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Bulletin of Advanced English Studies is an academic journal published by Refaad. Due to the fact that English has become an international language for different reasons, this journal has been established to fulfill the needs of such topics. Arab countries are considered as a Foreign Learners of English language, so this journal wishes to increase the number of value research on EFL, ESL learners, and native speakers of English language. This journal has a clear vision about the importance of research in the field of English language and literature and through this journal we hope to establish a forum of professional discussion to promote the development of links between the researchers.

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## About the Issue

The Editorial Board of Bulletin of advanced English Studies is pleased to put into its readers the **1st issue of the volume 4, March 2020**. This issue included three thematic papers that were come from different countries such as Palestine, Egypt, and India. The subjects included a paper from literature field, another paper under teaching field, and the last one is from Linguistics filed.

The Editorial Board of Bulletin of advanced English Studies is keen to continue its policy of seeking to remain a leading journal at the local and regional level, and to be classified among the most famous global rules.

The Editorial Board of the Journal of Bulletin of advanced English Studies wants its readers to interact with it through its website and e-mail by giving their comments and presenting their suggestions, which they believe can have a good impact on the development and upgrading of the journal.

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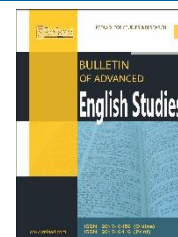
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# Stylistics of Teaching and Learning Process of Language through Literature: A Symbiotic Relationship and Spontaneous Production of Creative Pedagogy

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## Abstract:

This study showed that there is a strong link between literature, which is considered a living or symbiotic link. Therefore, the study indicated that the relationship should be examined and used to improve the teaching and learning process which are affected by literature and language at all levels of teaching.

Language teaching through literature first helps teachers recognize the use of language in order to improve their own competence and use language as a social phenomenon, rather than as an exclusive branch of learning, another thing is that the use of literature transforms the classroom as a stage in which there is a real practice of the language of communication. The study also showed that literature is an open window to the target language culture and helps learners to develop a better understanding of the "other", as well as to enhance their intercultural competence.

This paper has been focused or discussed on how to use literature in language classes so as to improve student knowledge of English language. She focused on employing literature as a well-known medium for teaching English as a foreign language. Exploring new ways of teaching English is the need of the hour. One of the best practices in teaching English through literature, which is calm and effective. The scope of this paper is to give some leading methods which are used by English language teachers and on how to pursue or use the potential of literary texts in their FL classroom by carefully planning activities and creating a platform for positive feedback for learners with skill, and contributing to the author's personal experience in adopting literature a powerful way To learn the language for learners and enhance communication competence.

**Keywords:** *Learning Process; Learning Process; Creative Pedagogy.*



## Introduction:

Literature could be regarded as a rich source of "original data" because it indicates two characteristics in its written form: the first is the "language used", that is, the employment of linguistics by those who have skilled it in vogue meant for original speakers; the second is the aesthetic representation of the spoken language that aims to establish or form Language in a specific cultural context. (Onuekwusi .2013,P.31), "Identifies that teaching language through literature help teachers first to acquaint themselves with language use to develop their own competence and understand language as a social phenomenon, and not as an exclusive branch of learning.in other words I would say that literature in all its forms it transforms the classrooms as the stage in which there is real practice of communicative language. It also helps teachers to consider language as entailing social acceptability" In different methods, they could have the classroom language as having affinities to the extrinsic language. As an outcome, this will increase interaction to the scale of social undertaking. It can be familiar that it is essential for scholars to

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improve their language efficiency by learning how to convey content in English, but also that they improve their interaction competence, which will permit them to transmit messages, use the language to interact, and communicate with others, which is finally have the primary function of a language. It is widely known that a literary text with richness and different diversity can motivate language scholars and can be used to elicit a wide range of reaction from students.

In concentration of the aforementioned, the sense of this study focuses on examining the factual issue that there is a correlated connection between literature and language. The study Shows how literature could be integrated with language usage in preparing a creative teaching and learning outcome. Good literature can be a good support for cultural understanding or acculturation; progress of language and competence; differentiation in decision; emotional progress and settlement. Provide positive and life-oriented situations.

