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ARTICLES

Review

Research Articles

Review

The comparative analysis of feminism thought in works of Shahrnoush Parsipour and Marguerite Duras

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Shahrnoush Parsipour and Marguerite Duras are both Iranian and French contemporary writers. There are similarities in their works for reasons such as being a woman, being writer, being intellectual, living in 20th century, being familiar with various approaches of feminism, experiencing Eastern life. The question is, what is the ideological and intellectual coordination that exists in Parsipour and Duras? The premise of this research is based on the attention given to "free love" and "magic realism"; breaking the tradition and rebellion against women's status, challenging superstitious and baseless beliefs, protesting against women owning property, criticizing man-centered governing laws, accepting to be oppressed and humiliated by women in history, prostitution and women's fear and insecurity, encouraging women to acquire various sciences and considering men as a model by women are the same cases in stories of both writers. The titles of both stories reflect concerns over the authors' minds and explicitly represent feminist thought.

Key words: Feminism, story, Shahrnoosh Parsipoor, Margarit Dorath

INTRODUCTION

The origin of feminism thought dates back to 7th and early 18th century. The writers of the Age of Enlightenment in Europe analyze human nature in the frame of "wise speculative the bourgeoisie" and their analysis was based on "persons"; they analyzed any gender, race or ideology based on individualism humanism (Benhabib, 1995:35). Feminist tendencies mainly were in opposition to the reform with the adoption of predefined roles for men and women in family and society. They represent an inappropriate and extreme theory about the same education for both men and women and the same social roles for both sexes not compatible with human nature

(Alice, 2002:23). They try to instill this belief that in marital relationships the most important role of men and women is not starting a family and childrearing, but what matter is the egotistic happiness and satisfaction. Feminists insist on rejection of the role of women as mothers and wives as their duty; generally, these bunch of feminists give less value to home and family unless the basis is female.

Writers and intellectuals who advocate this thought believe that in a marriage, all enjoyments and growth belongs to men and all backwards to women. According to feminist thoughts, women are free to live in any format

of family structures including nuclear family and marriage, family without marriage…

To struggle against inequalities, feminists believe in using available recent legal and political opportunities to change the situation, providing equal economical opportunities, changes in family and school, and mass media message.

These thoughts influence the majority of contemporary writers and have attracted their works as media tools. Shahrnoush Parsipour is among such writers who address woman's suffering and painful lives in their stories.

Stories such as "*the dog and long winter*", "*tuba and the meaning of night*", "*free experiences*", "*women against women*", "*blue wisdom*", "*women without men*", "*heat in year zero*" which are full of concerns of feminist and thoughts based on free thinking are the subject of discussion in this study. Marguerit Duras, as a contemporary French writer, her stories bear witness of being one of the promoters of ideological-literal feminist thought. The study of Duras's stories show that three subjects of "woman", "love" and "poverty" form her triangle of thought; her stories include "*Pain*", "*Lover*", "*Love*", "*Lal Stein*", "*Summer Rain*", "*Ten and a Half Hours a Night During the Summer*", "*Vice Consul*".

A writer's thought concerns would be his/her main investment for writing; basically, if there are no thought concerns, there will not be a creation of any work of art or fiction. The how and the why of feminist concern, dominant element of both writers' -Parsipour and Duras- thought is the question on which this study is based.

Research method in the article

Comparative criticism in this study has been used as a way to criticize both writers' works. Comparative criticism is a kind of comparative world view which transcends national, geographical, lingual boundaries and considers literature as a global phenomenon of which human nature is the same in all cultures (Justi, 2002:37). Comparative literature is important because it reveals sources of intellectual and art currents and because each literary current on first contact with global literature helps human consciousness or ethnic orientation. Comparative history studies international literary relationships; it studies about common elements in various literatures as well (Radfar, 2006:81). In comparative literature based on the unity of human thought, it can be realized how a thought in one part of the world is represented by a scientist, scholar or a writer and the same one appears in another way in another part of the world (Akbari, 2007:53).

Signs of feminism in Shahrnoush Parsipour's stories

Parsipour's tendency to express woman's issues and

rebel against traditions and social conventions in order to create a change in people's lifestyle, especially women, as well as a call of the society to equality and have a view beyond gender, puts her among feminist writers. In her opinion, women have been oppressed and of course acceptted to be oppressed. Parsipour considers thinking as a necessary way to pass tradition to modernity; a tradition that considers women as an object, she says: "apparently, I'm writing as if I'm going to be a human, who am I? I want to know how I can imagine God in my mind. How can I recognize evil's boundaries? I want to think about these; I don't want others to think about my thought" (Parsipour; 1987:20).

Breaking tradition, novelty and change

In her stories, Parsipour always looks for novelty and wants to escape the traditional society defined by men. Her stories represent objection literature by a sensitive and awareness woman. Huri, in "*the Dog and the Long winter*", says: "I'm tired of constantly being an object waiting for husband. I want to be a human. I don't know why I shouldn't be a human. I must get rid of this definition. I want to be disgraced; I'm tired of this honor because it has closed my feet like those of a sheep in the herd (Parsipour; 1990:246). She believes that, insisting on society, the social submission and relations will change. "You know, if you don't change definitions, if you don't accept changes, what is happening will fall on you like a nightmare" (The Very Book, p: 246).

"*Tuba and the Meaning of Night*" is the clear manifest of wry to arranged traditions and conventions of society. Mounes, as a breaking with tradition character who seeks novelty, works in an office; she got married couple of times and had a miscarriage. The girl, ''Mounes was distressed and couldn't sleep that night, she was approaching a monstrous marriage" (Parsipour, 1993: 228). According to Mounes's opinion, marriage is a fettered contract and an abominable custom which always limits human. However, Mounes did it (marriage). Few years later with another wry to traditions she divorced Mr.Khansari and married Ismail; when Ismail was arrested, again she had another miracle: miscarriage.

Mounes got such self-confidence that she could moved a mountain if it is necessary (The very book: p, 248). In "*Men vs. Women*" it is said that:"finally, this is time for women, those Godless ones have gotten more power in a way that they become lawyers and ministers" (Parsipour, 2004: 87).

In "*Women without Men*", Parsipour consciously struggles with traditional beliefs as a feminist missioner. Parsipour considers virginity as an inhibitory means that even limit children to enjoy their happiness because they may hurt their imaginary screen. Mounes as one character in the story "never climb the tree because of

fear" (The Very Book: p, 15). Furthermore, other characters are created as breaking with tradition too. Faezeh suggests that they will bring a clergyman and formalize her marriage, she will read the marriage contract herself (The Very Book: p112). All cases above indicate that Parsipour is one of Iranian writers who represent her thoughts and concerns as well as those of others about life by fictional characters dauntlessly. She has no fear of tradition rebelling against her.

Emphasis on learning and reasoning

Parsipour regards learning and reasoning as the only way of flying and reaching equality and escaping men's dominion. In "*the Dog and the Long Winter*" she believes that Huri can free herself of limitations and conviction by knowledge and wisdom. As a character in this story, Huri focuses on knowledge and thinking, "I shouldn't go ahead with this useless growing up and grow up indeed. I should save wisdom behind my broken eyebrows instead of sentiment" (Parsipour, 1990 p, 280). Men abuse women's illiteracy in order to dominate them in Parsipour's stories. Tuba's father "by 50, when he got married to his illiterate wife, he enjoys her stupidity; just a quick glance was enough to make her quiet and sit down" (Parsipour, 1991 p, 13). In Parsipour's stories, male characters are worried about woman's thinking. Haji thought, "they are thinking"; he was hit again (The Very Book: p, 90). ''They have to look at the front of their feet not to fall on the ground" (Parsipour, 1993:p403). "*Women without Men*" could be considered as an intentional statement for women's education and wisdom. Mounes, as a central character emphasizes on education and knowledge; she is a feminism wisdom missionary as well. She bought a book, read it, and now she has another meaning of trees, sun and streets in her mind; she was growing up. In "*the Blue Reason*" Parsipour highlights this topic explicitly and says "women aren't accustomed to thinking, because they have lost their right of thinking over thousands of years''. (*Women without Women*; p,16). Katayoun as a central character in "*Men vs. Women*" always lays emphasis on learning and knowledge; she is a student and turns to intellectual side. Learning more and satisfying her curiosity, she keeps company with men. She said she was bored spending time with people of her age; she wants to jump higher and be a tourist" (Parsipour, 2004: p .65).

Marriage escape and monotony avoidance

Huri, as a central character in "*The Dog and the Long Winter*", escapes marriage because she thinks it makes her stay home like her sister "Badri"to cook and clean. She says: "whenever I was thinking about marriage Badri comes in front of my eyes. If I was getting married, I'd probably suffer the same fate" (Parsipour, 1990; p, 189). In her stories, Parsipour always considers marriage as the cause of life monotony and boredom. "What a futile life! She always does household works at a house which may not exist at all" (Parsipour, 1993; p, 390). "Tuba" in "*Tuba and the Meaning of Night*", thinks to herself: "finally one day when she settled all kids down, she will go to find out The God, to that time she has to weave, clean and cook. She should circle around this eternal circle then returned back to her place'' (The Very Book: p, 119).

The loss of identity and ownership look on women

In "*the Dog and the Long winter*" Huri feels lack of identity, "I'm not alone, I don't have identity only, and where is my identity?" (Parsipour, 1990: p, 287). Huri sees herself on an unknown direction and life as an unlimited corridor. "Our way didn't have a particular direction; sometimes we were down, sometimes we were up; we head thousands of times in different complex curves but there was no end for it" (The Very Book: p, 336). Parsipour considers this ownership look as a cause of keeping women in stagnation; she believes that it encourages women to temptation; "when she is not a "human" anymore but one's "property" so, finding a better owner, she uses seduction" (Parsipour, 1993, 322). Parsipour emphasizes that a woman should be accepted as she is, as always the look on man is a balanced look and is appropriate to his value as a human being. "I wish you understand me as I am, this simply means a woman is a woman" (The Very Book: p, 322).

Signs of feminism in Marguerite Duras's stories

In her life, Marguerite Duras, always escapes commitment to thoughts currents and even love. She is thirsty for instability and chaos. She wants to live freely, to think freely and to write freely; based on which, Duras lays emphasis on her unique style of writing. In this method, Duras does not inform others, but tells "herself". Her novels are talking to herself; so she wrote all her internal ebullitions on paper. While she writes, Duras follows her subconscious mind that modernity, being away of moral and logical constraints, could be seen in her works. She shows the fact as she analyzes; she rebels against word-centered method and wants to free word from limitation of meaning. That is why repetition is common in her writings; however, this repetition is a variety because her writings are more about exploration with a linear narrative story. She explores justice, beauty, simplicity of words and even whiteness among them. Describing her works, she says: "my work is not literature, not cinema too; it's something else" (Iulen, 2004; p.66). To Duras, writing is a

necessity as well as both life and death, with an obvious contradiction; she believes "if I keep writing, I won't die" (Iebli, 2001; p,184). The combination of various styles of writing as well as relating controversial matters to the most important ones, generally incoherence, adorn her writing style with postmodernism.

