi Shihab Nye is one of the Arab-American writers whose works reveal a deep understanding of our weakness, our humanity, as the stories she creates define her ties to the people who endow her with an appreciation for heritage and a strong sense of what she has lost and what she has gained as she defines her own place in the world."⁴³

Within diaspora, Nye tries to connect with individuals and forge tight boundaries. Her exile is rather personal than communal. She sees, from her own niche, people with a special eye trying to recreate life based essentially on

⁴¹ Naomi Shihab Nye, "San Antonio," in *Is This Forever or What? Poems and Paintings from Texas* (New York: Harper Collins, 2004), printed by Poets.org, <https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem/san-antonio>.

⁴² Lauren Newkirk Maynard, "Wandering Poet – Naomi Shihab Nye," Just Buffalo Literary Center (2011/2012), 5, www.justbuffalo.org/babel.

⁴³ Wafa Yousef Al-Khatib, "An Examination of Postcolonialism, Multiculturalism and Hybridity in Naomi Shihab Nye's *Sitti's Secrets*, *Habibi*, *19 Varieties of Gazelle Poems of the Middle East* and *Red Suitcase*," Master in English Language and Literature, Department of English Language and Literature (Amman, Jordan, January, 2009), 5.

inner/outer vision. Al Khatib maintains that: “Nye also writes from a universal perspective in which she tries to take care of the inner lives of the people, which make her poetry very close to the way many people think and feel, utilizing her ethnic experience that reflects her attitude towards the world including the Middle Eastern culture.”⁴⁴ So, space coins her belonging; she feels American more than Palestinian. Of one hundred fifty five (155) poems in her three published collections, only fourteen (14) have Arab or Palestinian content – less than nine percent.⁴⁵

The dilemma Nye lives in is due to her helter-skelter state. She feels that her duty is to write about her father’s land, but at the same time, she feels rooted in America. But to what extent is she able to fuse both in reality? Amal Abdelrazek maintains that: “Arab-American women are not quite the same as Arab women or the same as American women, nor are they quite the «other»; they stand in that undetermined threshold place where they constantly drift in and out.”⁴⁶ Sana’a Abdulrahim describes in-betweenness as a feeling within writers themselves, more than society. In her doctorate thesis about empire and diaspora, she writes: “Adnan, Nye, Kahf and Hammad have extended themselves across both worlds and cultures, drawing on both, yet developing their new diasporic multi-layered perspectives; neither are these perspectives Arab, nor are they American.”⁴⁷

By presenting to American readers Palestinians as humans, who are suffering, Nye wants to universalize Palestinian cause not as a typical matter – the loss of the land – but as people, who deserve to live in a world of peace among all other races and ethnics. Thus, she seems to tell us that acceptance to live with the other, as she does herself in American, is the only issue of peace for Palestinians. In other words, she is against the suffering of people rather than the usurping of the land. Abdulrahim states that:

Naomi Shihab Nye always claims that her experiences in Palestine and San Antonio have led to the formation of her poetic vision through the prism of [...] the “radical multiculturalism.” It is a mode of multiculturalism that seeks to move beyond binary classifications of identities and rigid boundaries of identifications. Rather, it moves towards more inclusive relationships and commonalities within the context of difference

⁴⁴ Al-Khatib, “An Examination of Postcolonialism,” 23.

⁴⁵ Al-Khatib, “An Examination of Postcolonialism,” 41.

⁴⁶ Amal Abdelrazek, “Scheherazad’s Legacy Arab-American Women Writers and the Resisting, Healing, and Connecting Power of their Storytelling,” *The MIT: Electronic Journal of Middle East Studies* 5 (Spring 2005), 150.

⁴⁷ Abdulrahim, “Between Empire and Diaspora,” 20.

The Nature of Exile in Naomi Shihab Nye's Poems

*to denounce and transform persistent realities by forging alliances that cross race and other tropes of classifications of different groups.*⁴⁸

Regardless of ethnicity, race and colour, human beings are alike. Humaneness is innate within every one of us. Nye, subsequently, looks at Palestinians through this angle. Her poems incarnate such vision of oneness, which enhances everyone to feel compassion and empathy and reach a good comprehension of human nature. Being of mixed cultural heritage and bounded by more than one culture, Nye's poems offer a kind of ambiguity in identifying which of the cultures she is near to. In this context, Majaj claims that:

*Nye offers a nuanced meditation on the notion of cultural "blood inheritance," moving from a lightly humorous consideration of the possibilities of being a "true Arab" offered by her father's folk tales, to a deeply troubled questioning of the implications and responsibilities of this identity.*⁴⁹

In her poem "Blood," she says:

*Years before, a girl knocked,
wanted to see the Arab.
I said we didn't have one.
After that, my father told me who he was, "Shihab" – "shooting star" –
a good name, borrowed from the sky."
Today the headlines clot in my blood.
Homeless fig, this tragedy with a terrible root
is too big for us.*⁵⁰

Nye seems to be haunted by the loss of the father, who died in exile without seeing his land independent. That is why she writes about his people and his land to free herself from the burden of this past. In "The Man Who Makes Brooms," she writes:

*So you come with these maps in your head
and I come with voices chiding me to
"speak for my people"
and we march around like guardians of memory
till we find the man on the short stool
who makes brooms.*⁵¹

Which home does Nye consider as a real space for her? Is it the palpable effective concrete one? Is it that of her father? Or is it the universal one, where all people live in with different cultures, conditions and positions? Nye's poems seem to reveal more than what she wants to tell us: she hides her visionary aspects of

⁴⁸ Abdulrahim, "Between Empire and Diaspora," 120.

⁴⁹ Majaj, "Transformative Acts: Arab American Writing/Writing Arab America," 127.

⁵⁰ Nye, "Blood," 2979.

⁵¹ Nye, *Words under the Words: Selected Poems*, 127.

life. In her artistic creation, she is very ambiguous. In this ambiguity, she exiles herself. Majaj maintains that:

But overarching all of these is the idea of a home in the self: a space shaped by cultural, political, social, religious, familial, gendered and geographical factors, but which cannot be reduced to any of these. In this sense, home-space rewrites the multiple dimensions of exile – physical, cultural, emotional, spiritual and metaphorical -- and creates the grounds for both identity and agency.⁵²

Conclusion

Through her poetry, Nye seeks to create a world of peace, where people of the Middle-East could live together beyond tensions and contentions. She perceives a world through the lens of her world: a world where all diasporas live in harmony, like America, she dwells her. America, for her, is a world of cultures – the world of the worlds. Though Nye is of a Palestinian origin, among her one hundred fifty five (155) poems (published in three collections), only fourteen (14) dealt with the ancestral homeland of the father; the rest are about Hispanic Southwest, where she lives, and about Latin America, where she has most of the time travelled.

Nye's exile is not the one that is tinged and imbued with nostalgia and homesickness. Possessing a mixed heritage, she does not feel uprooted: she is at home wherever she goes. Her father's home, which holds three monotheistic religions, could be an inspiring element to lay the ground for her own world, where harmony between people is built up.

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⁵² Majaj, "Transformative Acts: Arab American Writing/Writing Arab America," 209.

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Selecting and Developing Teaching/Learning Materials in EFL classes

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Abstract

*Materials' development in EFL classes is a continuous concern of teachers. Teaching components include explanation, questioning and feedback. However, without a good textbook and suitable teaching material, even an experienced teacher will not have a great success. "Materials should teach students to learn, they should be resource books for ideas and activities for instruction / learning, and they should give teachers rationales for what they do."*¹

Language teaching has important elements like students, methods, strategies and techniques. Why are teaching materials important in EFL classes? What is the role of materials in language learning? What is a good English textbook? How can we select materials according to student's age and language level? Can teachers and novice ones manage their time to use supplementary materials?

It is true that the text is the base of teaching / learning processes, but in some cases, teachers should differentiate materials and activities for the sake of learning. If your students feel bored, not motivated, creating interactive activities based on additional materials will lower the barriers of learning. Curriculum is adapted to student's goals in centered classes. It is the teacher's concern to monitor the learning process and to adapt materials, textbook, activities and methodology to student's needs if they are not. With materials it is understood every teaching/learning sources used in class like textbooks, audio visual, ITC. In this paper, we will consider some important elements in how, what and why to choose materials concerning effective teaching/learning in EFL context.

¹ R. L. Allwright, "What do we want teaching materials for?" in *Currents in language teaching*, eds. R. Rossner and R. Bolitho (Oxford University Press, 1990).

Keywords: *classroom materials, interactive activities, teaching/learning process.*

Introduction

Language learning and teaching is a long process, which involves students in acquiring, comprehension and usage of language. As such, many components are combined together and are very important ingredients. To be a good language speaker there is a need to use strategies of learning effectively. Besides this, there are other components that affect learners like: teachers, methodology, materials. As it is stated by Richards,²

The notion of teaching methods has had a long history in language teaching, as is witnessed by the rise and fall of a variety of methods throughout the recent history of language teaching.

Therefore, the teaching materials to serve better to the purpose of learning support methods. For these reasons, let us have a look at language materials used in the classroom. Fostering students' interaction is not a simple matter.

Learner's ability to acquire language differs from a learner to another. In a language classroom, there are different students that use different strategies in learning and have different learning styles. *What to do in in this case? How can we select and adopt materials in our own classroom?* This is the first issue that it is dealt.

Materials in the foreign language classroom

There are different perceptions about the word "*materials*" in a language classroom. As teachers, we understand that materials include all written, visual content used in the language class, including the textbook. Being a textbook or other material, they serve for different purposes. Textbook is the core of the process, but beside this, there are other "additional materials" that we can use in the class.