### **The Concept and Functions of Literature:**

As a matter of fact, that literature has been considered as a familiar key of language using, manipulating, learning and teaching. (Onuekwusi,19,2013), "Literature is any imaginative and beautiful creation in words whether oral or written, which explores man as he struggles to survive in his existential position and which provides entertainment, information, education and excitement to its audience". Even though literature is defined by (O'Connell, F. 2009) as an accurate experience to grasp the spirit of literature, it is pertinent to point out that not all literature to be considered as an imaginative genre. As a matter of fact, I can conclude that several literary versions are related to facts, and are depended on rationalization by considering them as related to prose type which are sorted into two styles, fiction and non-fiction. Literature that is factual which could be consider as under the title genuine literature, in other words, it is a written work to what we call it a prose genre. In other words that is to say that language is the main producer of that literature. The term "literature" is considered in two main meanings. First, it is done to any written themes in language to what we call it literature. Second, it is an expression done to indicate to one of the study themes that is used by scholars or a university field of study; and it is this second content that practiced to students in that scope or field. It is depended on that point that it is normally considered that Literature is language in different form or usage.

Literature aids to generate the student's language in practice because it awakens learner's enthusiasm and preserves in them a ready-made attribution to read. Furthermore, it supports the seekers to improve language perfection and the ability to discuss what is used and understood". As a learning field, there are some magnitude themes Literature operates. Used in different shape the complete gist of processing Literature as a learning field or scope is for the learners to extract several advantages. Ayo (2003, p. 128) shows the advantages as the different interests of Literature. According to his understanding, "the utilities of Literature could be educational, cultural, moral, recreational and socio-political". As a scholar I would like to help the thoroughness or containment of Literature in the linguistic form in teaching because it brings worth genuine knowledge, improves personal expression and support sharing to learners' cultural as well as language inseminate. Still on the interests of Literature, (Lazar 1993) comes up with five facts for forming literature in ELT to contain the following:

- 1) encouraging knowledge
- 2) motivating linguistic conquest
- 3) developing learners' linguistic forms
- 4) improving learners' expressing and discussing abilities
- 5) edifying the entire learner.

### **The strong relevant relationship between Literature and Language:**

The coexistence between Literature and language is summarized aforementioned according to (Retrieved April ,2005, P.37) also he has mentioned that English teaching literature and language is not only coexist together but also interlinked. Literature presupposes language because it is with a language tool in which literature is embodied. Therefore, it seems absurd to study literature without a language in the foreground or study language without literature plays a prominent role. This view is based on the view that the best description of the relationship between literature and language is to be coordinated.

In the teaching process, students are aware of a lot of practical value about language usage and language itself. In their literary studies, students meet the language in its most diverse and strong forms, and learn how to study the author's use of them in the context of all the language sources which are available to them. Literature for all reading ages - is a linguistic lexicon that must apply linguistic understanding if it can be examined and valued. In other meanings, I would like to tell that literature shows language at usage. But it also supports the learners to use the language. It provides good examples and stimulates language responses of different types. English teachers not only offer literature, but also literature. They also benefit from it, because they can form correct language as well as its embodiment.

Literature, as a suitable mode of meaning for a text in foreign language, gives us a stimulating knowledge of linguistic interaction. (Carter and Long .1991) similarly agreed that literature is a legal resource and deserves to learn language and teach. Literature depends on language and language gets ornament and enthusiasm through literature. Literature and language are therefore closely linked. According to (Lazar .1993), literary forms should

be in touch with educated literature because it is an encouraging incentive to accommodate the language, and students appreciate it, and it is fun, it exists in many curriculums and the same thing.

When we be in touch with literature in linguistic form classes, we teach the language. (Barnett, S 2013, P. 23) View that it is simply accepted as it is taken that literature is a viable element of foreign language on an appropriate criterion and that one of the prominent objectives of literature is to use as an ordinary to change the culture of those who use the language they speak or write. Literature is a high element of language use. It can be said that it notifies the most prominent tact that the language user can show. Anyone who needs to use or has a complicated knowledge of the language that drives beyond interest will read literary texts in in their linguistic forms.

Language and Literature are interchangeable in other words they help that the learning process of Language and Literature should go within each other, since literature is perfectly existing together. Some linguists said that since there should be no partition between them, so there is no deep differentiation between language and Literature so Literature told to be preceding language. In the same origin, (Ayo 2003, P. 130) is of the attitude that "through the creative modes of learning and teaching Literature, the learners could be supported to improve credibility within themselves in giving out coherent and cohesive spoken discourses and in ordering sentences into paragraphs with efficient connectors and classify paragraphs into connected and understandable spoken and written".