Breaking with tradition, novelty and change

Women's monotonous life was always complained of by Duras. In "*the Rain of Summer*", she protests against the strong presence of women in the kitchen. "Such a big world in each corner of which various things exist with all these different events but you are sitting here peeling potatoes from morning till night! Why don't you want to do another thing?" (Duras, 2001; p, 17). In "Ll and Enstain Mania", Duras criticizes Ll's boredom and monotony as well as her lack of novelty and change in life. By her statements, ''it's not possible to explain how boring and long is, to be Ll.v. Estain is long" (Duras, 2001; p, 19); in another part she says: "with a blur smile on her lips, he says: years after years, there is no change around me" (The Very Book: p, 67).

Excessive sadness and depression

Sadness in "*the pain*" is so deep that it leads to depression. "The woman leans on the closet of kitchen. She is always deep in the heart of absolute pain of thought (Duras, 2004; p, 41). The pain of sadness and expectation imagine the life in such way for her "nothing but a black hole without any light rays" (The Very Book: p, 47). Excessive sadness causes the narrator of "*the Lover*" to say: "it was late very soon, eighteen was late; I was old in eighteen" (Duras, 2004; p. 7). In "*the Vice Consul*", Duras regards women as receptive of this pain and suffering, "those women, who all pain descend on them like waves, those open armed women" (Parsipour, 1990; p.107).

Emphasis on learning and reasoning

In "*the Love*", Duras believes that if women and girls obtain the required knowledge, they will pass all superficial things. "Now, I know something; I know that what makes women almost attractive isn't wearing or clothes, but knowledge" (Duras, 2004; p, 94). "Here women are careful about their beauty closely. In my opinion women's failure was a mistake done by themselves, I mean Not to Thinking" (The Very Book: p, 22). In "*the Pain*" Duras considered women's ignorance and unawareness as the source of all their pain; "all these things that come to you flow from ignorance and unawareness" (Duras, 2004; p, 37).

Free love and marriage escape

Duras regards marriage as the cause of women's plights; about her friend, Helen, she says: "the very girl, whose husband could be any man, was frightened by him; then he commands her to stay home and to wait" (Duras, 2004; p, 75). Ll and Tatiana in "*Ll Mania*" enjoy having relationship with others after marriage. "Tatiana delighted among her lovers. She enjoys her vivid memory of afternoons in "D'boi" hotel, where she seeks a partner to be calm. That very body reaches perfection just in that hotel" (Duras, 1987; p, 69). "However I'm ready for mockery of marriage, but it's always accompanied by call of internal resistance" (The Very Book: p, 15).

The necessity of social activities for women

Marguerite's relationship in the age of fifteen and half with the Chinese man was not for love. She tried to reduce her family's financial problems because "poverty has destroyed family's fences" (Duras, 2004; p, 47). ''Money should be brought home; it makes no difference how, and a desert surrounded the house". (The Previous: p, 27). We shouldn't consider ourselves fumbling; this should be removed from the minds of us as women" (The Previous: p, 63).

Conclusion

One of communism-feminism doctrines is belief in free love vs. marriage. Communism regards a family as a patriarchal institution of class system which rebels against system by free love (Bordo, 1990 p, 23). In Parsipour and Marguerite Duras' stories this theory is desired. In Huri's opinion in "*The Dog and the Long winter*" this kind of free love is normal. In "*the Men vs. the Women*" Katayuon has free relationship with other men. In "*the Pain*" when her husband was in prison, the narrator, starts a free relationship with Mr.D. in "*Daring to be bad*", Alisa and Estein make love to each other freely even before her husband, Max's very eyes. The most important features of love in Parsipour and Duras's stories are failure and dismal. The love of woman to her brother is common in both author's stories. In "*The Dog and the Long Winter*", Huri loves her brother Hossein very much; their love is deep and radical. In "*the Lover*" Duras as the narrator tells about her deep and excessive love to her younger brother. Heroes in Parsi pour and Duras's stories, always break with traditions and rebel against status quo. In "*the Dog and the Long Winter*" Hurri evades customs of society; she was pregnant.

When her brother asked her surprisingly: "who's her child's father?" She replied with equanimity: "a man". In "*Free Experiences*" the girl went beyond traditions and got married to a man whom she saw in street and completely stayed away from accepted traditions. Duras in "*the Lover*" pays attention to the narrator's relationship with her Chinese lover which was against custom; and shows how she pulls wry face to social traditions. In Parsipour and Duras' opinion, women are the center of existence. In "*Tuba and the Meaning of Night*", Parsipour regarded Tuba as the one who gives all men. In "*The Blue Reason*" she comes with sunset and along with a male passenger in Estala beach. There is an ownership look on women in both writers' works. In "*Tuba and the Meaning of Night*" Prience Fereidun Mirza had the sense of ownership to his wife and behaves the way he likes. In "*the Dog and the Long Winter*" Hurri rebels against this social look on women and tries to free herself from such look. In "*Men vs. Women*" katayoun tries to represent this look as an inappropriate thing. It is also clear in "*vice consul*" by Duras; vice consul calls the woman "the thing". Woman in Duras's stories seeks shelter to escape being an object as well as monotonous look at life. Parsipour does the same but limited by Iranian culture in which free love is not acceptable; it is interpreted as scandal. Lack of thinking, knowledge and reasoning are common points in both authors' stories. In all her stories, Parsipour invites all women to learn and think; she believes that thinking is natural and a special ability in women; as the woman in "*The Blue Reason*", emphasizes that I give the very child I was thinking of. The woman in "*The Blue Reason*" is not a child any more, but she decides to think and pass the way of progress and perfection. In "*women without Men*", after getting rid of her brother, Mounes becomes familiar with books, and spies her progress of thought; she starts to study. Tuba in "*Tuba and the Meaning of the Night*" was thinking and her father regards her thinking as the cause of impudence; as in patriarchal society, women's thinking is very dangerous. Duras in "*the Pain*", and "*the Lover*", considers woman's un-awareness and her less knowledge as the only cause of her humiliation. Duras in "*Writing*" says: men cannot only stand a woman who thinks and writes but also find it really frustrating for them. At the end, it should be said that these two writers' stories in spying different cultural context, audiences and languages, are frank manifest that represents feminism thoughts. All cases here indicate that Parsipour is one of Iranian writer who represents her thoughts and concerns as well as those of others with fictional dauntless characters.

Conflict of Interests

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

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Full Length Research Paper

Living in bondage: A dream deferred or a promise betrayed for Igbo linguistic and cultural renaissance?

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When the seminal home video movie, *Living in Bondage,* burst into the market and Nigerian homes in 1991, it literally hit the ground running! It was such an instant hit that it caused a revolution in the Nigerian movie industry akin to the literary revolution set off by Chinua Achebe with *Things Fall Apart* fifty-six years ago. One aspect of the novelty, mystic, charm and great promise of the great movie was that it was rendered in Igbo language with English sub-titling. It triggered a rash of home video productions in several Nigerian languages notably Igbo, Ibibio, Edo, Hausa and Yoruba in English sub-titles. For the Igbos and their language – still to recover sufficiently from the debilitating effects of the Nigerian civil war, the Biafran War – that seminal movie seemed to herald the beginning of a much awaited linguistic and cultural renaissance. But that was not to be. The Nigerian home video industry did grow from its humble beginnings in *Living in Bondage* to become a world renowned industry called Nollywood – named and rated third after the Indian Bollywood and the American Hollywood. Unfortunately, the Igbo language component of the revolution soon petered out like a flash in the pan – an unfortunate victim of the dictate of the profit motive and yet another evidence of the free fall of the Igbo language from its previous position of strength in the era of Tony Ubesie, hailed as 'probably the most gifted and accomplished Igbo writing fiction today in any language' (Emenyonu, 2001:33).

INTRODUCTION

Dream Deferred

What Happens to a Dream Deferred?
Does it dry up
Like a raisin in the sun?
Or fester like a sore—
And then run?
Does it stink like rotten meat?
Or crust and sugar over—
Like a syrupy sweet?

Maybe it just sags
like a heavy load.
Or does it explode?
Langston Hughes (1902-1967)

Great works of art are classics which provide impetus for the growth of their kind within a milieu. They provide intellectual and cultural stimulation to a whole generation of consumers of the work and spurn a significant replication of themselves by other artists. Is this not why

Things Fall Apart (TFA) is such a great cultural icon and delight, giving rise to the African Writers Series of Heinemann Publishers and to African Literature as a body of world literature? If we have to shift our attention to the movies, can we not say the same of *Living in Bondage,* the chart-bursting movie that triggered the home video revolution and created Nollywood in Nigeria? But we shall revisit this aspect in a moment.

To put this study in sharper relief, let us briefly examine the film as an artistic medium with a boundless capacity for cultural and linguistic transformation of societies.

The Encyclopedia Americana (2004) evaluates the film as a tool for research and education, noting that the motion picture has unique capabilities. Films can record cultures, and they can treat social or political issues and other aspects of societies to capture relationships difficult to communicate by other means. Films allow the scientist to see aspects of the world that are difficult or impossible to observe with the naked eye. The motion-picture camera can record bacteria and other microscopic objects, as well as star systems whose light is too faint for normal viewing (Encyclopedia Americana, 2004:506).

Film or motion picture is indispensable to the contemporary world. Scholars have been wondering why movies create everlasting impression. David Bordwell and Kristin Thompson say:

No one knows the full answer. Many people have speculated that the effect result from "persistence of vision", the tendency of an image to linger briefly on our retina. Yet if this were the real cause, we'd see a bewildering blur of superimposed stills instead of smooth action. At present, researchers believe that two psychological processes are involved in cinematic motion: critical flicker fusion and apparent motion (2).

Mankind has known the benefits of films since the first magnetic recording was first patented by the Danish engineer Valdemar Poulesn (1869-1942) in 1900 - a crude method where sound was recorded on a steel wire. From the silent movies of Charlie Chaplin of the 1930s to the modern day Hollywood, Western, Chinese and Indian movies (now Bollywood), the film medium has become the most powerful tool for cultural dissemination and the possession or lack of possession of effective control over this medium is highly indicative of where each country or society stands in the new world information order of the globalized world.

Similarly, within a multi-ethnic country like Nigeria, the level of development of any cultural and linguistic group in this medium of communication is indicative of their overall cultural and linguistic strength. If half of the efforts and resources committed to conferences on Igbo language, culture and civilization had been ploughed into Igbo language movies, a better result would have been achieved. All that talk about redressing Igbo linguistic and cultural decline will make sense when an answer can be found in the movie, as Hubert Ogunde did in "Yoruba Ronu". The high cultural and political marks scored by that movie and its spin offs have placed the Yoruba language and its people on a much more solid footing in the League of Nations. Although Ogunde has passed on, his works and his disciples live and carry on the message of linguistic, social and cultural resurgence. The recent declaration of the Osun shrine as a world Heritage Site by UNESCO and the setting up of UNESCO cultural centre in Oshogbo could have been influenced in part by the early success of the Yoruba language films. Of course, Nigeria as a country failed to achieve any significant height in the celluloid film industry partly because of the sophisticated and expensive technology involved and the lack of vision of the post-independence leaders to invest in that area.