Authentic materials include written and visual ones like:

- *Magazines,*
- *Books,*
- *Pamphlets,*
- *Brochures,*
- *Advertisements,*

² Jack C. Richards and Willy A. Renandya, *Methodology in Language Teaching An Anthology of Current Practice* (Cambridge University Press, 2002), 5.

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- *Magazines,*
- *Newspapers,*
- *Instructions,*
- *Videos,*
- *Films,*
- *Songs,*
- *Music,*
- *Documentaries, est.*

Although teachers may use and find materials, it is very important to know *why* and *how* to use them. We can find them easily in internet, libraries, or even asking colleagues. The way teachers use materials in the language classroom depends on the reasons, the stage and learner's need. Some teachers may use them as an additional teaching resource, while some others may use them since at the beginning. The materials are used to help learners acquire the basic skills as an *example*: the use of a song to teach grammar issues. Materials may be used to teach cultural content as an *example*: a documentary about UK or USA.

Materials expose students to authentic language as an *example* a historical documentary spoken by authentic English speaker (a native one). The usage of additional materials help teachers to varie language content and strategies. If we have a look at the Curriculum of foreign language teaching, we will see that among the components of language learning and teaching, materials and textbook are given great importance.

Teachers are aware that learners should use the language to master communicative competence. As it is stated in the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*³ “Plurilingual and pluricultural competence refers to the ability to use languages for the purposes of communication and to take part in intercultural interaction, where a person, viewed as a social agent has proficiency, of varying degrees, in several languages and experience of several cultures.” This means that all the language materials used in the language classroom should be exploitable. Language has three points of view: structural, functional and interactive. Thus, it is very important while selecting the materials, because language is learned in the context, thus the materials should contain language that fulfills the three points, otherwise it does not make sense.

³ Council of Europe, *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment* Language Policy Unit (Strasbourg: Cambridge University Press), 168, www.coe.int/lang-CEFR.

*Materials, therefore, need to be authentic-like, that is, 'authentic, in the sense that the language is not artificially constrained, and is, at the same time, amenable to exploitation for language teaching purposes.'*⁴

Once we select the materials that we want to use, or once we have the English textbook and we want extra interactive activities, we can adopt the first or the second for our own teaching / learning purposes. We may suggest here some kind of activities, which will help learners acquire language.

❖ **Materials adoption**

Newspapers

If we want authentic language exploration, we can take as an example of authentic material a newspaper. Usually newspapers deals with issues like environment, pollution or climate changes. In such a case, we can take an extract on the following issues and create some activities for our own students.

Level B1

➤ **Activity 1**

Work in pairs. Write about the climate changes according to your point of view. Have a look at the text. What else would you add to this article?

➤ **Activity 2**

Individual

Write an essay about climate changes in the recent years.

Instructions for the essay:

Take in consideration:-food-temperature-Air pollution-Health problems, add others.

Foreign language Textbook

Textbooks are not a new concern in foreign or English language teaching. "Concern whether pre-prepared materials can meet individual learner needs is part of the dilemma teacher's face in trying to implement learner-centered language programs in a group setting."⁵ In the Albanian educational system, the Ministry of Education approves foreign language textbooks used in schools. This means that teachers should use these books in language classes. However, this does not mean that all the textbooks are the same and offer the same possibility for communicative activities. For this reason, enhancing student's ability to communicate, the teacher should use or even adopt the textbook to be communicative.

⁴ I. Mac William, "Video and language comprehension," *ELT Journal* 40(2), reprinted in *Currents of change in English language teaching*, eds. Rossner and R. Bolitho (1986), 160.

⁵ Richards and Renandya, *Methodology in Language Teaching*, 81.

It remains to the teacher to create, activities that make students exploit and use the language. From the experience, we have noticed that a good textbook should contain interesting topics for discussion, should motivate and should be always interesting. Other points to be given to a good textbook are if it has clear instructions for exercises, activities, in order to make it understandable. In other words, Textbook should support learning. “An approved textbook may easily become the curriculum in the classroom, yet fail to incorporate significant features of the policy or goals that it is supposed to address.”⁶

It is very important for the learner to be motivated and engage himself / herself in interaction. Thus, it remains to the teacher to make students be actively involved in class. To reinforce this opinion we can mention what Prabhu states about this process:

*if the teacher engages in classroom activity with a sense of intellectual excitement, there is at least a fair probability that learners will begin to participate in the excitement and to perceive classroom lessons mainly as learning events as experiences of growth for themselves.*⁷

As in the case of the newspaper even in a Textbook we can have some changes and adoption. To illustrate this let us bring as an example the *English textbook On Screen*⁸ level B1+.Module 2 pg.35 the reading part *My storm - chasing adventure*. There is given the reading part and the reading exercise is a multiple-choice exercise. We can design other types of exercises for the reading comprehension and the writing skill.

Example

➤ Activity 1

Individual

-Read the story again. What would you do if you were the main character? Would you change anything from that journey?

-Find a synonym for the underlined words. (the teacher has underlined the words that are important to understand the text)

-Find another ending for the story. Continue it with your own words.

➤ Activity 2

Work in pairs

-Rewrite the story in the form of a dialogue including more characters.

Individual

⁶ M. G. Fullan, *The New Meaning of Educational Change* (London: Cassell, 1991), 70.

⁷ N. S. Prabhu, “The dynamics of the language lesson,” *TESOL Quarterly* 26/2 (1992), 239.

⁸ Virginia Evans and Jenny Dooly, *On Screen, student's book* (Express publishing, 2014), 35.

-Write your imaginative adventure story. (Up to 150 words). Topic: free choice.

Individual writing will help students practice structure, language, be independent in thinking, while working in pairs help students build cooperative learning, share ideas and learn from each other. The activities must be adapted always to student's language level.

Like the activities mentioned above, teachers may use other types like: guessing games with A1, A2 level, where you can prepare flash cards, write words on it or grammar items, divide pupils in groups and give the proper time to develop the activity. Other types of interactive activities are scrambled words or sentences, quizzes and so on.

Audiovisuals

Drama or movie usage

This is another type of interactive activity. Either you can choose written or visual drama and prepare exercises on them. Let students comprehend even using subtitles to act out. Movies, dramas, cartoons contain authentic language usage, for this reason they are very good to be used in the language classroom. They might be used even for comprehending grammar items, even to exploit the meaning of the words in the context. Examples of some movies or cartoons to be used with different levels. *Game Shakers 12-14, Sponge Bob-10-12, Ben Ten, Avatar 10-12 est.*

Example of the activities involved in using audiovisuals as materials in a language class:

Course: English Language Teaching Methods

Degree programme: Master in English

No. of students: 38

This course aims to provide students of Master in English with knowledge about the development of teaching methodologies available for English language teaching. They are going to become teachers for this reason this course will also provide different frameworks for developing lesson plans to prepare students for their own teaching practice at the end of the studies. As a practice they implement in seminars simulations of English classes from theory to practice. As part of teaching, novice teachers use even audiovisuals as a teaching practice. They learn how to use an audiovisual material adopting it for different language levels and write a lesson plan and create activities from those mentioned above.

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Below there are given two examples practiced in this course.

➤ *The first Practical activity:*

Students are required to watch a movie: Cinderella. After watching they should write a lesson plan upon it. They should create and design activities based on the story. Activities include reading and writing exercises. Students have 15-20 minutes to perform a simulation class choosing 5 students to be their pupils. The lesson plan is designed for students of the 6th Grade, level A2. After performing the rest of the class gives opinions about this process. They are satisfied so they are going to use such an example for a real class.

➤ *The second practical activity*

Students have different pieces of authentic materials from the textbook of British history Mc Dowall , David. An Illustrated History of Britain. Students are divided in groups of 4 students each group. Working for 15 minutes they are required to design one exercise for each of the skills: reading, speaking, writing and listening. After that, each of the groups performed by reading the exercises. Each group based on the material given designed exercises for language students Grade 12, level B2. The types of exercises included: 1. True or false. 2. Critical thinking questions. 3. General comprehension. 4. Listen and fill in gap. 5. Write your own story.

The aim of this kind of activities is to make students proficient in teaching English classes by using the most useful techniques combined with language materials and especially audiovisuals materials which are a very good source and may be exploitable to any teacher who wants to use variety in a language classroom.

Conclusion

In student-centered classes, teaching and learning takes place on both plans: instruction and practice. Teachers may use the already given material-textbook, or other additional materials, like those mentioned previously, to adopt them for teaching/learning purposes. Materials should be chosen carefully and should be suitable to language level and age of learners. Students at the same time practice grammar patterns and the meaning of the new words in the context. All the elements of the process should be combined together to produce effective learning. Authentic language usage enhances motivation and interaction. Try always to choose interesting topics and differentiate strategies and activities. Using visual media student's language comprehension, acquisition and interaction is reinforced.

According to Wright⁹ “*We teach with, rather than through, materials, thus being free to improvise and adapt in response to learner feedback.*” Other benefits of using authentic materials are the cultural information provided. They will help learners to comprehend better and to learn new things.

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Novice Teachers and some need-to-know Classroom Management Questions

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Abstract

*"Classroom management refers to the ways in which student behavior, movement and interaction during a lesson are organized and controlled by the teacher."*¹ While one has completed a graduation and learned all that s/he could about classroom management while student teaching, by reading textbooks, or observing experienced teachers, he's still left with many questions unanswered. Many 'inexperienced' teachers stand in front of the classroom, instruct students, give explanations, assign homework and are convinced that they have done the best possible job. However the question still remains if the students "got it"?! It's worth taking a moment here to define exactly what we mean when we talk about classroom management. To our point of view, there are a number of key concepts to consider, namely: preparation, procedures and behavior. Cultural norms are also different. So there are a lot of classroom management questions and answers that every novice teacher wants to know. Teaching is only the half of it. A large part of our "teaching" time is spent not on developing lesson plans or introducing new material, but doing something else entirely. Unfortunately, there doesn't exist a simple bound of tips that will work in all situations. To get to the heart of how-to-effectively manage the classroom, we'll have to go deeper.