A brief history of the film in Nigeria

Onyero Mgbejume, in his seminal work, Film in Nigeria – Development, Problems and Promise (1989), provides a lot of insight into the growth of the film in Nigeria. In his account, the cinema birthed in Nigeria on Monday, August 12, 1903 when the first 'cinematograph exhibition' was screened at the Glover Memorial Hall in Lagos by Messrs Balboa of Spain under the management of an enterprising Nigerian, Herbert Macaulay. This was seven years after the emergence of cinema. On his departure a month later, a certain Stanley Jones filled the gap by commencing screening of 'living pictures' in the same Glover Hall as from November of that year. Among his staple movies were *The Great Fire Scene*, *Bobby Whitewashed* and *Saturday Shopping*. His greatest hit of that period was a film shown on the 3rd of August, 1904 that showed the Alake of Abeokuta on a visit to England.

For the next three and a half decades, the film became popular as different expatriate investors set up shop and screened movies in different parts of Lagos. In 1946, an office of the Colonial Film Unit, which had been established in England in 1937, was set up in Nigeria to fast track educational development and value reorientation of the colonized peoples, explain government policies and provide news from England. Using 16mm films, the unit deployed cinema vans with local interpreters to rural communities. One important objective of the Colonial Film Unit, which was renamed the Federal Film Unit by legislation in 1947, was to train natives in various aspects of film making and commentary. The Federal Film Unit and its state counterparts today have always been into documentaries, but their activities clearly impacted on the growth of the local feature film industry in Nigeria by the 1970s.

By 1951, there were many commercial theatres showing 35mm movies in Nigeria to large audiences, with estimated annual attendances of 3,500,000 (Mgbejume,

1989: 55). As the same Mgbejume notes, the first Nigerian to make a notable feature film was Sam Zebba, who made **Fincho** in 1958. He also chronicles the attempts by different German, Italian and British film makers to film Cyprian Ekwensi's Jagua Nana in the 60s that were thwarted by the Federal Government which saw the novel event as decadent, a veto that received Wole Soyinka's tongue lashing then. **The Swamp Dwellers** a movie based on Wole Soyinka's play of the same title was produced in London in 1967 with an all Nigerian cast. Then came the 1970s and early 1980s, the golden era of indigenous Nigerian feature film industry.

Shaka (2002) surmises that although Hubert Ogunde and his Yoruba traveling theatre had made attempt at film making in the past, it was not until the 1970s that Ola Balogun, Eddy Ugboma, Sanya Dosumu, Francis Oladele, Jab Adu, Adamu Halilu, etc. made real attempts at film making in Nigeria. The chronicle include: Ola Balogun's Alpha (1974), Amadi (1975), Ajani Ogun (1976), Music Man (1977), Black Goddess (1978), Cry Freedom (1981) and Money Power (1982); Eddy Ugboma's The Rise and Fall of Dr. Oyenusi (1979), The Boy is Good (1979), The Mask (1979), Oil Doom (1980), Bolus '80 (1982) and Death of a Black President (1983); Jab Adu's Bisi, Daughter of the River (1977) ; Sanya Dosumu's Dinner with the Devil (1975) and Adamu Halilu's Shehu Umar (1976), Kanta of Kebbi (1977) and Moment of Truth (1978); (Shaka 2002:11-30). It is worth noting that Amadi by Ola Balogun was the first movie in Nigeria to be shot in an indigenous language, Igbo, (Mgbejume, 1989) but Living in Bondage was the first in an indigenous language with English sub-titles. It was also the very first notable film in the home video technology, which it popularized in Nigeria and beyond as a film medium.

The Rise of the Home Video Films and Nollywood in Nigeria

The history of the home video is naturally much more recent than the celluloid era in Nigeria and elsewhere. As technology opens new pages for mankind, fast thinking man is caught in its webs. Given the highly portable and relatively inexpensive profile of video cameras that inundated Nigeria in the late 1980s and its extreme popularity in capturing social and cultural events, the experimentation with home video films soon gained ground. A lot has been attributed to the roving Yoruba theatres which were managed by family members. The scenario was such that most of these family members identified with it as it was their main source of livelihood. And as Oni and Yerima observed, "The producers/ directors were heads of large families while their wives, children and other relations made up the troupes" (Oni and Yerima, 2008:5).

In their study of why the celluloid era collapsed in Nigeria, Adesanya (1997), Haynes (1997) and Shaka (2002 and 2003) attributed it to a number of factors. The first was that the colonial administration did not lay a stable foundation for the film industry in Nigeria to thrive. But as mentioned elsewhere in this paper, there is a greater burden of guilt on the immediate post colonial governments of Nigeria, which should have invested massively in the sector given its strategic importance to nation building. The second reason advanced by the writers in question was the general insecurity and the decline of urban night life at the end of the civil war which impacted negatively on the cinema world. The third reason canvassed was the dilapidation of cinema theatres from lack of patronage and - in the South East - as a result of the war, which led to many of them being converted to places of worship and warehouses. The fourth factor presented was the control of the cinema by expatriates, mostly Lebanese and Indian companies, which screened foreign films to the detriment of local films and their production. Another point raised was the rapid expansion of the television at a time the film was struggling to find its footing in Nigeria. The unrestricted airing of foreign movies on these televisions was a disincentive to the cinema culture. The seventh point advanced by the writers under review was the cash squeeze occasioned by the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) introduced by the President Ibrahim Babangida administration. This made foreign exchange difficult to obtain to fund the celluloid production equipment (Oni and Yerima, 2008: 4-5).

The game changer occurred when Kenneth Nnebue, seeing the gap created by the dearth of the Nigerian celluloid movies, produced Sola Ogunsola's Yoruba film, *Aiye ni iya mi*, in home video format with the token sum of N2000, "and made quite some profit" (Oni and Yerima, 2008: 5). Nnebue then followed this success up with the chat bursting Living in Bondage**,** which opened the floodgate to hyperactive productions in the new format. Quite remarkably, his effort saw to the exodus of star artists from the television to the film industry which had become more prestigious and lucrative.

Gabriel Okoye followed Nnebue's lead with Battle of Musanga and Nneka the Pretty Serpent. Although Alade Aromire had produced a film, Ekun (1987) in celluloid but Living in Bondage acquired a particular popularity that defined the stage. A steady stream of feature films on home video format in Nigerian languages with English sub-titling followed, riding on the impetus created by Living in Bondage. These were in Igbo, Yoruba, Hausa, Ibibio, Edo and other languages. The enthusiasm herald-ing its entry notwithstanding, strong criticisms followed the new industry in its preliminary years. In assessing Nollywood, Victor Akande has this to say:

Nollywood, the nomenclature for the Nigerian motion picture industry has been variously described as a

phenomenon. This is because the format was a sudden and successful vehicle that has consistently driven the visual entertainment wing of the industry at the expense of cinema, television series, and perhaps stage play------ While film makers from Nigeria are still basking in the euphoria of the UNESCO rating, which in 2009 proclaimed Nollywood as the second largest film industry in the world, critics stressed again that the UNESCO rating was based on quantum and not quality (Akande 2010:8-9).

On return on investment, the new industry has been a soar away success. Both the producers and actors/ actresses have been smiling their way to the bank. Hear Shaka:

With little investments, producers rake in millions of Naira, with much of it going to the financiers/executive producers who are basically motor spare parts dealers or electronic merchants either at Idumota Lagos or at Onitsha Main Market. These traders moved into the industry basically because of its high yielding profit (Shaka, 2002: 16)

However, Gbemisola Adeoti is more positive in his assessment of the impact of the industry. He says:

Largely, home video is a product of the increasing tendency across the world to appropriate products of modern scientific inventions and technological revolutions to interpret, propagate and disseminate indigenous cultures… It has provided jobs for script writers, distri- butors, marketers, advertisers, poster-makers, hoteliers, transporters, and proprietors of video clubs. Investment in the industry is worth about 650 billion of Naira as it has benefited tremendously from the expansion in the industry and technological breakthrough in the field of electronics (Adeoti, 2007:3).

Stories in Nollywood are rehashed from the bowel of the Nigerian society. Some portray interesting historical events. A good number emanate from our belief systems and our tendency to attribute most things to, not ill-luck or any fault of our own but the evil machinations of wicked people. Many others focus on the get rich schemes of people today and its evil concomitants. Yet others portray the good life of ordinary Nigerians, their love and romance as well as their disappointments and pains.

Living in Bondage: A Promise and a Revolution

Living in Bondage is not necessarily the first home video film in Nigeria or the first Igbo film for that matter. Such others like *Amadi* came before it. What is indisputable is that it is the first to draw serious attention to the medium and stories told through it. It is the classic that took the

industry thus far and gave Nollywood the name it bears proudly today. It is the first Igbo language and Nigeria film to set the stage for an industrial movie revolution in Nigeria that will engulf the entire world. Perhaps its director, Chika Onu and script writer Kenneth Nnebue never set out to embark on this great mission, but their accomplishments have ricocheted all around the globe. Living in Bondage after its debut has established itself as the most widely watched Igbo movie, nay Nigerian movie ever.

A lot has been written about late entry of the Igbo in the cinema world in Nigeria. Edward Ossai while reviewing the situation says of it –

A study of the Igbo culture and worldview is most likely to reveal that the Igbos had almost everything it takes to start a viable cinema earlier than they did, but for fear of venturing into the unknown. They have a rich culture, lots of myths, legends, and folklore to tap from and adapt into screenplays. They are recognized as very good dancers, acrobats, singers, and storytellers. The ingenuity of the Igbo made him to realize, late though that much could be made from the filmic world and evolve what appears to be a new genre. That is, ritual films or what the European audience classify as "horror" ----------It is no wonder, therefore to hear people refer to Nigerian films as ritual films" (Ossai, 2006:11-12 in Sokomba and Ossai, 2006).

While the fear of venturing into the unknown is not, to our knowledge an attribute of Igbos, part of what makes Living in Bondage an epic Igbo and Nigerian movie is that it is in Igbo language with English sub-titles. But the story itself sells as well. It attempts to capture the Igbo spirit as perverted in a new comer to the city. Andy Okeke suffers terribly under the weight of city life and later succumbs to its allurements by seeking bloody wealth. Its makers tried to accommodate a compelling story and a good theatre sense told in Igbo language in a time of dwindling economic fortunes of Nigeria in the late 1980s and beyond by experimenting with the video cassette.

In some way, Living in Bondage is the story of Ndigbo (Igbo People) and the consequences which the civil war had imposed on them. Faced with overwhelming poverty, Andy Okeke seeks to break away from the strangulating hold that it has placed on him in his Igbo village. The protracted civil war made a sound education a mirage for Andy. As a village Champion, his inability to possess the woman of his dream drives him to seek his fortunes elsewhere. To cross the Rubicon, he escapes to the city, but reaching there is not a guarantee of success. Andy defines for himself the meaning of choice, value system, ambition and goal. The modern Nigerian State of the 1970s and 1980s makes true the Machiavellian principle that the end justifies the means. This is what the movie condemns. It is a morality tale. Andy's life-style is not a reflection of all Igbo young men. By telling the story in

Igbo language, the producers brought the reality of contemporary Nigerian city life starkly to Igbo young men and women. But the English subtitling also makes it at the same time the archetypal Nigerian, African and world tale that it is, with the story and its morality applicable to people of all linguistic background.

Thematically, Living in Bondage is like Cyprian Ekwensi's experiment in *Jagua Nana* and *People of the City* and Chinua Achebe's second novel, *No Longer At Ease.* Once the character enters the city, he loses his innocence and the devil in the city devours his conscience. A particular feature of Living in Bondage is its inclination towards the occult. This wave and the light it inflamed will hunt many films that were to come after it. Today, the common criticism against Nollywood is its penchant for the occult which spreads the idea that the Nigerian society is a personification of occultism. Since art is often that which it prefigures or mirrors, then this criticism can be sustained.

The unbridled copying of Living in Bondage occultism by successive film producers sent a deadly signal that the level of moral decadence had reached alarming proportions. It was not therefore surprising that these movies were followed by another rash of Christian inspired movies that sang the opposite tune; attempting to create a sense that all is not lost as a mighty God will soon come for recompense. Like the wildness associated with the spread of gospel songs after Path Obasi's Nwa Mami Water in the early 1980s, the new generation pastors have tended to see Christianized home video movies as an extension of their divine mission.

However, it is in its choice of language that Living in Bondage made its boldest statement. By using Igbo language – not the rustic, localized but pure dialect of any of the numerous large Igbo clans with substantial sprinkling of the famous Igbo proverbs, but an easy going, almost deodorized modern day Igbo of the urban settlements – it generated an unprecedented wave of enthusiasm amongst Igbo speakers the world over. It showed that Igbo could be a modern language used in modern, contemporary movies. To make matters even more profound, the film caught on tremendously amongst non-Igbo speakers in Nigeria and Nigerians overseas. It was all the rage as it became the sure topic of every conversation in local bars and pepper soup joints in the country. It even became the subject for editorials and Sunday sermons in churches as witnessed by one of these writers in Ibadan. For him, the defining moment of the canonization of Living in Bondage as a Nigerian epic film in Igbo language was when a Yoruba Catholic priest based his entire Sunday sermon at the Seat of Wisdom Chapel of the University of Ibadan on the film. Even as the Monsignor struggled with pronouncing some of the Igbo names and words, the feeling of Igbo language having arrived on the national scene – or having re-arrived on the scene two decades after it had been pushed out at the end of the Biafran war – was palpable.

Overnight, he and many other Igbos living in the cosmopolitan Yoruba city of Ibadan became crash-programme tutors of Igbo language for hordes of enthusiastic non-Igbo speakers who were desirous of learning sufficient Igbo to better appreciate the riveting story. Among Igbo speakers, catch phrases from the movie like "Andy a kowasikwaalu m ya ofuma" (Andy did not explain the implications to me) caught on quite fast and easily distinguished those who had watched the film from the fast diminishing number of those who had not. Perhaps for the first time since the end of the tragic Biafran war, Nigerians of all linguistic backgrounds were celebrating a Nigerian project of Igbo language coloration. It was a landmark that pointed to a possible renaissance of the Igbo language and culture, even politics.

The rise of the Nigerian home video not only created wealthy Nigerians but produced Igbo stars as well. While analyzing the developmental trend, Oni and Yerima (2008:11) opined that "Since the financial control of the industry is in the hands of Igbo businessmen, it has been easy for executive producers to raise video film stars of Igbo extraction. It is not surprising then that a greater number of the "selling faces" in the industry are Igbo." One may wonder then why the same financial controllers and executive producers did not keep Igbo language in the hub of the films they made.

A Dream Deferred!

That the home video industry in Nigeria blossomed after Living in Bondage has been well acknowledged inter-nationally. So is its coined name, Nollywood, taken in honour of the acclaimed leaders of the world film market, Hollywood. What certainly did not blossom is the use of Igbo as the linguistic medium of high profile films. The producers, directors, actors and investors grew astrono-mically as the volume of films increased, many of them of Igbo extraction. Yet the promise, the excitement and the necessity of continued patronage of Igbo language was largely put aside. How and why did this happen?

In an interview with Chika Onu, the acclaimed producer of the epic, every inch an Igbo man, he has more than enough light to throw on the issues in this cryptic, terse passage. Says he:

The home video is not about morality but about giving the people what they want to see. The film maker is in business and that defines his goal. We can only revive the Igbo image if we shun materialism and collectively and financially work towards promoting Igbo films with sound cultural values. Adequate funding is the only solution to this image redemption. We have the professionals. The need for international standardization

saw the not too literate Igbo marketer losing out. Other factors like rivalry, personality clash, lack of concerted effort, refusal to adhere to directional dictates, reluctance by the educated Igbo industrialists to invest also played their ignoble role.
(Interview, February 5, 2009).

This is the horse talking strait as hearing from the horse's mouth goes! Once their movies crossed the borders and became widely acceptable, the stakeholders decided that they could make much more money by making their films in the English language and reaching a wider audience directly. Also, as other movie makers of non-Igbo orientation came on the scene, the market became more competitive and the Igbo folks felt they should not allow others to dominate the English language medium where they were already holding sway as the Yoruba folks – quickly crossing over from celluloid where they reigned virtually unchallenged in the 70s- were clearly dominating the Nigerian language home video market. The implications of the above comments from Mr. Onu should not be lost on any one.

The first clear implication is that Living in Bondage was not based on a sound, long-term philosophical underpinning as far as the choice of Igbo language was concerned. Yet it may not have been an accident either. If anything, and going by the brazen pecuniary ethos enunciated by Mr. Onu above, it may have been a choice based on shrewd market segmentation principles adopted by the makers of the film. Spelt out very clearly, it could be that having noted the sheer dominance of the celluloid medium in English and especially Yoruba language and seeing that they could not dabble into that medium for reasons already discussed, Onu, Nnebue and crew decided while experimenting with Home Video to also use Igbo as a means of harnessing that hitherto untapped market. In other words, using Igbo at that time made more economic sense than using English.

The second clear implication was that having by design or by accident made fame, proven the efficacy of home video as purveyor of films and having awakened the hunger of consumers for Nigerian stories acted by Nigerians, our heroes did not feel bound to stick with one of their agents of success – the Igbo language. On the contrary, they found it the most expendable variable in the whole marketing mix of the new order. With their new found wealth and fame, they still could not try celluloid because of cost and lack of expertise. They also could have confirmed from their successful experiment that with rising insecurity in the Nigerian cities and countryside, night life was hitting the rocks and the home video was it. Indeed, there was virtually no cinema culture left in the entire South East after the Civil War while Odion Cinema and other public cinemas were booming in the South West and open air cinemas in the North. So if by ditching Igbo language they would make more money in Nigeria

and internationally from their films, so be it. In other words, the commitment to the language was never there, right from the beginning. It was a mere expendable tool in the service of business lucre.

Conclusion

As noted earlier, film as a medium occupies a unique place in the propagation of language, culture and civilization. If the Igbos really think they want to revive their civilization, then they must continue from where makers of Living in Bondage abandoned their revolution. Here is another example of the potential for linguistic resurgence of Igbo language that lies in the film medium. In 1992, almost four years after the screening of the film version of Things Fall Apart in English and Igbo languages, one of these two researchers here was doing a survey of children's programming in the electronic and print media. He found to his amazement that children rated Things Fall Apart higher than many decidedly children's programmes such as Tales By Moonlight and Sesame Street. The Igbo version of the film was even more popular in the Igbo speaking states surveyed (Emejulu, 1992, 2004).

We are already familiar with the increasing plight and crisis of survival facing the Igbo language. The practice of shunning Igbo for English when members of the tribe meet in family and village circles is a great disservice to the promotion of Igbo language and culture. The declining study of the language in secondary schools and universities in Nigeria and around the world is another. The reluctance by Igbos in public offices to speak the language or respond in it when a visitor speaks to them in the language is a version of the same problem. The decreasing number of books written in Igbo is highlighted regularly in conferences. The absence of Igbo language programmes in any of the international news media – BBC, VOA, RD, RFI – is an urgent case in point. All of these symptoms underlie a language in danger of atrophy – a fact highlighted by UNESCO recently.

It is here then that Nollywood Igbo producers and directors must take over. They have to teach Igbos that there is nothing shameful about their language and culture as Chinua Achebe had done, though using the English language medium. It is for this reason that Things Fall Apart is being celebrated and taunted as a classic. Living in bondage gave some hope of a big revolution for the Igbo language but it was not built on a long term strategic vision of the Igbo people and their place in the world, and so the revolution was aborted. Admittedly, they must acknowledge the limited vision of those who gave them that momentary euphoria, but they must go back to the drawing board to reclaim and refine the vision, replant it and pursue it.

Conflict of Interests

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

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Full Length Research Paper

Students become authors: A course in Advanced Writing employing expressivist theory and pedagogy

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The first main assignment required in the first six weeks of Writing II class was designed on the expressivist approach. The article provides an actual class realization when the assignment was given to a group of thirty, English-major students at one Jordanian university. Those six weeks were a mixture of hard work, complaint, excitement, and actual texts produced. An overview of the theoretical basis on which the assignment was built is provided followed by a quick account of how the class was conducted employing expressivist pedagogy. At the end of the sixth week, students were asked to write a one-page journal entry to reflect on and evaluate their writing experience. The article tries to analyze this journal entry to uncover what students learned from doing the assignment and how they evaluated their learning. Analysis reveals that students achieved firsthand knowledge of the writing process and the requirements needed to develop readable effective texts. They finished the assignment believing that they had high potentials, that they could produce texts of good quality and with purpose—just like real writers. In other words, they could write; they could become authors.

Key words: Composition studies, Advanced Writing, expressivist theories, writing workshop.

INTRODUCTION

The study adopts the qualitative methods, particularly what is widely known and accepted as class/teacher research. The article mainly reports a teacher's attempt to understand what works and how it works in a writing class with a group of thirty students at one Jordanian university in the first semester of the academic year 2009-2010. It provides an actual class realization of the first six weeks of the semester. Those six weeks were dedicated to the first required main assignment designed on the expressivist theories.

Writing II class was run as a writing workshop in which students worked individually and collaborated among themselves and with their teacher to produce authentic, effective texts. The subjective/expressivist and the dialectical/social-critical were the two approaches used in the design and teaching of the class, in which the assignment described and analyzed in this article was a main requirement. The expressivist approach started in the 1960s and was dominant in the 1970s and 1980s in American college writing classes. It is still a strong direction in the teaching of writing as many teachers, theorists and practitioners strongly defend it. The second

(the social-critical) started in the mid-eighties, flourished in the nineties, and has continued in the twenty-first century as an approach of cultural-criticism in the teaching of writing.