In this article, we'll examine some key questions and elements that we all, as educators, need to consider when deciding on our own approaches to classroom management. We give some ideas that seem to work effectively, but personal observation, experience and reflection is what matters. Our best advice is, reflect on what works and adapt the approach accordingly.

Keywords: *classroom management, need-to-know questions, inexperienced teachers, interaction procedures behavior.*

¹ J. Richards and D. Nunan, *Second language teacher education* (Cambridge Language Teaching Library, 1990), 10.

Introduction

What is classroom management?

It's worth defining what we mean when we talk about classroom management. A number of crucial concepts need to be considered, like: *preparation, procedures and behavior*. The ending goal of effective classroom management is to optimize the students' learning experiences. There are a lot of classroom management questions and answers that every novice teacher wants to know. In our opinion:

- classroom management requires *what* to use for learning and *how* to use it
- classroom management is independent of methodology
- is complex but simple
- it's the way we manage students' learning by organizing and controlling what happens in our classroom.
- classroom management should not be considered as classroom discipline or refer to the ways of keeping order in class.

I. Novice teachers and some need-to-know classroom management questions

Many "inexperienced" teachers stand in front of the classroom, instruct students, give explanations, assign homework and are convinced that they have done the best possible job. However the question still remains if the students "got it"?! It's worth to stop here and define exactly what we mean when we talk about *classroom management*. So classroom management is independent of methodology, is complex because it covers issues like: location, cultural norms, time available, relationships, moods & many other factors, it's the way we manage students' learning by organizing and controlling what happens in our classroom. On the other hand, classroom management should not be considered as classroom discipline or refer to the ways of keeping order in class. There are many *easy-to-learn*, practical techniques that can be tried out and used as teacher's repertoire.

II. Let's get started with 11 crucial need-to-know issues, proper for classroom management:

- a. *Classroom layout* (arrangement of seats/desks/tables) But a precious advice for novice teachers: *avoid chaos when rearranging the room*. (One tip that helps here, is to give learners responsibility, to make use of their ideas in rearranging the class). The way students are seated in the classroom will often determine the dynamics of the lesson. Indeed, a simple change in the seating pattern can make an incredible difference to group coherence and

Novice Teachers and some need-to-know Classroom Management Questions

student satisfaction. In many cases the seating has been a crucial element in the success or failure of the lesson.

Sometimes, the desks are fixed to the ground or the school has strict rules about not moving the furniture. The increasing number of *students is* also an issue of concern. Teachers have different preferences for seating arrangements. Some layouts suggested by Jim Scrivener² are:

- Semi-circle or U
- Tipped U
- One large table
- Curved rows
- Full circle
- Diagonal
- Separate corners, etc.

In any case, whatever seating pattern we choose or is imposed on us, the class is likely to be more successful if we keep the following principles in mind:

- Try and maximize eye contact.
- Make sure students are seated at a comfortable distance from each other.
- Think in advance about how you will organize changing partners or changing groups.
- Fix Students' Names

b. varying teacher's position

Too often I have heard teachers, trainees and inexperienced teachers come out of a lesson and ask each other the same question; *standing or sitting?!* Norms may differ, culture context too, especially when teaching in an unknown environment. However there's no rule book that teachers have to stand all the way through their lessons. Sitting down is not illegal. It can have certain uses:

- give oneself a rest
- signal changes in the pace & tone (a slower pace / a different tone)

(Varying teacher's position is also connected with the fact "*how do I want the learners to view me*" - *as an authority, as a distant figure, a manager, a friend, a mentor, or a facilitator!?*).

c. planning, preparation and clear expectations.

² Jim Scrivener, "Classroom Management Techniques" CPU (2012), 79-84.

Planning allows for effective transitions between activities, teachers should have clear, explicit learning objectives, sufficient activities to achieve these objectives, and enough teaching materials (visual aids, flash cards, photocopies, online immersion, videos). Having the appropriate materials help to make the lesson run smoothly and achieve the desired learning outcomes. Teachers make sure that students always know and are aware of what is expected from them at each stage of the lesson. Instructions should be *brief, explicit* and ***consistent***.

d. appropriate sequencing of activities

It is worthwhile giving some time to the sequencing of activities. Teachers need to think about the time of day their lessons are taking place. *A Friday afternoon may not be the proper time to undertake a grammar lesson.* Teachers should vary the way they use exercises, recycle tasks, thus using the course book selectively,³ and consider sequencing within the structure of their own lessons.

e. cultural context and support

It is important to bear in mind that every school has its own *school culture* and *conduct code*. This will help when we consider our approach to classroom management. It's also important to get a feel for the local teaching culture when teaching in an unknown context. Sometimes difficulties are best resolved by a local teacher. Good working relationships with colleagues, *parents, help to face successfully discipline issues.*

f. use of students' mother tongue

If used *carefully* and with a *well-thought* plan, student's mother tongue can be a very effective classroom management tool. If we can not speak the mother tongue of the students that we are teaching, then we seek for aids and facilities, one of which is *learning a few key phrases*, this can help us manage our classroom, better.

g. ignore disruptive behavior in the classroom

Ignoring low-level disruptive behavior disturbances in the classroom may at times be necessary. It may seem absurd but sometimes teaching, like politics, becomes "the art of the possible." There are occasions when a particular student becomes something of a black ship for our attention. Of course, we don't give up on a student, but we cannot always find a "*quick-fix*" solution in the middle of a

³ Penny Ur, *Penny Ur's 100 teaching Tips* (Cambridge University Press, 2016), 10-13.

lesson. Instead, we may have *to build rapport with disruptive students over time*. We rarely know the real reasons of misbehavior. It may be that students just don't like our class, but we should be sensitive to the possibility of other reasons. Find out what they are interested in and try to engage them in a little conversation when possible. Taking it slowly at the start, and having patience will make us understand that *classroom management is more of an art than a science*. "To maintain order and to keep the group on task and moving ahead, not to spot and punish those students who are misbehaving."⁴

h. consider the advantages and disadvantages of punishment

Punishment is an event that takes place after a behavior. Punishments are designed to reduce that behavior in the future. It depends on the kind of punishment. Punishments for bad behavior should be compensated / balanced by rewards for good behavior to avoid discouraging students. Teachers may be strict and hard when students plagiarize or cheat in an exam or written assignment, but they may give high marks for good research work.

i. group & pair work

*Some students say: "Why do we have to do pair work and group work?"*⁵

Group work allows students to reveal subconsciously or unconsciously *who* they are, *what* they expect from the course, and *how far* they want to interact with their peers. Students vary a lot in the way they like to learn, some enjoy working in groups, others prefer to do things alone, or in teacher-led full class activity, and dislike collaborative work.⁶ Teachers need to have a good reason to use group work. Group work is useful for certain purposes, such as getting students to talk and interact, but novice teachers tend to avoid it, because of concerns that it may result in poor-disciplined and uncontrolled classes, with little learning going on. Practical advice always counts:

- make collaboration worthwhile
- do group work in the middle of the lesson
- combine pair work and group work together
- organize groups quickly
- design and plan the activities for group work in advance

⁴ Greenwood and Parkay (1989) cited by Gary Sturt, "Classroom management," <http://www.garysturt.free-online.co.uk/classman.htm>

⁵ J. Leo, *The Student-Centered Classroom* (Cambridge University Press, 2007), 3-7.

⁶ Ur, *Penny Ur's 100 Teaching Tips*, 37-43.

- let students work together in discussions or in role-plays, sharing ideas, opinions, and experiences
- make them interact with the teacher and the whole class, asking questions or brainstorming ideas
- give advice and encouragement while students are working together
- move around the class and monitor the students working in groups
- as soon as they finish working together, and the class is reassembled, the teacher gives them feedback, offers suggestions and advice, makes corrections, and answers questions.⁷

When students work together, they:

- Are more involved
- Talk more
- Learn from each other
- Share their ideas
- Feel more secure and less anxious
- Use English in a genuine, realistic way
- Enjoy using English to communicate

But a few of them may:

- Speak in their native language, not in English
- Feel nervous, embarrassed, or tongue-tied
- Speak English and make a lot of mistakes
- Not enjoy working together

They see the teacher as: an instructor, a facilitator, as an observer who makes use of strategies in order to encourage an appropriate interaction among language learners.

j. timing

How long will an activity take? A time limit encourages students to take their time, and in doing so, have a stimulating exchange of views as they explore a topic in depth and share ideas. It's better for students to be given this time limit, so that they can pace themselves and deal with questions in details. This is important because some groups will finish quickly, while others will take longer and feel frustrated, Knowing how long they have, students will feel they can say more and share their ideas and opinions in a more relaxed way.

⁷ J. Scrivener, *Learning Teaching*, 3-d edition (Macmillan Books for Teachers, 2011), 54-58.

k. gestures & facial expressions

Time and again teachers make use of gestures or facial expressions in the classroom. This helps to reduce teacher talking time and increases the opportunity of students' talk. I've seen teachers using gestures to indicate 'time'. Pointing our forefinger to the ground, means now, at the moment of speaking, pointing behind our shoulder, indicates the past and pointing ahead, means the future. But be careful, students need to know what we mean through our gestures, so at first times the use of gestures need to be combined with oral instructions, until students get used to them. Also remember that gestures can mean different ideas in different countries. So if we are teaching in another culture, we should learn which gestures to avoid of using.