Composition studies and ESL writing: Background

Several composition scholars refer the birth of Composition Studies to the sixties of the twentieth century. It was not, however, until early in the eighties that Composition stepped into maturity and was fully recognized as a separate academic discipline. In the nineteen eighties, Language Clinics changed in many American Universities into Writing Centers; more and more English departments started to offer graduate programs in composition and rhetoric. That was also the decade during which many specialized (peer-reviewed/refereed) journals were established in the discipline (e.g., Rhetoric Review, Pre/Text: A Journal of Rhetorical Theory, The Writing Center Journal, Written Communication, Journal of Advanced Composition (now JAC: Journal of Composition Studies), Journal of Computers and Composition); that is in addition to the well-recognized College Composition and Communication since 1949 and College English which began to publish more and more articles in composition (Peer-reviewed journals were a sign that English departments were hiring more tenure-track writing professors). Above all, the eighties was the decade when affiliation with a school of thought or an approach to teaching writing became a tradition among professors of English.

Scholars of Composition Studies generally agree on the existence of at least four major schools of thought/ approaches to teaching writing: *subjective* (variously referred to as expressivist, expressionistic or personal), *experimental* (known as the cognitivist), *dialectical* (differently referred to as social/transactional/critical), in addition to the much condemned *objectivist* (widely known as current-traditional; for details on these approaches to the teaching of writing, see the reviews done by Bizzell (1986), Berlin (1987) and North (1987.) The three main approaches (the subjective, the experimental and the dialectical) share a consensus over the importance of shifting the writing teacher's focus from evaluating the product produced by students to working with students on the processes and activities needed to make such a product possible, or what has come to be called the process paradigm in the teaching of composition.

ESL/EFL writing has never been easy to teach. Teachers have to worry about too many things in addition to the actual goal of the writing class: having students engaged in real acts of making meaning in order to compose fresh texts which communicate real purposes to readers. Pedagogies based on the process approach to the teaching of writing have found their ways to the ESL/EFL writing classes as early as the 1960s of the twentieth century (Reid, 1993, pp. 31-32). Many instructors involve their students in some pre-writing activities such as brain storming, free-writing and/or journal writing before they start to write an actual draft, a draft that is submitted to several revising techniques and rewriting processes.

Students come to writing classes at the university with almost no experience in academic writing—except writing answers learnt from studied materials to exam questions. It has been a challenge to work with students who believe that they could not write, and who do not care much about learning how to write. Over the years, the author insisted on teaching students and helping them see how they could learn and use writing to achieve their own academic and non-academic goals. For this purpose, the subjective expressivist approach to the teaching of writing has proved to be very helpful and fruitful.

The study

The writing class (ENG206: Writing II) in the first semester of 2009/2010 was taught to a group of thirty students. Given students' lack of experience with matters of writing, the class syllabus and curriculum was accordingly crafted to help them create a feeling of trust in their own potential abilities as writers. The class design and structure intended to help students become more comfortable with writing. The main assignments allowed them a less formal writing space in which to experiment with voice, giving details, expressing opinions and forming arguments. The class was designed to follow the paradigm shift in composition classes, and adopt Donald Murray's admonition (1968) of initiating students into the writing process by having them go through the experience of working as real authors do. Students were encouraged to feel like real authors of books who wish to present something of value to their readers. The main assignments main objective was to produce confident writers who were capable of forming and articulating logical points-of-view in a way that most readers could understand.

The assignment described and analyzed in this paper was the first required main assignment and designed on the expressivist theories. The following sections include a quick review of the main theoretical and pedagogical basics of the expressivist approach/school based on which the assignment was designed.

Theoretical Foundations: Expressivist Approach—A brief overview

It is widely accepted that the expressivist approach is the most widespread poststructural approach in the teaching

of college composition. Despite all the criticism that has been launched against it, it is still strongly practiced and defended. Major names of expressivists such as D. Gordon Rohman, Ken Macrorie, Donald Murray, Peter Elbow, Toby Fulwiler, and Ann Berthoff are hard not to recognize in the history of Composition Studies. Both theorists and teachers of composition never fail to reinvent the ways in which they use the basics of this approach in their classrooms.

In the 1970s, the circulation of the findings of psycho-linguistics about language processes and development in the academia either coincided with or helped the rise of the expressivist approach in Composition Studies and paved the way for another major movement in the field—cognitive research trend. These two movements (expressivist and cognitivist) instituted the language and practice of the trend known as *the process approach* or 'teaching writing-as-a-process' paradigm. In addition, Berlin (1987) and Gere (1986) agree that the revival of classical rhetoric (and the concept of pathos) in the fifties and sixties of the twentieth century was an important factor that encouraged the spread of expressivist practices. The other origin of the expressivist movement was said to be in Dewey's progressive education with its emphasis on learners' experience and motivation.

PEDAGOGY ENCOURAGED BY EXPRESSIVISTS: STUDY METHODOLOGY

To begin with, expressivist rhetoric defends the importance of freeing students' imagination, tolerating the disorderliness of individual searches for meaning. It gives power to personal voices and encourages the creative abilities of all students. The expressivists believe that writing is an art and the best way of learning it is by doing. There is no way that students will write better texts unless they actually engage in the process of producing texts and go through all the stages that established writers experience when they write. The goal of the composition class for the expressivists is, then, not to teach students how to write (because writing cannot be taught) but to allow them to write and express themselves. In this way, writing becomes a process of discovery—both of ideas and of the writer's self. The teacher's role is to support students' motivation and to provide the appropriate safe environment where students feel confident of the validity of their thoughts. The pedagogy encouraged by this rhetorical theory, consequently, revolves around three vital activities: the search for original meaning through free writing, the keeping of a journal, and participation in peer editorial groups.

These pedagogies have altered the teacher's function in the classroom. Teachers have come to see their roles as knowledgeable *collaborators* and participants in the *writing workshop*. In his 1973 *Writing Without Teachers*, Peter Elbow, the pioneer expressivist, adapted the stages of Piaget's model of cognitive development to fit a growth figure of writing as organic (see pages 42-47). Elbow insisted that a piece of writing, like a baby and all other living organisms, starts in the infancy stage and goes through a process of growing and refinement until it reaches maturity—the stage when the piece comes very close to saying what the writer has originally intended to say. To reach this stage of maturity, Elbow outlined a plan that starts with 'free writing' and ends with severe, conventional editing. This growth figure has

resulted in the articulation of the process of writing constituting the stages of *pre-writing*, *writing*, and *rewriting*.

In the prewriting stage, students engage in different brainstorming activities that might include meditation, group discussions, free writing, and the keeping of journals. The notion of free writing is particularly basic to the expressivist writing class. Elbow calls for liberating students from artificial conditions and to set them free to express themselves in a way that will help them develop their own personalities and affirm their self-realization. The idea here is to give students time to write freely anything and everything that comes to mind. Forcing students to start writing and continue writing for ten or fifteen minutes nonstop, Elbow's instructions were: "start writing and keep writing" (Elbow, 1973, p. 25). In the early stage of writing, the writer should "shut off" the editor and write continuously whatever comes to mind for "enough time to get tired and get into" the topic. Elbow says that the writer at this stage, writes for the 'garbage can' in order to allow ideas to grow naturally. The other goal of free writing is to build an emotional relation with the topic, to reach the state when the writer "can feel it in [the] stomach and arms and jaw" (p. 27).

Instead of the orderly plan or outline students were required to start from, Elbow, Murray, Macrorie, Berthoff and other expressivists called upon composition teachers to allow their students 'chaotic beginnings' to experiment with thoughts and language. Free writing led to the idea of Journal writing. Journals are intended to be places where students explore their inner worlds with regard to a topic before they start refining their ideas for a draft. Journal writing for Elbow has no rules except to start writing and continue writing.

The other pedagogical technique that expressionist adopted (in addition to freewriting/ journal-writing)—and which still lives prosperously in composition classes today—is the use of the peer-response groups. Students in the expressivist writing class are encouraged to share their writing with other students to get feedback. As different students may have varied learning experiences, they will benefit from each other's skills and knowledge. To prevent possible undesirable reactions from students, expressivists developed certain basic outlines to teach students how to respond to their classmates' writings. Examples of these criteria include: never quarrel with someone else's reaction; give specific reactions to specific parts of the text in question; remember that no reaction is a wrong reaction, and that advice and evaluation have no value; remember that theories are less important than facts; remember that you are always right and always wrong; do not reject what readers tell you, etc.

Peer-response practice led to developing the notion of writing groups that work inside and outside the classroom in which students exchange writings and feedback with the least interference from the teacher. The teacher in the writing-group based class is more of a coordinator than a traditional teaching figure. Peer-response and writing-groups are the bases of the new *'writing-workshop class'* that distinguishes the recent history of Composition Studies from all traditional approaches. And, the whole notion of collaborative writing came from peer-response and the writing-workshop class.

As it will become clear in the following sections, these (providing safe environment to help students feel, think and write, free/journal-writing, peer/group-response practice, in addition to the explanation and exploration of the three-stage prewriting-writing-rewriting process) were the main pedagogies implemented in the Writing-II class in which the assignment described and analyzed here was a main requirement.

Class and students

In an institution, ENG206: Writing II was a second-year major

requirement for all students of English Language and Literature in the College of Arts and for students of English Teacher Education in the College of Education. ENG206 class in the first semester of 2009/2010 had thirty students, 24 girls and 6 boys, who came from different parts of the country. All were third and fourth year English majors, some graduates in their last semester at the university. Though the class was a second year requirement, students could take it in any semester during their four-year study. Many of them delayed taking it until later in their program to ensure they were proficient enough in English. All students had finished classes in skills, linguistics, and literature. Some had failed a couple of courses in their first and second year or just barely passed in several classes. Stunned by the seriousness of their program requirements, students got into a habit of complaining, but working harder to pass classes and keep their seats. They started to understand, by the time they came into the author's class, the nature of their situation and the requirements of their program. Most of them were very serious in attending classes and doing assignments. All finished ENG106: Writing 1 (Paragraph Development)—some with the author (studied modes of academic discourse), others in different classes (studied a textbook with a mixture of grammar, reading, and writing exercises). All thirty students were serious about finishing class successfully—they did not want to sit in it again. A few were enthusiastic who had asked other students, liked the ideas, and prepared for the class before they enrolled in it.

Course description and syllabus

The formal ENG206—Writing II—course description stated that the class "should introduce students to and have them practice the art of writing the essay [added here: "and longer authentic texts"] in English". The syllabus was planned to familiarize students with the several steps and stages writers go through when producing a text. In other words, it was designed to develop student authors, or at least students who understand how authors work to produce authentic texts. The class was run in the form of a writing workshop in which students learned and practiced prewriting activities of rehearsal, discussions, and free writing in addition to drafting, revising, editing and rewriting.

The format of the English academic *essay* was taught and practiced. In addition to essays, the syllabus required that students write two main assignments called books: a *personal narrative book* (based on the expressivist approach), and a group, community-inquiry book (based on the social-critical approach). The personal book (the focus of this article) was a kind of analytic descriptive narrative of a personal experience: something that happened with the student her/himself. It was required to be 10-typed pages of coherent, well-connected ideas, presented in clear language. The book was given the First Exam grade (20 points) and was due by the end of the sixth week in the semester. The second main assignment was the *group book* which could not be shorter than 20 typed pages and was given the Second Exam grade (20 points). It was due by the end of the twelfth week in the semester.