Conclusion

English language teaching happens in a variety of contexts and locations. There is not a recipe book to instruct novice teachers what methodology to use or what techniques or activities are proper for classroom management. Through this article we give some ideas that seem to work effectively, but *personal observation, experience and reflection is what matters*. As Richards puts it: "Teachers entering the profession may find their initial teaching efforts stressful, but with experience they acquire a repertoire of teaching strategies that they draw on throughout their teaching."⁸ Step by step novice teachers learn to be themselves, establish and maintain rapport, become supportive, assert authority, give encouragement, feedback and praise, thus becoming better teachers with lots of teaching options for classroom management. To be really good at classroom management *we suggest them* to hang on:

- their own source of expertise, i.e. "their own experience and experimenting - the more, the better"⁹
- other teachers expertise or professionals
- being part of teachers' workshops and conferences will help them to refresh ideas and be critical on what counts good & adaptable in classroom management.

What we highlight through this paper will serve as a "start-up" for them, it's only the beginning of a long process. *Our aim is to help them be themselves and do their own thing.*

⁸ Jack Richards, *Towards Reflective Teaching. The Teacher Trainer*. 5 (1991).

⁹ Ur, *Penny Ur's 100 Teaching Tips*, 118.

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Differences between Logical Demonstration and Logical Argumentation in the Text

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Abstract

People always talk, discuss, argue, criticize or contradict each other. Have you ever thought of how do we do this? What language means do we use? What kind of elements do we use in verbal interaction? It is undoubtedly the use of arguments, part of a well-organized logic. Spontaneously people argue about different issues, trying to answer every question, trying to be persuasive in what we say. In the same way, we comment and express our opinion according to our point of view if something happens. This occurs naturally and no one stops to think how we argue and how many forms of argumentation exist.

*Different linguists and philosophers treated argumentation from ancient times up to now. We can mention Aristotle and his rhetoric, Perelman and Toulmin with *The new Rhetoric* or the *Theory of Argumentation*. Thanks to these studies, these theories are applied and used in Linguistic, Applicable Linguistic, and Text Linguistic. In this paper, we will have a look at different types of argumentation from theory to practice.*

Keywords: *argumentation theory, rhetoric, argumentative text, logical demonstration, logical argumentation.*

Introduction

The study of using logic has roots in ancient times, when the need to study rhetoric was born. This, by no doubt came as a response to the necessity of perfecting the use of rhetoric. Among the various philosophers of *Rhetoric*, we can mention Plato, Cicero, Socrates, Aristotle. Aristotle's view of rhetoric was based on logic, which consisted of two types: demonstration or scientific data and dialectics.¹ His rhetoric was based on various works including other Greek and

¹ Cope E. Meredith, *An Introduction to Aristotle's Rhetoric* (Cambridge, 1867), xii.

Roman authors. Aristotle applied a number of concepts and arguments in creation of the *Theory of persuasion*. His theory of *Rhetorical Arguments* is one of the applications of his general doctrine called *sullogismos*.² Aristotle's theory is also the basis of dialectics, logic and the *Theory of demonstration*.³ Below we will see how Aristotle determines logic in demonstration and argumentation.

Demonstration and Argumentation

Aristotle believed that logic was the essence of rhetoric. According to Aristotle, a convincing and successful rhetoric was based on logical argumentation. He argued that the speaker supports what he says based on logic, ethics and emotional state, making possible for these characteristics to be present in every presentation to the public. According to Aristotle, rhetoric was a *techne*,⁴ understood only by those who are able to argue logically and reflect on the characters, virtues and emotions. In his works, he dealt with the types of discourse, the audience / the listeners, the characters and the feelings, message and style. It addresses the importance they have for the speaker and consequently for the discourse and argumentation (how persuasive it is). He divided logic into demonstrative (in brief demonstration) and argumentative (in brief argumentation).

Logical demonstration applies strict rules in order to conclude indisputably and indispensably. Demonstration is the typical logic of sciences, especially formal ones. In logical argumentation (or argumentation), either the premise or the conclusion becomes the subject of criticism and the conclusions at the end are not necessary. Nowadays, the use of *argument* is more widespread than *demonstration* because we are often in situations where we use our logic to discuss controversial issues. We can say that argumentation is the typical logic of philosophy as well as our everyday life.

Between demonstration and argumentation, there are differences that we are presenting in the scheme below:⁵

² Comes from the Greek language, which means: deduction.

³ Taken from <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/aristotle-rhetoric/>.

⁴ The word comes from Greek means: technique.

⁵ Model adopted from A. Cattani, *Forme dell'argomentare* (Padova: Edizioni GB, 1990).

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DEMONSTRATION	ARGUMENTATION
➤ <i>Impersonal.</i>	➤ <i>Personal.</i>
➤ <i>Independent from time and space.</i>	➤ <i>Set in time and space.</i>
➤ <i>Valuable always and for all.</i>	➤ <i>Valuable in the proposed situation</i>
➤ <i>Irreversible.</i>	➤ <i>Always reviewable</i>
➤ <i>Continuance of further demonstration.</i>	➤ <i>Opportunities to collect</i>
➤ <i>Based on axioms.</i>	➤ <i>Based on thoughts, guesses and precedents.</i>
➤ <i>The principle of the excluded third is applicable.</i>	➤ <i>The principle of the excluded third is applicable, all or nothing.</i>
➤ <i>The character of logical truth, valid always and everywhere.</i>	➤ <i>Evaluative character, justifies reason for a choice.</i>
➤ <i>Highlighted and need.</i>	➤ <i>Almost true, opportunity, credibility.</i>
➤ <i>Short and simple.</i>	<i>Expansion and decoration (flattering).</i>
➤ <i>Uses a language that might be artificial, with signs or symbols.</i>	<i>Uses a natural language.</i>
➤ <i>The recipient does not matter.</i>	<i>Addressing to a defined Public.</i>
➤ <i>It is not questionable.</i>	<i>Discusses conclusions.</i>
➤ <i>Includes the possibility of even mechanical calculation.</i>	<i>Includes communication, dialogue, discussion, contardiction.</i>
➤ <i>Excludes the possibility of approach.</i>	<i>Accepts different levels of approach.</i>
➤ <i>Conclusive and occlusive.</i>	<i>Submits variable decisions if new factors or changes in evaluation occur.</i>

Table. 1 Differences between demonstration and argumentation

As we noticed above, demonstration is characterized by a closed logic where nothing is disputed, neither the beginning of logic nor the end of it. By contrast, argumentation is characterized by an open logic in which any “step” of it is discussable; even the beginning of the argument is an opinion that should be discussed.

It is noted that the argument, is not part of philosophy anymore and the strict rules of it, but becomes part of everyday life where for every issue we express an opinion. These include rules of civic life. Therefore, we can say that if for demonstration conclusion is indispensable, for the argumentation conclusion is neither unanimous nor indispensable.

In conclusion, we can say that logical demonstration is based on strict rules, while for the logical argumentation these rules are not necessary. Below we are going to deal practically with the types of arguments in two different types of text.

Explanation: *As an Italian language teacher and a Text Linguistic one, the author has chosen to analyze two Italian texts. The study is entitled “Argumentation in the argumentative text in Albanian and Italian language”. The dissertation is focused on the argumentation in the text in the two languages.*

Practical analysis of a scientific text where argumentation is demonstrative

The scientific text by its nature is an arguing text that submits the thesis or theses based on very plausible arguments. They are persuasive because the evidences presented to support them are based on scientific experiments, studies, facts and various evidences. As a result, scientific arguments are indisputable and incontrovertible. Conclusion is persuasive. The public in such cases cannot do otherwise but just accepts what is substantiated by scientific argumentation.

Example 1

A scientific text in Italian language:⁶

Anche le lacrime hanno un odore⁷

La scoperta nei topi. Che annusandolo si proteggono dai predatori

ROMA - Non solo la paura, ma anche le lacrime hanno un odore, che può essere usato come strumento difensivo negli animali. Lo dimostrano gli esperimenti sui topi, per i quali l'odore delle lacrime dei loro simili contiene segnali simili a quelli sessuali veicolati dai feromoni, mentre le lacrime dei predatori “tradiscono” la loro presenza e avvertono del pericolo. Lo spiegano sulla rivista Current Biology i ricercatori dell'università di Tokyo. In altre parole il pericolo di un predatore che si avvicina viene

⁶ We are presenting the text in the original language, because the study is based on Text analyses in Italian and Albanian language.

⁷ Newspaper article: “Anche le lacrime hanno un odore,” 29 march 2018 from: http://www.repubblica.it/scienze/2018/03/29/news/anche_le_lacrime_hanno_un_odore-192543258/

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captato di nascosto dall'odore delle lacrime. Per gli studiosi si tratta del primo esempio di "origliamento olfattivo" nelle comunicazioni tra preda-predatore nei mammiferi. Il gruppo guidato da Kazushige Touhara aveva già descritto, in un precedente studio, una proteina dei feromoni nelle lacrime dei topi, chiamata ESP1. In questa nuova ricerca si è partiti ipotizzando che le proteine presenti nelle lacrime di un predatore potessero innescare dei cambiamenti nel comportamento delle loro prede.

Nel loro esperimento i ricercatori hanno così identificato un nuovo composto nelle lacrime predatori maschi, la proteina Crp1, che non solo attiva i recettori nasali delle loro femmine, ma agisce anche sulle loro prede. Nel cervello di queste ultime si attiva infatti un circuito difensivo, che le fa smettere di muovere, abbassare la temperatura corporea e il battito cardiaco. Nel naso dei topi ci sono diversi recettori capaci di rilevare questa proteina dalle lacrime dei predatori, ma se uno di loro viene "silenziato" geneticamente, il topo smette di rispondere alla proteina Crp1 e attivare il suo comportamento di autoprotezione. "La proteina nelle lacrime dei predatori è un presunto feromone sessuale che i topi captano come un segnale della presenza di un predatore", precisa Touhara. Una scoperta che, secondo i ricercatori, apre una nuova strada per capire l'evoluzione delle comunicazioni tra predatore e preda.

As it was noted, the scientific text presents a didactic argumentation strategy. It is intended to justify the attitude, point of view and the goal on a given subject. It also seeks to clarify and persuade the reader about the truth of what is stated. It is required to prove the thesis using arguments based on scientific evidences. Thus, in our case the argumentation is based on the demonstration of the experiment carried out at the rats. The thesis is accomplished by explaining the experiment and presenting scientific results. It is arrived to the conclusion by affirming and confirming the thesis presented.

As explained above demonstration is called otherwise scientific evidence, and as such is accepted as true. The defense of a thesis through demonstration leads to a conclusive and occlusive conclusion. This is due to the results of a scientific test or experiment. It comes in explanations and certificates. The conclusions of such texts are not discussable but needs further demonstrations.

Practical analysis of a newspaper text where argumentation is rational

Example 2

A text in Italian language which discusses social and education issues:

Scuola obbligatoria a 3 anni in Francia, l'esperto: "E' l'età giusta per stare con gli altri",⁸

⁸ We are presenting the text in the original language, because the study is based on Text analyses in Italian and Albanian language. From *La Repubblica*, article from Sara Pero, 29 march 2018.

Una decisione del presidente francese Emmanuel Macron che potrebbe concretizzarsi già a partire dal prossimo anno. Ma qual è l'età giusta per staccarsi dal nido familiare? PORTARE la scuola dell'obbligo a tre anni d'età invece che ai sei attuali. È questa la misura presa dal presidente francese Emmanuel Macron, che dovrebbe diventare effettiva già dal 2019. Ma i bambini sono davvero pronti a quell'età per andare all'asilo? Secondo gli esperti sembrerebbe di sì: "La fascia d'età tre-sei anni rappresenta il periodo evolutivo durante il quale il bambino è pronto a uscire dal proprio nido familiare e iniziare ad aprirsi al mondo", spiega Alberto Pellai, medico e psicoterapeuta dell'età evolutiva che su questo tema ha anche scritto un libro, "Il metodo famiglia felice. Come allenare i figli alla vita" (DeAgostini).

I genitori hanno il compito di allenare i figli alla separazione, un esercizio che educa il loro bisogno d'esplorazione: "Interagire con gli altri coetanei, infatti, aiuta il bambino ad acquisire competenze pro-sociali ed emotive – continua l'esperto -. Ad esempio impara ad autoregolare i propri comportamenti, mediandoli, capacità fondamentale per la relazione «io e gli altri». Un bambino che inizia la scuola elementare senza essere passato prima per la materna potrebbe essere cognitivamente preparato, ma potrebbe avere un quoziente emotivo inferiore rispetto alla classe, facendo più fatica, soprattutto nel primo periodo, ad integrarsi e a sintonizzarsi con il resto dei compagni".

La misura presa dalla Francia, però, ha un valore piuttosto simbolico visto che già la quasi totalità dei bambini francesi frequenta la scuola a tre anni. "La decisione del presidente francese di abbassare l'età per la scuola dell'obbligo, portandola dai sei ai tre anni – conclude Pellai -, tocca molte delle dimensioni essenziali per preparare i figli ad affrontare la vita: tutto ciò che riguarda le competenze sociali che ruotano intorno alla sfera scolastica, ma anche quelle emotive e relazionali. Ma tale scelta, inevitabilmente, sarebbe difficile da attuare nel nostro paese" Come mai? "In Francia il governo sostiene con varie misure e agevolazioni le famiglie, mentre in Italia, il concetto di benessere familiare è estremamente trascurato: da noi, spesso, la scelta di non mandare un figlio all'asilo a tre anni non è soltanto legata a un fattore culturale, ma anche economico e psicologico - aggiunge Pellai -. Nei nuclei familiari in cui è soltanto un genitore a lavorare, ci potrebbe essere la tendenza del coniuge che non lavora a prendersi cura del bambino all'interno delle mura domestiche per alleviare quella dimensione di vuoto che potrebbe provare, sentendosi più attivo".

This is a newspaper article in Italian language. It addresses the issue of primary education and its specificity in France. In the same way for analogy it is mentioned the reality of education system in Italy. Through the analysis, the author tries to inform the reader about a particular situation in France: to take children of three years old to elementary school. Through the explanations of the specialist, the author tries to convince the reader about the benefits this law brings to children of this age. However, at the same time she points out the impossibility of implementing this law in Italy.

This text uses argumentative strategy of didactic type. Through submission of arguments, the author seeks to inform and at the same time persuade about the pros and cons of the new law on primary education in France (lowering the age at children). She argues that the thesis is good and feasible in France but impossible

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to be implemented in her country (Italy). To persuade the reader she uses arguments based on the opinion of an expert. The conclusion of this argument is not indisputable but implied.

Conclusions

After Aristotle, studies on rhetoric and argumentation were put forward based on the *Old Rhetoric* and at the same time bringing something new. However, the differences set by Aristotle on demonstration and argumentation remains and studied the same even nowadays.

From the above we noticed that demonstration and argumentation are two forms of logic which serve to express our opinion in ways that are more persuasive. However, although they both belong to logical reasoning and follow a certain way of submissions, they present differences between them. Demonstration is based on concrete facts, evidence and experimentation. It presents an indisputable conclusion. In other words, it is not discussible.

Argumentation, unlike the demonstration, sets out arguments based on personal opinions, analogue situations, facts, evidences and documents. It is discussible and submits different opinions. Conclusion is not indispensable because it may be rejected and may be implicit.

In conclusion, we can say that both demonstration and argumentation are indisputable and inseparable part of our interaction and communication.

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The Most Typical Learning Styles used in 9th Grade School and University

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Abstract

Learning a foreign language is not always an easy task. There are many components that play a vital role in the whole process. Among the most important ones we can mention the learning styles used by the learners themselves. As we know, the way students learn a foreign language varies from one to the other. As teachers, knowing more about their leaning styles helps considerably in the acquisition and learning of the foreign language by our students.

More specifically, the aim of this study is to find out what learning styles result to be the most typical in learning English language. For this purpose we chose two different levels of education in order to see if there would be any difference in the learning styles applied namely the 8th grade and the 3rd year in “Aleksander Moisiu” University. A questionnaire containing 30 statements, which covered a wide range of learning styles namely: visual, tactile, auditory, group, kinesthetic and individual was administered to them and quantitative techniques were used in order to analyze the data.

As was expected, there were certain differences concerning the major and minor learning styles used by the two groups surveyed. Recommendations for further research and implications of the findings will also be part of the article.

Keywords: *English language, Learning styles, university level, 9th grade school.*

Introduction

Learning a foreign language is not always an easy task. In order to be a successful language learner, one must be in contact with the language as much as possible, communicate with native speakers, try new experiences, develop a

certain feel for the foreign language, etc. Apart from these, there are numerous other elements that determine the success in learning or acquiring the language. Language learning is frequently related to various other factors including age, motivation, intelligence, interest, attitude to language, educational and cultural background, learning styles, etc. The more teachers understand the differences between students, the better they can address their needs. For this reason, the individual differences toward learning have been considered as an important issue by many researchers in this field of study. As Murray¹ stated, learners in the language classroom can no longer be treated as homogeneous. This element is more conspicuous nowadays that foreign language classes are student-centered rather than teacher-centered.

More specifically, Illeris² considers learning as a process where cognitive, emotional and environmental influences come together and enable acquiring, enhancing, or making changes in one's knowledge, skills and values." This perspective has led to a large number of studies dedicated to learning styles or the way in which learners adapt the new information to their methods of learning. However, in the field of education, the learning style concept has been recognized since at least the mid-1970s.³ Sternberg et al⁴ affirm that learning styles can be used as a valuable teaching tool inside the classroom." They support the view that, by diagnosing students' learning styles and matching them to teaching methods (for example for a "visual learner," presenting information through pictorial illustrations), learning can be greatly enhanced.

In the Albanian context there aren't many studies conducted on this specific aspect. For this reason we found it interesting to investigate if there were any similarities between the learning styles applied by pupils and students in the two different educational levels above-mentioned. The questionnaire used was Reid⁵ perceptual learning style preference questionnaire (PLSPQ, 1987). The study was conducted in November 2017.

¹ D. E. Murray, The tapestry of diversity in our classroom. In K.M. Bailey and D. Nunan (eds.), *Voices from the language classroom* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 434-48.

² K. Illeris, "Transformative learning in the perspective of a comprehensive learning theory," *Journal of Transformative Learning* 2 (2004), 79-89.

³ C. Griffiths, "Learning styles: traversing the quagmire" in *Psychology for Language Learning: Insights from Research, Theory and Practice*, eds. S. Mercer, S. Ryan and M. Williams (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).

⁴ R. J. Sternberg, E. L. Grigorenko and L. Zhang, *Styles of learning and thinking matter in instruction and assessment. Perspectives on Psychological Science* 3 (2008), 486-506.

⁵ J. M. Reid, "The learning style preferences of ESL students," *TESOL Quarterly* 21/1 (1987): 87-110.