In addition to these two major assignments, students wrote *five short essays* during the semester, and a number of *journal entries* (all were given 20 points). They were also asked to sit for a *final exam* (30 points) in which they were asked to write one short essay and one short journal entry on topics provided on the exam day. Ten points of the total grade were given to class *participation*, involvement in work and discussions, and attendance. Students had to attend individual and group writing conferences with the teacher to discuss their work.

Most of the work and writing happened outside class time. In class they were often made to get into peer-response groups of two and three to discuss their writing and share experience. Often, individual students were asked to share part of their writing with the whole class to discuss, revise and evaluate. The course was condensed and seemed to be a little too demanding for inexperienced student-writers. But with encouragement, a bit of enforcement, and heightened teachers' involvement, students became engaged and active producers of texts. Keeping the level of motivation high was an issue to be addressed in a variety of ways throughout the semester. Most students got excited as they were producing their original texts.

Details of everyday class-dynamics

First class. The syllabus was given and the required work was discussed with the students, explaining to them the two main jobs (books) they were expected to accomplish throughout the semester. Students—having no real experience of doing actual writing in which they created knowledge before this class—thought the class to be too demanding for them. They thought the assignments to be new and innovative but a bit too advanced for them. They modeled Sally Chandler's assertion that "[s]tudent fear and loss of confidence are perennial issues in composition classrooms" (2007, p. 60). As the class needed a lot of hard work, students needed to be assured that they could do the required writing—and actually enjoy doing it—if they follow the instructions and do their work faithfully. And, it was a blessing to notice in that first class how a positive psychological notion started to build in the students. They actually liked the fact that they were expected to do hard work and that they had the ability to accomplish the job. They liked to feel that they did have potentials and that their teacher believed in them.

In that first class, details were given about the first book and how to choose appropriate topics. Students were asked to choose a personal experience, explaining in details why a personal topic was the right choice for that first book ever in their lives. Then, they were given some hints of what to think of—an important event, a change of life, or a goal that shaped their life. They were to decide on their book topic on that first day. A couple of students immediately announced what they wanted to write about. They were asked questions (with the rest of students listening) and helped to develop the idea for their books. Such interaction gave an example to the others of the type of things they could write about and how to go about it.

Students were told to force themselves to decide on the topic that same day so that before coming to class the following lecture, they must have settled with the topic and be ready to start their work—their actual book-writing. Following Peter Elbow's approach in his *Writing Without Teachers*, they were told to decide on the topic and force themselves to write about it and not to let anything disturb or stop them while writing before going to bed that night. They were encouraged to write freely without paying any attention to language, grammar or the logic of what they would write in order to see if they really felt comfortable with the chosen topic, and if they could write the whole book on it. They were asked to bring what they could write with them to the following class. Then—in the last ten minutes of that first class—they were told how to do the journals. Any topic and every topic could be a good subject for a journal entry. They needed to start their journals the second week of classes in the semester.

Second class. The mood was a mixture of complaint, moaning, encouragement and forced writing. Most of the students came without having written anything—but had roughly decided on their possible topics. Each individual student was asked to announce to the whole class their topics. The author discussed with a few what

they would include in the book and how they would do it. This helped the undecided students to make up their minds and settle with a topic. Students were then given ten minutes to write anything that may come to their minds related to their topics. They were asked to have by the end of the ten minutes at least two to three hand-written pages on their chosen topic. Under close observation, students did try to write, but many complained that they did not know where to start or how to begin. The answer was simply to: "begin from the beginning." They were directed to start naturally where their story started in their lives and then to follow the events taking lead from the time sequence in which the events happened. They did not need to worry too much about how to begin as each story could have many different beginnings, and they could decide to change the beginning point of their story later on in the course of their actual writing. It was also made clear that no one would know the beginning of their stories except themselves because each one of them was the only one in the class (or maybe in the world) who knew when, how, where his/her story began.

After ten minutes, they were asked to take a break in which we talked about the idea of free writing as introduced and discussed by Peter Elbow. The idea was basically about how to let one-self go on writing freely without stopping like a person going on a sea voyage, with no particular end in mind at the start point and to let the piece or the story find its own way. Elbow called this practice the open-ended writing process. With time and revisions, the piece of writing would develop what Elbow called "a center of gravity" (1973, p. 35). Then students were asked if they wanted to discuss more ideas about writing, or continue writing in their books. Most voted to continue writing, saying they had things to write and they did not want to lose their ideas.

Before the end of that second meeting, the class discussed the importance of writing as a way of self-expression. It was emphasized how each one of the students was the sole authority on her/his topic. The meaning of the word AUTHOR—as a term connected to the notion of AUTHORITY—was explained to them. Discussion focused on what it meant to establish and keep authority/control, both over topic and readers. It was emphasized that writing was a natural act because every person had things to say, and that any written piece no matter how formal or academic should eventually convey the writer's knowledge, thinking and feeling as a way to affect an intended audience. On top of all, it was made clear how affecting readers would mean making these readers see, feel and believe; giving them the chance to share the author's knowledge, experience and understanding of the world/topic. To do so, that is, to affect readers, writing needed to fulfill three conditions: to be authentic, honest and telling. Towards the end of the class, we reflected on why a personal narrative seemed to be the right place for inexperienced writers to begin practicing and establishing authority through the power of expression. Students were asked to continue writing at home and to bring with them at least five hand-written pages to the next class. This discussion of authorship and the work of authors were interesting, insightful and energizing to the students and it helped them to see their position in relation to what they were writing.

Third class. All students had started their writing and they were settled with their chosen topics. They were told to use the first thirty minutes of class to write in their books. It was emphasized that they should not stop for any reason. They were directed not to read what they were writing. They had to keep their hands moving with the pen to the very last minute of the time given. They were not to think of introductions, organization, grammar, or language. They only needed to think of writing what happened in their stories. They would have enough time to worry about everything after reaching the end and starting the revising processes. They were reminded of the time and that it was going fast because the due date was

final. All students used the time to write and got very much invested in the work; they wrote very seriously. Many of them seemed to enjoy it. They did not want to be interrupted and actually took the whole class time doing writing. Before the end of the class, the author told them that she let them fool her and write the whole class, which we would not be able to do again. They found this experience (forced writing inside class) helpful. They were asked to bring with them to the next class at least 10 to 15 hand-written pages.

Individual writing conferences were set. Each student was assigned a time of fifteen-to-twenty minutes to come to the office to discuss her/his story and writing processes. During the writing conference, most students expressed their satisfaction with the work they were doing. Many of them had questions, and some expressed fears and worries about time, the value of their narratives, and the quality of their writing. Those conferences were reassuring to the author as well as to the students. Extra measures were taken to help them feel comfortable discussing their topics, their writing processes and the problems they faced. Four students were not yet sure they wanted to continue with their narratives. The conversation helped them make the final decision. Other students had questions about the structure of the text and paragraphing. Ten students expressed worries about their language difficulties and asked for advice to overcome them. The level of commitment students showed during these conferences was highly astonishing and pleasing.

Fourth class. Many students were asked to write like in the previous class. They said they found themselves very productive when they wrote inside class. The first half hour of class time was given. Then, there was a vote. Half of them wanted to write and the other half wanted to discuss ideas and ask questions. They were given some explanation on how to start revising their ideas to check whether they were complete ideas and would make sense to their readers. Each group was allowed to do what they needed. One group immediately started to write. The other group was asked to work in pairs, discussing and developing what they had written, and to ask questions if they needed help while the teacher was going between them. Starting from this point in the semester, the job of the teacher running the class became not to instruct, but to clearly redefine and stay in the role of a coach and advisor. As Christine Love Thompson admonished,
"when instructing students in writing, we shouldn't be *teachers*. We should be guides, facilitators, and co-writers. By stepping out of the teacher role and giving students control, we ensure that individuality, creativity, and student voices are heard" (2011, p. 61).

The teacher had only to interfere and impose on individual students and groups to make sure they were all engaged in the right tasks. It was made clear to them that they were in full charge of their writing. They were encouraged to ask questions and demand help whenever they needed.

Fifth class. Immediately from the beginning, students asked to be given the time: some wanted to continue writing; others had made arrangements among themselves to work together on revising ideas. That class was so vibrant. The teacher had no place in it; she spent the whole class watching and trying to steal hearing some of what they were discussing among themselves. They were loud discussing ideas—some Arabic words could be heard now and then. They were unaware of the teacher's presence. They seemed to be much taken by the task and looked serious doing the job. Despite the several attempts to interrupt them, they wanted to continue. One student said, "Doctorah, don't worry. I will give you a complete book on the due date. Just give us the time; we need it." It seemed like for the first time in their lives, they discovered that they could write and that they had things to say and share with others— things that had meaning. The only choice was to leave them alone

to do it the way they needed. Class time ended; they did not pay attention. The teacher stole out of the room and quietly closed the door behind her. No one saw her leave.

Classes Six to Eight. The sixth class was almost the same as the fifth. But the last 15 min of class time was a general talk about the whole process of them writing the book. Most students sounded more confident to have it done but some were a bit behind in their writing because they wrote only in class. Students were encouraged and told that they needed to have it down on paper by the following week because they would start to work on revising, correcting and rewriting what they had written. And so the following class sessions went on between writing, complaining, encouraging, asking questions, raising problems, sharing parts of what they had written until they actually finished the first draft by the end of the fourth week. In those class sessions, it was a blessing to watch students involved in real acts of making meaning. Instead of moaning and complaining, many of them asked practical questions.

The process of producing a complete first draft took eight class sessions of work over four weeks. For about half an hour and sometimes longer the teacher almost had no real work to do in class. Students were deeply involved in their writing/revising, and did not want any to disturb them. Very often in those classes, they used her as a moving dictionary. When she was passing near Iman's seat, she looked up at her and, without thinking, hesitation or any introductions, asked: "What is /za3laneh/ in English?"

- "Angry or sad," the teacher said.
- "Yes! Yes! Angry," she said, "but if a … a lot?"
- "Furious!?"
- "aywah!" (Jordanian slang for "exactly")

And she sank back over her notebook, continued writing, too busy to say thank you, as if nobody was there at all.

Classes Nine to Twelve. Then, in class nine, with a complete first draft at hand, the class started revising—sometimes as a whole group, often in pairs, and some insisted on doing it alone and only asked their teacher or their friends questions when they needed. Some students were asked to read loud one part of their texts to the class. And everybody worked on developing ideas, making sure they were complete and made sense to readers, checking relations between ideas and parts of the story, establishing order and organi-zation in the text, in addition to checking form and language points such as paragraphing, choice of vocabulary, grammar especially the use of narrative (past) tenses, spelling and punctuation.