Literature review

Since there are many definitions for the term Learning style we will focus on some of them in order to create a clear idea. Ellis⁶ defines learning style as “the characteristic ways, in which individuals orientate to problem-solving”. Keefe⁷ views learning styles as “cognitive, affective and physiological traits that serve as relatively stable indicators of how learners perceive, interact with, and respond to the learning environment” and which “reflect genetic coding, personality development, and environmental adaptation”. A degree of destiny intervention can be perceived in the definition given by Reinert,⁸ who asserts that “an individual’s learning style is the way in which that person is programmed to learn most effectively, i.e., to receive, understand, remember, and be able to use new information.” Whereas Reid⁹ believes that believes that the learning styles are retained in spite the methods used in teaching. However, it is noticed that with the passing of time it is possible to acquire new styles and adapt the old ones to specific circumstances.

Apart from the definitions it is important to be acquainted with various categorizations of learning styles. One of the most typical is that of Knowles¹⁰ who differentiates between four types of learning styles:

(1) *Concrete learning style* that helps learners interested in information that has immediate value. Learners using this style are curious, spontaneous and willing to take the risks. They like variety and constant change of pace. “They dislike routine learning, written work and prefer verbal or visual experiences. They like to be entertained and like to be physically involved in learning.” For example, concrete learners want to learn by game, by pictures, films, videos, by working in pairs.¹¹

(2) *Analytical learning style* which helps learners to be more independent, solve problems, track down ideas and develop principles on their own. Such

⁶ R. Ellis, “Principles of instructed language learning,” *System* 33 (2) (2005), 209-224.

⁷ J. W. Keefe, “Assessing student learning styles,” in *Student learning styles and brain behaviour*, ed. J. W. Keefe (Reston, VA: National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1982), 1-18.

⁸ H. Reinert, “One picture is worth a thousand words? Not necessarily,” *Modern Language Journal* 60 (1976), 160-168.

⁹ J. M. Reid, *Understanding learning styles in the second language classroom* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc. 1998)

¹⁰ L. Knowles, *Teaching and Reading* (National Council on Industrial Language Training: London, 1982).

¹¹ L. Knowles, “*Teaching and Reading*” (National Council on Industrial Language Training: London, 1982), cited in V. Tafani, *Language Teaching and Learning Methodology* (Tirana: SHBLU, 2003).

learners prefer logical systematic presentation of new learning material with opportunities for learners to follow up on their own. Analytical learners are serious, push themselves hard and are vulnerable to failure. Learners with analytical learning style want to learn by studying grammar, by reading books, or they want the teacher let them find their mistakes.¹²

(3) *Communicative learning style* which helps learners who prefer a social approach to learning. They need personal feedback and interaction and learn well from discussion and group activities. Learners with communicative learning style prefer to learn a foreign language by listening to natives, by talking to native speakers and by watching TV in English.¹³

(4) *Authority-oriented learning style*, which is related to learners who are responsible and dependable. These learners “like and need structure progression. They relate well to a traditional classroom. They prefer to have the teacher as an authority figure. They like to have clear instructions and to know exactly what they are doing. They are not comfortable with discussion.” Authority-oriented learners prefer “the teacher to explain everything to them, to write everything in their notebook, to have their own textbook.”¹⁴

Another model is that presented by Reid¹⁵ who has developed a learning style model for learners of foreign language based on how students learn best using their perceptions: visual, auditory and kinesthetic preferences.

(1) *Visual learners* “learn better by visual means, for example by looking at pictures or films. They remember instructions best if they see them, for example, on the board. The teacher would advise these learners to write things down. In order to stay focused they should look at people who talk to them. They also should look at the pictures before they read a certain text.”¹⁶

(2) *Auditory learners* learn well by hearing things, for examples, “lectures or tapes. They like teachers to give oral instructions and they like making tape recordings of what they are learning and having” discussion. The teachers should advise the auditory learners to study out load with a friend or alone, to ask for oral instructions if they do not understand any issue to play tape recording to themselves about what they are studying.¹⁷

¹² M. Knowles cited in “*Language Teaching and Learning Methodology*.”

¹³ M. Knowles cited in “*Language Teaching and Learning Methodology*.”

¹⁴ M. Knowles cited in “*Language Teaching and Learning Methodology*.”

¹⁵ J. M. Reid, ed., *Learning Styles in the ESL/ EFL Classroom* (Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle, 1995).

¹⁶ Reid, *Learning Styles*.

¹⁷ Reid, *Learning Styles*.

(3) *Kinesthetic learners* learn best when they have hands-on experience, when they are physically involved or can actively participate. They like moving around when they learn and they like a variety of classroom activities. Teachers advise them to walk around the room or change their position every so often when they are learning. They should take short breaks often, say every 20 minutes. They should highlight or underline their notes or draw things on them.¹⁸

Concerning the research done in the field we can mention Peacock's¹⁹ study which focused on the correlation between learning and teaching styles based on Reid's hypotheses. He found out that learners favored kinesthetic and auditory styles and disfavored individual and group styles, while teachers favored kinesthetic, group and auditory styles.

Rita and Kenneth Dunn²⁰ studied the way people learn and they found out that some students achieved knowledge only by means of selective methods. Various elements that had an impact in learning styles were mentioned in their study. Among them were: environmental, emotional, sociological and physical elements.

Among older studies, Oxford et al.'s²¹ study is perhaps the most influential research that identified the relationships between isolated learning styles and the achievement of high school students learning Japanese. It revealed that among 107 students who participated in the study, visual students significantly outperformed auditory and tactile / kinesthetic students.

A study conducted by Naimie et al²² suggests that it is crucial for teachers to have knowledge about learner preferences and to take them under consideration in their teaching design. Their study revealed higher achievement when students' learning preferences and needs were taken under consideration by the teachers. Based on findings, it is assumed that the different learning styles dimensions have their own preferences in terms of technology usage. The study showed that findings of studies on English Language Learning indicated that in order to be effective teachers should have knowledge about the learners' learning needs,

¹⁸ Reid, *Learning Styles*.

¹⁹ Mathew Peacock, "Match or mismatch? Learning styles and teaching styles in EFL," *International Journal of Applied Linguistic* 11(1) (2001), 20.

²⁰ Rita Dunn and Kenneth Dunn, *Teaching secondary students through their individual learning styles: Practical approaches for grades 7-12* (Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 1993).

²¹ R. Oxford and M. Ehrman, "Second language research on individual differences," *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics* 13 (1993), 188-205.

²² Z. Naimie, et al. "Do you think your match is made in heaven? Teaching styles/learning styles match and mismatch revisited," *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences* 2 (Elsevier Ltd., 2010), 349-353, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2011.04.30>

individual differences in learning, the required teaching methods, learners' preferences as well as the necessary teaching materials required to meet learners' needs in the educational setting.

On the other hand, Reid²³ study focused on perceptual learning styles preferences for group and/or individual learning of nearly 1300 non-native speakers of English in the US and found out that ESL students differ significantly from native speakers of English in their perceptual learning styles. What was more, ESL students from different language, educational and cultural backgrounds sometimes differ significantly from each other in their learning style preferences.

Another study, made by Kenner and Weinerman,²⁴ showed that adult learners bring with them learning styles and experiences that may serve as the basis for future success. It is fundamental that these learning styles and background experiences be taken into consideration while teaching if we want to have proficient L2 learners.

The Study

SUBJECTS

The study was conducted at two different education environments, namely "14 Nëntori" school (which is a 9th grade school) and "Aleksander Moisiu" University, Durrës. The subjects of the study consisted of 28 pupils from the 8th grade at "14 Nëntori" school and 28 students of the English branch, who were at 3rd year in "Aleksandër Moisiu" University, Durrës. The sample of the study consisted of pupils and students who were chosen randomly. Their participation in the survey was anonymous and voluntary.

INSTRUMENTS

The instrument used for the study was Reid's perceptual learning style preference questionnaire (PLSPQ, 1987). The questionnaire administered to pupils of the 8th grade was translated in Albanian, so that all statements were clear to them, whereas for the 3rd years students was used the original version. The questionnaire was composed by 30 statements rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree", and was designed to cover Reid's six learning style preferences that are as follows: (1) visual; (2) tactile; (3) auditory; (4) group; (5) kinesthetic; and (6) individual. In 1995 Reid went further on and categorized the 6 learning styles above as Major, Minor and Negligible. Major is a preferred leaning style, Minor is one in which learners can still function

²³ Reid, "The Learning Style Preferences," 87-111.

²⁴ C. Kenner and J. Weinerman, "Adult Learning Theory: Application to Non-Traditional College Students," *Journal of College Reading and Learning* 41 (2) (2011), 87-96.

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well, and Negligible is the one that can make the learning process more difficult for them. The results were analyzed by categorizing them into above-mentioned learning style preferences and presented in the findings as well. Quantitative methods were used to analyze the data. The calculations are made based on this table:

<i>Major learning style preference</i>	38-50
<i>Minor learning style preference</i>	25-37
<i>Negligible learning style preference</i>	0-24

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questions that we aimed at answering in our study are as follows:

1. What are the major, minor and negligible learning styles of the pupils in the 8th grade?
2. What are the major, minor and negligible learning styles of students of the 3rd year?
3. Are there any similarities in major, minor and negligible learning styles of both groups?

DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

All the necessary ethical procedures were followed to usefully collect the data. Permission was requested and granted for both groups. Participants were contacted personally and the aim of the study was explained to them. Participants were encouraged to take part in this study and were told that their participation and opinion will contribute to the improvement of learning English as a foreign language.

DATA ANALYSIS

Research question nr.1.

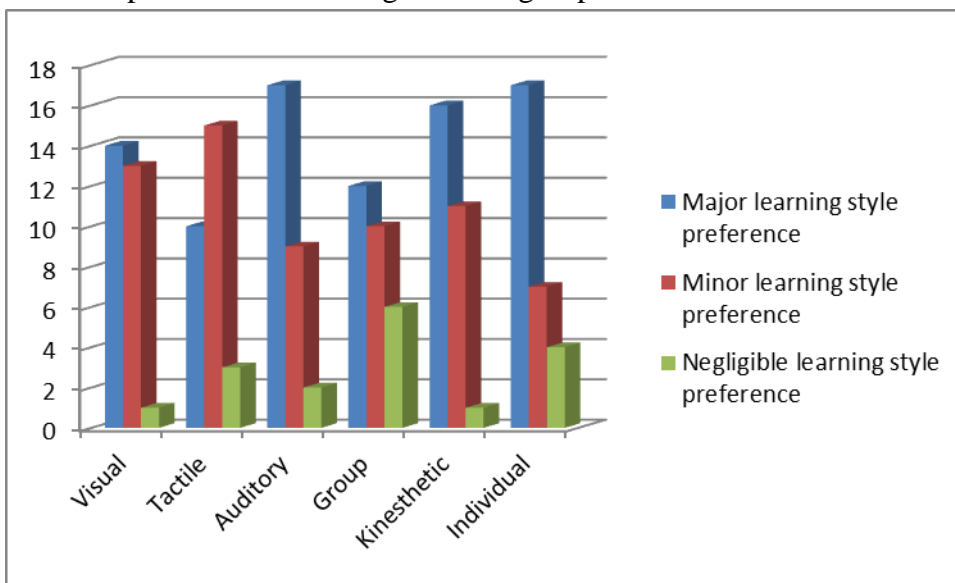
First of all, we intended to find out what were the typical learning styles of the pupils in the 8th grade that were surveyed. In this way we can answer the first research question. After the calculations the results are as presented in table nr.1.

	Major learning style preference	Minor learning style preference	Negligible learning style preference
Visual	14	13	1
Tactile	10	15	3
Auditory	17	9	2
Group	12	10	6

Kinesthetic	16	11	1
Individual	17	7	4

Table nr.1. Pupils' learning styles in the 8th grade

The data in the table is also presented graphically in graph nr.1 in order to provide a clear picture of the findings for this group.



Graph nr.1 Pupils' learning styles in the 8th grade

As we notice from the graph, the most typical learning styles from the “Major” category result to be Auditory, Kinesthetic and Individual, whereas the least popular seems to be Tactile. It is interesting to see that Individual learning style is among pupils’ favorites ones because it indicates that they still find it difficult to cooperate with each other and work in group or team, which is inherited by teacher-centered methods used in the past in our educational system. However, even Auditory and Kinesthetic learning styles result quite popular. Among the most popular learning styles in the “Minor” category result Visual and Tactile. As we mentioned above the “Minor” category is one in which learners can still perform well. In the “Negligible” category we notice that the pupils have chosen among others the Group learning style which seems to make things difficult for them when it comes to learning a foreign language. Furthermore, in the graph we see that that for Auditory and Individual learning styles the difference between major and minor categories is considerable.

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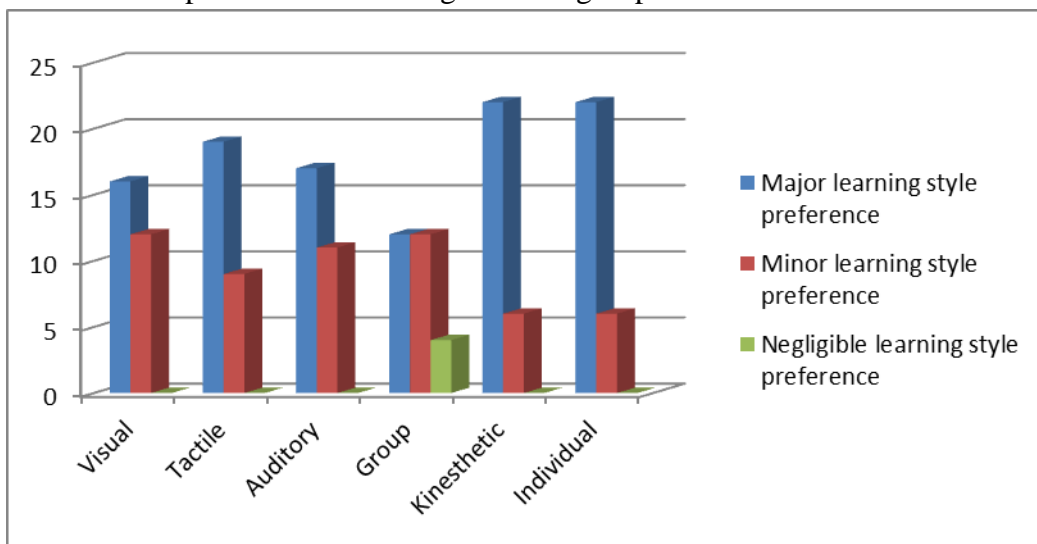
Research question nr.2

Table nr.2 presents the findings concerning the learning styles of 3rd year university students, including the classification in major, minor and negligible categories.

	Major learning style preference	Minor learning style preference	Negligible learning style preference
Visual	16	12	0
Tactile	19	9	0
Auditory	17	11	0
Group	12	12	4
Kinesthetic	22	6	0
Individual	22	6	0

Table nr. 2. Students' learning styles

The data in the table is also presented graphically in graph nr.2 in order to provide a clear picture of the findings for this group.



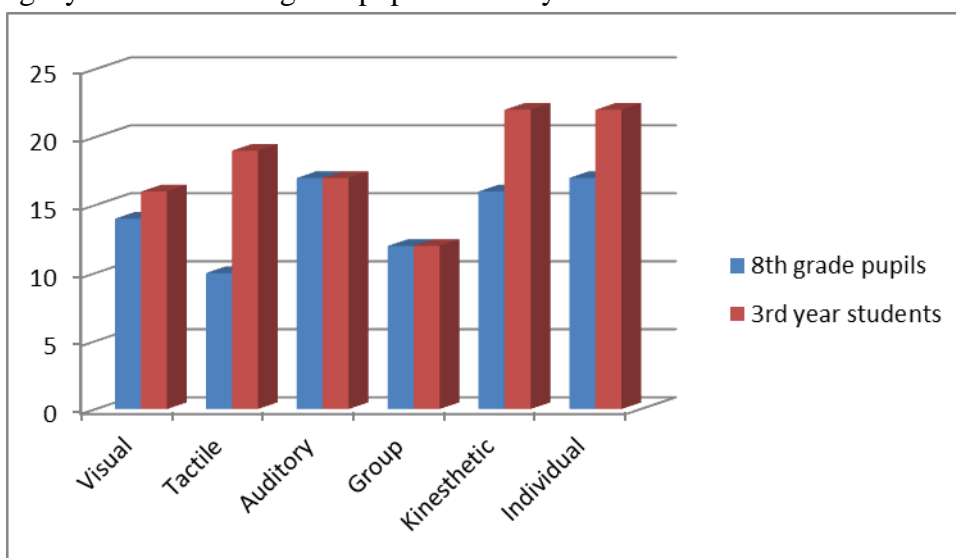
Graph nr. 2 Students' learning styles

Based on the table and graph nr.2 we can say that the majority of the students surveyed have chosen Kinesthetic and Individual learning style pertaining to the “Major” category. It shows that they favor learning by experience, by being involved physically in classroom experiences and remember information better when they actively participate in activities. A combination of stimuli, for example,

an audio tape combined with an activity will help them understand new material. But also they seem to favour even studying alone and working by themselves. Concerning the “Minor” category the learning styles that students can still use effectively in their learning process include: Visual, Group and Auditory learning styles. Whereas in relation to “Negligible” category what attracts the attention is the fact that students have chosen only Group learning style which seems to be the only one that hinders their progress in learning. Another element that we notice is that the number of students that have Group as a major learning style is equal to those who have chosen it as a minor learning style.

Research question nr.3

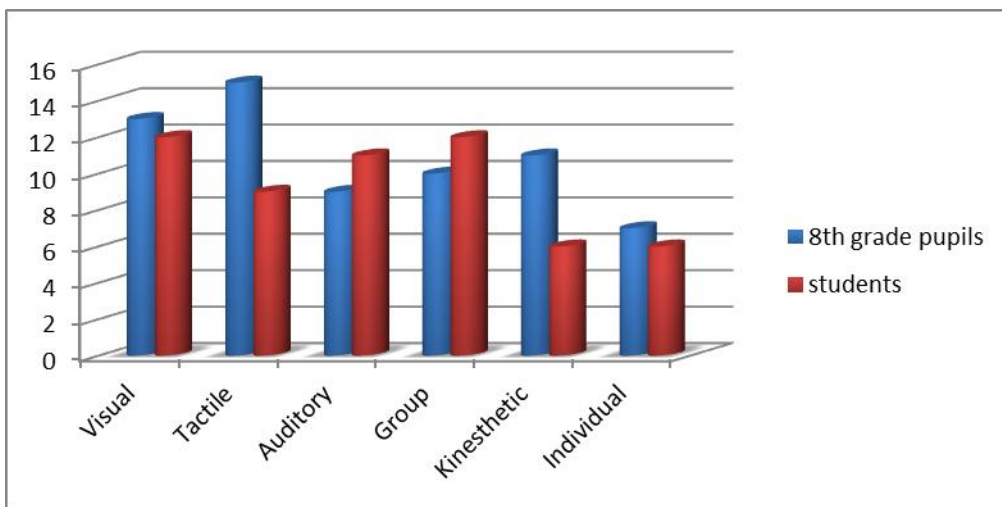
In graph nr. 3 are presented the differences regarding the choice of major learning styles between 8th grade pupils and 3rd year students.