Class number twelve in the semester—the last class in the sixth week—one student was absent [[She came two hours after class time to the office, with her book at hand, almost crying with apologies. It was out of her control as she had no personal computer and the bookshop which typed the book for her were not punctual and delayed her]]; twenty-nine students brought their books, neatly typed and published. They were asked to hold the books high at the same time and to look around and see the class books. They were happy! Books collected, students were made to take fifteen minutes to write a one-page journal entry in which they were instructed to critically reflect on and evaluate their experience writing that first book. On that day, the status of the class with those student writers seemed bright. With this much of excitement in that class period, number twelve in the semester, the class started discussing the second assignment—the community inquiry book. The teacher left the classroom on that day carrying more than four hundred pages (most narratives were longer than the ten-page minimum limit) of students writing to check, correct, respond to, and evaluate. she was happy—just like her students—but at the same time overwhelmed by the heavy load she was carrying.

RESULTS, DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

The necessary arrangements were made, and reading started. Amazing was the fact that students who were sure they were not writers had actually done the work of authors: clear writings, powerful stories, compelling feelings and thoughtful reflections. It was delightful to read through and see how the ultimate goal of teaching writing—to help student-writers develop that particular "sense of agency and ownership" (Rogers, 2011, p. 133)—materialized in most of those narratives.

True! Most texts had grammar, punctuation and spelling mistakes, but the ideas were clear enough not only to understand the stories but to enjoy and be affected by reading them. In the process, the author had to let go a little on language correctness. she totally agrees with Christine Thompson who learned from her classes that "focusing too much on correct grammar and spelling stifles students' voice in their writing" (2011, p. 57). The author often asked herself the same question Thompson asked: "what kind of writing teacher would I be if I let students leave mistakes in their papers?" The author had to take charge and decide her priorities: correct Grammar or effective Writing? Did she want her students to produce the regular "mutt genres" Elizabeth Wardle described? Genres, she said, "that do not respond to rhetorical situations requiring communication in order to accomplish a purpose that is meaningful to the author" (2009, p. 777). Or did she want them to produce real pieces with authentic voice and communicative purpose? Her choices were clear.

Topics and stories: A telling example

The stories/topics students wrote ranged from sad events, to happy occasions, to failures in some life endeavors, to having fun, to wrong doings and regrets, to important turns in personal lives, to silly things. They were all personal, and each reflected a personality that was striving to reach a point of culmination of success/ happiness or failure/pain. Some stories presented the formation of a character learning and changing because of what happened. Other stories showed a discovery, an understanding, or a point of making peace with what happened. The stories were good! Honest! Telling! Full of real life!

Muna wrote about her neighbor, classmate and friend, whom she called the Dove and who died in cancer when they were in the eleventh grade. She ended the story saying that she bought a couple of doves which she kept and took care of. Every morning she would hear the sound of the doves in her room to assure herself that Hadeel, her friend, was still remembered. That last sentence of the book was the first and only mention of the friend's real name: "Hadeel". The title of her book was "The Sound of Doves," the literal translation of the name

Hadeel in English—Imagine! The idea just didn't occur to the author before reading that last sentence. she couldn't help tears. When the student was later asked her about it, she explained that she planned to do it in this manner on the day when in class seven the discussion was about building suspense and how to avoid saying things too soon in the narrative because they might ruin the story for the reader.

In her journal entry, Muna talked about how good it was to be able to express feelings that she "can't talk about". She talked in details about her worries that her "writing maybe misunderstood" or if others "can't understand" it as she wanted. She intended "to express feelings" because readers "must live with writer's feeling, thought, and events." She said, "I tried to make my writing expressive to make [the] readers live the story." She was worried that she might have forgotten "details that readers need to understand." She now knew how "hard and beautiful" it felt to be a writer.

As such, Muna summarized in her one-page journal entry all which her teacher wished to teach students about writing and the job of the writer. She felt great respon-sibility towards her readers. It was not possible for the teacher to have thought of a way to raise her audience awareness to the level she expressed. She felt responsible for her ideas, the effect to be created, the language used, and above all how to be true/honest to the story she was telling. She finished her journal saying that it was a "big responsibility: to be honest." Muna, without knowing anything about theories or theorists of composition, summarized what Johanna Rogers sees to be "a strong consensus among theorists regarding how they would like to see students position themselves in relationship to academic writing, namely with responsi-bility and engagement" (2011, p. 133).

Points included in students' journals

In the journal entry students wrote in class session number twelve, they reflected on their writing experience. They clearly revealed their understanding of the job they were doing—writing to achieve a purpose and affect readers—and expressed their excitement about having done the job. Many of them talked about the benefits they gained, about the challenges they faced, and also about how they never thought they could write in English that much or as such. Twenty five students of the thirty mentioned personal benefits and gains they felt they had achieved as a result of having written the book. Those benefits ranged from psychological/ emotional gains, to self-confidence, to gaining knowledge, to developing skills of using sources, to learning how to manage time and give priorities. Students talked about how writing the assignment affected their personality: they became more thoughtful and aware of their inner selves, more attentive to understanding others and more articulate in expressing

their feelings and thoughts.

Expressing feelings. Like Muna, Ten students expressed their excitement about being able to express feelings they did not know how to talk about before they wrote the book. For these students, writing the personal book was therapeutic, a cure for psychological and social complexities they may have been suffering from because of certain personal private histories. Students in their journal confirmed ideas similar to the findings of Pennebaker and Seagal that "Writing about important personal experiences in an emotional way ... brings about improvements in mental and physical health" (1999, p. 1243). They seemed to have developed the "ability to generate new ways of thinking about emotions, cognitive processing, and health" (Smyth and Pennebaker, 2008, p. 6).

Students used the words "happy," and "comfortable" to describe their satisfaction. Dhuha was happy as she discovered that writing was a good way to express if she could not express in speech while Safa's "nice experience in writing" made her "so happy" and felt that she loved her father (the topic of her book) more because writing about him made her discover how he was a "gift" in her life. On the other hand, Majed, who wrote about a blind classmate, said: "At the end of writing I found myself love this world because I wrote about this friend; it changed my way of seeing others."

Self-confidence: achievement. It was clear that writing the personal book boosted students' self-esteem and self-confidence. Twenty-four of the thirty students felt that writing the book was an achievement that made them proud of themselves because they were able to do such a demanding work of authoring. Like the students of Goodburn and Camp, they "wrote glowingly" about their experience and "felt ownership and pride" (2004, p. 95). Iman said she was not only proud but elated for having "tried to achieve something very big like a personal book." She continued, "Really I achieved the book. I can write a book…. I succeeded." Yousef said it was good to feel that he "could do something and was able to let people know" that he did. Inas, who felt "so proud" of herself, felt that it was "fantastic … to write and let people feel with you." Islam J. summarized it all: "I felt that I achieved something and not anything, but something different and new…. I think that it is a big work." It is this sense of achievement which they all shared and tried to express. For the first time in their lives, they had been able to produce in writing something that can (even if symbolically) be called a book.

Developing Writers Gaining Knowledge. Like the students of Sally Chandler, my students revealed in their journal "a narrative analysis of their development as writers" (2004, p. 59). Twenty three students said in one way or another that they were learning and gaining knowledge despite the fact that they were writing about

something personal from their lives. They expressed certain ideas related to their awareness of different writing processes that were related to presenting and developing ideas, creating needed effect, revising language, grammar, and the choice of words in addition to developing skills of using sources and managing their time. Twenty one of them said that they came to understand how authors write and the kind of suffering they go through to produce readable texts. Rasha discovered that she needed to "work hard" because authors write "something good that makes effect on readers." Five students (Aseel, Alaa, Sawsan, Su'ad, and Asia) found problems deciding their "beginnings" or "starting point", but once started, they found "information flowing" and, as Sawsan said, they "could describe, narrate, [and] create suspense."

Thirteen students (Aseel, Alaa', Sawsan, Su'ad, Seham, Asia, Tamadhur, Iman, Sufyan, Kawther, Reem, Nasreen, and Husam) described how they worked with ideas in the process of writing. They mentioned deleting details and adding others while trying to decide as Su'ad said "what to write and what not". Like authors, their decisions of which details to include were based on two main factors. One, as Asia said, they "tried to be effective". And second, they had to make tough decisions on "which is important and which is not," in the words of Su'ad. This resulted in deleting many personal details (Tamadhur) while at the same time trying to express events in clear statement (Sawsan). Some felt angry because the process "needed a lot of time" (Sufyan, Islam H.) while others were satisfied as it resulted with a "more related and expressive" text (Kawther).

Students also talked of organizing ideas and dividing the text into paragraphs (Nasreen, Su'aad), paying attention to "time order and the sequence of events" (Iman, Kawther) and relating "the event or actions with each other" (Reem). Students experienced first-hand both the joys and disappointments of the process of authoring. Islam H., who "felt angry" because "the doctor ordered to write enough details" when she thought she had written everything, "found many mistakes" when she "started to make revisions," and had to "revise ideas, theme and everything" several times to make sure her text honestly conveyed what she intended to say. In the same way, Kawther read repeatedly "to check the relatedness of the events and added some tiny details". Above all, Reem suffered because she often felt that she could "express the idea in Arabic more beautiful and better than English." She said, "I worked hard to convey my messages: I started to collect my ideas in draft…. At the end, I found … I can write in English language in … a good manner." She was aware of her writing processes and that she was actually improving her skills.

Developing Skills: Using Sources. It is tempting to say that students could make a leap in their ability to use English—the foreign language—to communicate a desired message effectively and thoughtfully. In the revising processes, they learned to use available sources. One important source was the dictionary to check meanings of words they did not know or words they were not sure of as well as to check spelling. Tamadhur "found problems in … choosing vocabulary" and had to frequently revise. Likewise, Iman focused on "revising everything and looking up some words in the dictionary". In this way, Sawsan found that in the process she learned new words. And, Kawther talked of editing "the lexical choices to make the book more effective for the reader." Nahar, who was surprised she could write, found she "had difficulty in vocabulary" because she knew few and "simple" words. So, she started memorizing "new words every day to use in writing." It was difficult but she was interested "in doing the job."

Other sources were their grammar books and punctuation manuals. Sufyan found that writing made him give all his attention to everything. He said, "It was a difficult experience that needed … to be careful about the structure of every sentence." Kanary was worried about her grammar which forced her to revise more than one time. Alaa', who talked in details about problems, "discovered grammar errors that made reading not interesting." Asia "tried to be effective" by correcting grammatical mistakes, and reading to check the errors of printing. Tamadhur "found problems in grammar" and had to frequently revise. Every time she revised it, she found mistakes and had to do more work. Iman in the process, found that she "became very careful about spelling and grammar" because she "wanted it to be excellent work." Nasreen consulted her grammar book to correct mistakes. Husam was bothered by problems in "using punctuation marks" and worked hard on them because he wanted his book "to be done in a good way like the author."When Islam H. "started to make revisions," she "found many mistakes" and had to "revise language… and punctuation." Fahed described how, while revising, he "put the dictionary and other necessary books of grammar, and a manual of punctuation" beside him. For DHuha and Fadwa, taking care of language and grammar was a main difficulty. Generally speaking, students became aware of the importance of good language to convey a message and create the needed effects. Leena said that she used her knowledge to write and correct language because she wanted to "make it beautiful … to make [the] book readable". She confirmed that in the process, her "writing became better." As such students tried to achieve the highest success, still, they reflected excellent results in language learning.

A third source some students used while revising was other people or readers to double check language, details and effects. Several students mentioned having "friends read it" to guarantee achieving the highest success. Iman, who was happy she succeeded in writing the book, made all her friends read it and was happy because they

"felt comfortable." She said, "This made me sure I achieved a good something."

Developing writer's audience awareness. Compositionists have raised so many issues related to audience awareness, the kind of audience a writer may be thinking of while writing, and ways of helping student-writers—as Willey (1990) suggests—"decenter", to move from the egocentric stage to actually presenting information for a reader with a purpose in mind. That is, students of writing need to become aware that they are writing to a reader and to decide what kind of relationship they want to have with this intended reader and how to create such a relation. Composition theorists referred to this kind of audience awareness as "social cognition". Curtis Bonk (1990) defines social cognition as "a person's inferences, beliefs, or conceptions about the inner psychological processes or attributes of other human beings" (1990, p. 137). In other words, a writer needs to make assumptions concerning the kind of mentality and psychology the addressed reader either has or will have while reading the text being composed.

The students in ENG206 mentioned clearly in their journal entry that they were thinking of the audience, their prospective reader and what purpose they wanted to impart to this audience. Many of them actually expressed strong audience awareness. Nahar worried a lot that her poor vocabulary might make her subject "not good, not interesting to reader." Kanary and Rasha shared a concern to make their readers "understand, feel … and think." Kanary said that it was a "big responsibility" while Rasha discovered how "a simple idea with hard work becomes effective" to readers. Iman was aware that the teacher was going to be the primary reader, and she was clearly writing to her. She said, "I tried to put all specific details in it to make her [teacher] understand everything without any questionable stopping…. I became very careful … because I wanted it to be excellent work."

Kawther explained in details how she worked for her reader. "I tried to make things happen logically…. When I finished I wrote it repeatedly to check the relatedness of the events… I added some tiny details … in order to make it more related and expressive…. Also I changed some words and edited the lexical choices to make the book more effective for the reader." Alaa' discovered that she had to work on her grammar errors because they made reading not interesting. In the process she learned "how to convince other people and give [her] opinion polite." She said, "I learned in my personal book to write and describe everything … small and big [to make] the reader feel with me." Inas was very clear: "It was a fantastic feeling to write and to let the people feel with you and share [with] them your experience…. I gave all the details in order to help readers understand and never make a gap." Nahar worried that language problems would make her "subject not good, not interesting to

reader." DHuha felt it a problem if there is a possibility that her "writing maybe misunderstood" or if others cannot understand it as she wanted. She worked hard because she thought that the "reader must live with writer's feeling, thought, and events." For this end, she tried to make her "writing expressive to make reader live the story."

Ends: Have students become authors?

With the end of the experience of writing a long text on one topic and from their own repertoire without using or copying from other sources, it became legitimate to ask the question: Did students become authors? All students with no exception talked seriously about themselves while engaged in the writing process. Twenty one of the thirty students in the class said clearly in their journal that they came to understand how authors write and that they had experienced firsthand the kind of suffering authors go through to produce good texts. They now know what kind of work needed to accomplish a readable, effective text. Generally speaking, students divide into two main groups. The first group thought they were not authors but they knew how authors write. Students in the second group stated clearly that they felt like they have become authors.

The first group of students thought they still needed to go a long way before they could declare that they have become authors, but that they understand the require-ments as they discovered how to make it happen if they were to decide to become authors. Yuosef found that he actually wrote though he could not write 10 lines in the past. He did not think he became an author, and he never had a dream to be one because he thought it impossible. But "now," he said, "yes I will make it true." Likewise, Rasha thought it difficult to say that she had become an author. She said, "If I am, everyone could be." But she discovered the secret: "To write, I need to work hard."Nahar, who like Yousef, never thought she would become an author on one day as she thought she was "unable to write a long book on one subject because [she] lacked experience in the language," tried though to make her writing better and was surprised she could write. She ended her journal saying that her experience was "difficult but interesting."

On the other hand, some students felt happy for the result they achieved though they could not say that they became authors. DHuha, for example, was tired, but when finished, she felt comfortable and happy as she discovered for the first time in her life that she could write. Similarly, Sufyan explained how "writing [his] personal book … was a good idea." He continued, "The personal book gives [sic] me a chance to express what happened…. Made me very nervous … but I felt very happy. I enjoyed in writing…. It was [a] difficult experience

that needed a lot of time…. Despite all difficulties, I felt happy and I enjoyed in writing." In the same way, Fadwa explained how "writing … was difficult … especially to look after language and words. But it is finished then I discovered that it is easy to write when you want to write." For her, it was a matter of being committed. Su'aad complained that she "was forced to write," but while doing it she "felt some sense of authoring because [she] knew … which is important which is not." That feeling was "exciting and interesting" to her.

The second group consists of those students who found enough courage to announce it strong. Yes; they felt they became authors either because of their awareness of the process itself and its requirements or because of the results they achieved. Nasreen thought it was a good experience because she discovered that she could write and express her thoughts in a good way. Inas also thought it was "an interesting job but it needed a lot of time and hard work." She talked in details about how the experience affected her image of herself, and then said, "I could write…. I became confident of my writing…. I trust my writing and my abilities…. It opened the door for me to be a decision maker…. Nobody has authority over me. I am the author. I give myself this title…. This is the first time I feel I am a productive person in my society that I can do something good and at the same time not easy…. In the experience, I became … more logical in my writing…. I became the writer and the reader…. I gave all the details in order to [help readers] understand and never make a gap."

Reem like Inas and like an author talked about herself while engaged in the process and making decisions. "I decided to make my book as [a] short story…. I suffered from many difficulties. But I worked hard to convey my messages…. I started to collect my ideas in draft and related the events or actions with each other …. At the end, I found myself know the rules of writing and how I can write in English language by [sic] professional way or a good manner." Leena felt like an author because she practiced having "the ability to control." In the same way, Husam talked about the kind of control he developed as an author while doing the job. He wrote saying, "Tired…. I spent a long time writing, revising…. I am [an] author … [I] write ... change ideas ... to be done in a good way like the author….I found that the work of the author [is] very tiring … [but] it is interesting."

Asia very simply stated how she learned that "to be an author isn't difficult." She continued describing how she "learned from this book to write." Then, she felt she "became an author." But Iman felt hilarious about having done the job. She started her journal declaring: "Iman becoming an author." She continued: "In the beginning I felt it may be difficult how I become an author…. But inside me, really I felt very strong feeling I must do it in a perfect picture [sic]." She explained how the "work needed a lot of patience," but in the process "[i]t became

very enjoyable." She "felt very happy … to achieve something very big as a personal book." She then explained why she thought she became an author: "I became as an author. I have knowledge." But the great joy was when the job was finished. "When I printed my book, I felt very strange feeling I don't [sic] feel it before ... Really I achieved a book…. I can write a book …. I succeeded." After expressing ecstasy for having done the job, she reflected on the consequences she felt in her heart. She now has a new image of herself: "I am a doer person…. I can touch my achievement and make anyone read it with desire to continue. All my friends read it…. They felt comfortable …. This made me sure I achieved a good something."

Like Iman, both Kawther and Islam J. declared clearly they thought they became authors. Kawther established with confidence at the beginning of her journal saying: "I am becoming an author." She continued, "Although I used to write poetry and short stories and journals and reports, but this experience taught me many new and effective devices in writing…. It supported my qualities in writing." Islam J. "felt comfortable" essentially because he "felt that [he] achieved something and not anything, but something different and new." He thought it was "a big work" like the texts produced by authors and respected by readers.

The answer to the question whether students have become authors is yes. Most students felt they became authors or at least they understood how authors work. They all talked of the processes they were engaged in while producing the text.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In a 1991 *College English* article, Peter Elbow insists that the expressivist writing class is capable of teaching students all the norms of academic writing. He maintains that critical thinking, reasoning and giving evidence, inference, and even naked summaries can all be gained through expressive writing with the least interference by the teacher. Elbow emphasizes that the "best test of a writing course is whether it makes students more likely to use writing in their lives" because "life is long and college is short" (p. 145). He further asserts that non-academic discourse will help students produce good academic discourse by helping them establish "a personal connection" with the subject matter they tackle (p. 148). And this is the core of the expressivist notion in the teaching of writing: creating this personal connection between the writer and the topic. The writer must feel that all ideas presented, in whatever style, are her/his own regardless of which topic she/he is writing about.

The work students did in that ENG206: writing II class to produce the first assignment has been a strong argument supporting the benefits of using expressivist

pedagogy in teaching writing to students who are not native speakers. The results were strikingly encouraging to their aspiring teacher of writing. Having students write from their own personal experience helped achieve several goals. First, students became comfortable with the idea of writing in English to express themselves and their own thoughts and ideas.

Second, their heightened concentration on developing ideas and presenting them in clear language enhanced their language abilities and helped them to feel comfortable with the language itself as a means of communication—not as a school subject, which they study to pass exams. Their intense involvement in revising sharpened their sense of language mistakes. Hence, writing from personal experience can be a strong aid to personalize students' own language learning, which is always recommended. That is, if we want our students to be good in English and to use it for communication exactly as they use Arabic, they need to feel that the language is their own, that it conveys their own messages and that it helps them to achieve their own purposes.

Third, students learned how to write placing themselves in the appropriate rhetorical situation. Contrary to the students of Sally Chandler who resisted "engaging in rhetorical analysis of purpose, audience, and form," (2007, p. 59) Students of ENG206: Writing II, the class described here, could not elude this kind of engagement because the topics were their own and from their own lives. They wrote to communicate a message and to create an effect—not just to fulfill a class assignment.

Fourth, like the students of Amy Goodburn and Heather Camp, these students' work on the personal book "offered a space to explore central issues in their lives from different perspectives" (2004, p. 95). Some expressed a growth in personality, a change in the way they understand the world and other people. For this reason, they were involved in both working on grammar and language and at the same time on ideas to create the intended effect.

Fifth, it was clear that writing the personal book boosted students' self-confidence and heightened their self-respect as it made possible a better understanding of their situation at the intersection of two widely different languages.

Teachers of ESL/EFL writing at the college level are encouraged to follow the expressivist approach in their classes. But they have to ensure three conditions. First, teachers must be willing to show high level of engagement in students' writing processes. Second, individual writing conferences are vital for the success of this approach as students will need to talk to the teacher on a one-to-one basis about their topics and writing processes. In such conferences students will have the chance to feel the legitimacy of their stories and life experiences as topics for their own writing. Third,

students will need to feel the teacher's personal respect and acceptance of what they feel to be important to them. Once they are assured that their ideas are important, they will be able to write comfortably and they will pay attention to and worry about the effectiveness of their expression and accuracy of their language—our ultimate goals as teachers of ESL/EFL writing classes. Finally, it is worth affirming that the principal key to the success of this class was a positive attitude toward students' abilities and writing.

Conflict of Interests

The author has not declared any conflict of interests.

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