Graph nr. 3 Comparison of “Major” category between pupils and students

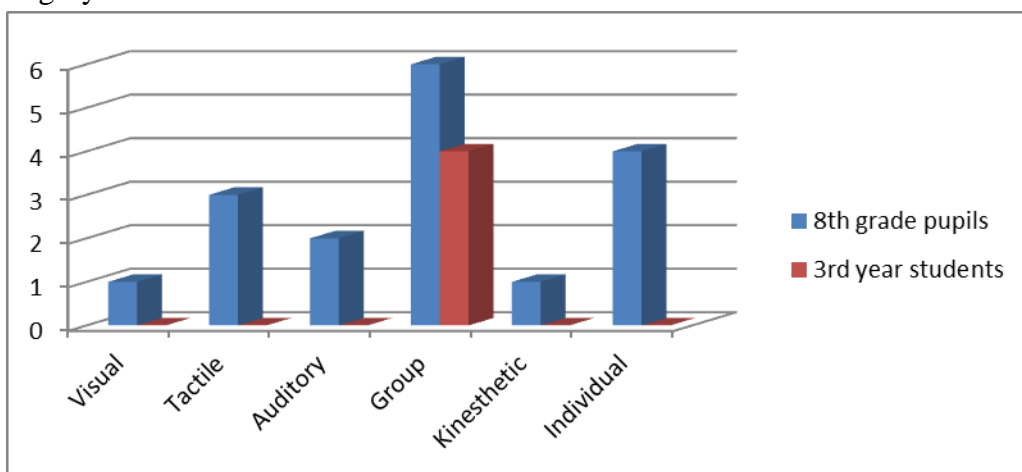
What we notice from the graph is that the most conspicuous learning styles for students result to be Kinesthetic and Individual followed by Tactile. Nearly the same can be said about the 8th grade pupils who have chosen Auditory, Kinesthetic and Individual learning styles among their favourite ones. It seems that apart from activities that pertain to Kinesthetic and Individual learning styles, pupils find useful even activities related to Auditory learning style such as oral explanations, reading aloud, hearing audio tapes, lectures, and class discussion, teaching other pupils etc. We have to emphasize that for both pupils and students, Group learning style remains at quite a low level.

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Graph nr. 4 Comparison of “Minor” category between pupils and students

In this graph are presented the differences regarding the choice of learning styles in the “Minor” category between 8th grade pupils and 3rd year students. What attracts the attention almost immediately is that in this category the majority of 8th grade pupils have selected Tactile and Visual learning styles whereas 3rd year students have opted for Visual, Group and Auditory learning styles. The only similarity between them lies in the choice of Visual learning style that appears to be useful to both groups in learning the foreign language. Another similarity is found in relation to Individual learning style that is the least popular in this category.



Graph nr. 5 Comparison of “Negligible” category between pupils and students

Graph nr. 5 presents the differences regarding the learning styles in the “Negligible” category between 8th grade pupils and 3rd year students. What

becomes evident when we see the graph is the fact that students have reported only Group learning style as the only style that makes it difficult for them to tackle with English language, whereas 8th grade students have reported various styles. Among the most problematic appear to be Group and Individual learning styles. The similarity between the two levels lies in Group learning style which indicates that students are not involved enough in group or team work while in class, in order to make them feel at home even with this style of learning. It is the teacher's duty to engage them more frequently in activities of this kind.

Conclusions

After carefully analyzing the questionnaire administered in both levels of education, we reached the following conclusions:

1. Among the most popular leaning styles for 8th grade pupils in the "Major" category are Individual, Auditory and Kinesthetic learning styles. In the "Minor" category the most typical ones result Visual and Tactile learning styles whereas in "Negligible" category Group and to some degree Individual learning styles are reported to be problematic
2. Concerning 3rd year university students, the most popular leaning style in the "Major" category are Kinesthetic and Individual learning styles. In the "Minor" category the most typical ones result Visual, Group and Auditory learning styles. Whereas in the "Negligible" category students have chosen only Group learning style.
3. By comparing the "Major" categories of the two groups it is evident that both pupils and students have expressed their preference especially for Auditory and Individual learning styles. Another similarity noticed here is related to the fact that Group learning style is the least popular for pupils and students alike.
4. By comparing the "Minor" categories of the two groups, it results that the first similarity that we can notice lies in the choice of Visual learning style that appears to be useful to both groups in learning the foreign language. Another similarity is found in relation to Individual learning style that is the least popular in this category.
5. By comparing the "Negligible" categories between pupils and university students we notice that both groups have indicated Group learning style as the most problematic among those listed there.

Limitations of the Study

There were several limitations that would make a considerable difference in the discussion of the results for the research questions raised in the study. The first is related to the survey sample. The limited number of participants had its own impact in the results of the study. In other words, a larger sample would have provided more specific results.

Another limitation is related to the instrument used in the data collection procedures. This study may have generated more reliable results with multiple data sources, as for example interviews with students and teacher, focus groups, etc. as their opinions are always validity for a better study. Using data from different sources would have enabled me to conduct a thorough search.

Finally, the fact that in Albania there are not many studies related to this aspect of learning process has its own impact on the study.

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ESSAYS

PRESENTATIONS

REVIEWS

The Figures of Imagination

Review

Gérard Bras and Jean-Pierre Cléro

Pascal. Doctrina figurilor imaginației, LUMEN, 2018

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In 1996, Gérard Bras and Jean-Pierre Cléro wrote a very interesting book about imagination in the works of Blaise Pascal – *Pascal. Figures de l'imagination*, published by Vrin, Paris. The book was translated in Romanian last year, by Lumen Publishing House, Iași.

This book is very fascinating for many reasons. First, Pascal is a mostly unknown in philosophical literature in Europe, even in France, where we think he should be at home. Maybe this happened because in his time, Pascal was known as a mathematician or a science man. Even so, nowadays his philosophical and theological thinking are for the most part ignored. In this book about imagination in the conception of Pascal, we have a very subtle and keen line of conceptions of Pascal linked to this subject. As we still dedicate a brief study to pascalian thought, it is normal to have many stereotypes and preconceptions. One of these is, of course, that which considers imagination as the main source of our deceits. Secondly, in this book, the authors overturn their preconception about imagination in this sense and reinstate it in a better position between the powers of mind. Likewise, the functions of imagination are strongly calibrated in the structure of the mind and soul.

For Pascal, imagination is more a *puissance*, a power, and less a faculty, as it is conceived in Kant thought. In virtue of this consideration, imagination manifests at many levels of the mind/soul constructions. Imagination attends the mathematics and physics in shaping the reality, but also the theology and transcendental sphere. In fact, the authors underline this interesting shape or *figure* of imagination which intervenes in the use of *belief*. Pascal was a very prolific scientific researcher, and for this reason, he was interested in how imagination

intercedes in mathematics or in other scientific domains which are based on either on *abstract constructions*, as numbers and relation between numbers, or *facts*. The power of imagination finds a very special shape or *figure* – and we can understand it as an “energy” adapted on this support. After his comprehension regarding this logic of imagination which acts and can take this figure, Pascal passes on a more difficult provocation: how can we understand the logic of belief? And how can intervene in this case the imagination to solve the sphere of belief? Imagination can have always two implications for the mind and soul: we speak about a *good* imagination, when we can construct an abstract entity which is coherent with the facts, and a *bad* imagination, as source of our deceptive and misunderstanding of the whole surround us (the world). As these two figures are always joined together in us, being present in every action, it means we have imagination in its *good* shape in the order of belief. Not any belief is the result of a bad imagination. There is a good use of imagination also in this order of belief, and by this we enter now in another logic which is more sophisticated than the logic of facts or abstract mathematical entities. We talk about the transcendental *worlds* which interfere with our sensitive known world. This figure of imagination is linked to the order of *the flesh*, as Pascal call the sensitive world, but seen in itself, the order of belief is more powerful than any concreteness of the flesh order. Imagination can contribute to the *understanding* of the order of the flesh, by creating the abstract or concrete structures of the mind – as there are met in physics and mathematics – which sustain our representations of the world. But imagination also contributes to the *life* of the soul which is interested about the *other worlds* which are not available by our senses or our mental constructions. The world of belief, the Christianity (believing in Jesus or God in a specific way), introduces us in a new way of *life* which is not the same as the life in the flesh reality.

The book covers a big void in our *weltanschauung*, where we are usually very tempted to *separate* into individualities even the wholes which are not separable. Pascal cannot be alleged of a *parti pris* for such or such stance. He proceeds in the analysis of imagination continuously with a mindful scrutiny. His main idea is that the order or *understanding* – as the mind affaire – is extremely linked with the *experience of life* – as the soul affaire. And this relation is to be found its interlink component under the power of imagination. The same imagination, which is source of error and misleading at any moment in our actions, can be used under some figures to cross over different ontological orders. Imagination has this inconvenient, of being hard to determine its useful figure, but also it has this convenient: can cross any limit imposed by any order of reality.

The Figures of Imagination

Even more, imagination is not less or more important, it is not less functional or more efficient in its different actions linked of some supports or objects. The power of imagination is neutral from this point of view. It is not more efficient in physics or mathematics and less efficient in religion. It is not less independent in mathematics and freest – until the touch of irrational fantasy – in religion. It can take some figures which can be used to *create* structures of life. Our subsequent references on these structures, as a second action, are those which define our attitudes. The morality and the order of flesh can take a certain advantage or importance in the economics of our hierarches of the world, but not imagination which can be used to create some of these institutions of the world.