The results of the studies help in the correct way in which there is full reliance between extensive reading literature, language understanding, and, foremost, real reading. For example, (O'Connell, F.2009, P.13) He argues that reading can bring ready tools to understand the comic in a foreign language. The source also shows that reading literature carries students' access to large elements of vocabulary in the contexts of their true language. One of the best ways to read literary courses that demonstrate a more effective understanding of meanings is because the whole of any creative writing is the ability to use the appropriate expression to form meaningful sentences that are logically and in sequence. By the way, all writing methods are correct if the author does not have a good order of directed jackish. However, language learning through literature supports in particular the advancement of language-speaking skills. (Guth and Schuster 1997, p. 75) Have accepted with the supporters of literature theory and language relations by insisting that: "A good reader of literature is a good speaker in the language". They also explain the role of reading literature in being able to speak in manipulation.

Literature of prose could be practiced to make learners' have more lexical and however alleviate their learning language strength; which leads to mindful dialogue in major elements in a short story or any literary version which could help learners' perfection of the main parts of novel, within, discussion, description and telling. (Ayo 2003) has discussed in prose practicing, the tact of manipulated reading as well as skimming and scanning can be processed. Ayo has mentioned that, if the learners go through literature effectively then language will be developed, their speaking experience could be enhanced in other meaning a reader of literature one has to be a good speaker of language.

Literature in the advanced stage of learners is known to be learned as an isolated field, considered as a different subject. Processing with a new mode, while others are classified as language teachers are appointed as literature trainers, others are sorted as language teachers. With this classification, the literature teacher teaches literature consistently without assigning elements while English teachers do the same without reference to literature. On the whole, there is no cooperation, support or education between the two categories of instructors, because each one of instructor is considered aside. As we know in this study, this particular situation should be studied to determine the path of innovation that would create space for the discovery and use of the close symbiotic or coexisting relation between literature and language so as to develop the skill of English language use among English learners as a foreign or second language.

### **Orientation for Learning Literature and English for Motivated Goals:**

Literary virgins are genuine, thoughtful and correlated to learners' lives. They produce the utmost chance, for participation, repercussion, and even though learning lives in them. Literature is rationally awakening our thoughts because it allows students to feel worlds they are not experienced with. This is done through the use of depicting language. In order to experience, the learners will create his thoughtful picture of what the authors are saying. In this meaning, the learners become acting followers in a brainstorming action as he sees. Literature-based programs concentrate on one's own interpretation of the language so learners start to experience the linguistic method and use this into them.

[1] The literature teacher should not neglect linguistic hints that are limited to dialogue in drama version, so the instructor of the language has to be more specific in order to clarify literary versions in his teaching process of the different parts of the language. In this way, the success or failure of English language students in the classroom must be a collective responsibility of both language and literature teachers and not just the responsibility of the language teacher as it is today. English Literature and teachers must have a common goal to enhance the motivation in using English in their skills. In order to achieve this goal, their vocational training must be designed to be qualified in both English and English so that the teaching of the literature has all the basic skills necessary for teaching the language, while the English teacher must be sufficiently qualified to teach the



literature. Practice in which Teacher A claims to be a specialist in teaching literature while Teacher B is an expert in English

- [2] Literature has to be used as major field of study such as English Language and physics and consider it as a major subject which is compulsory to all learners with regardless to the field of specialization. This practice will make learners to take an advantage of appropriate literature resources to enrich their English language skills.
- [3] Learners in both middle and high school should be able to read a significant of many literature versions texts because they will enlarge students' capacity of perception which let them engage in considered language in order to enhance English language proficiency. Literature creates space for students to create a culture of wide-ranging reading, which it is a strong way to address English language incompatibility.
- [4] Many reasons considered teachers and students of literature to be satisfied with the literary forms. The test in which literary parts are to be assessed to candidate or student elected in literature tests frustrates the importance of literature in language acquisition.
- [5] The last practice whereby only two- or three-times literature is assigned per week is imminent. On the one hand, there is not enough opportunity for the coach to deal with the plan comprehensively for the semester or semester; and in the place of learners, students do not have enough time to work in motivating classes on this topic. Literature must define a logical number of times on the school's schedule as in English program.
- [6] The instructor of tests and literature should be involved in the versions of the texts that are absorbed into English culture written in modern English. Copies of written literature must be within the logical linguistic competence of learners and be linked to their social and cultural teaching and acquisition. Although the Chaucerian versions are old and reflect the culture of the ancient English people, these versions could not be useful for effectively acquiring modern or current English.

### **The real value of taking literary version in language learning and teaching:**

Literature supplies genuine material. The students are disclosed to real language patterns from genuine life and literature demonstrates as a useful completion to such data. (Brumfit and Carter, 2014) affirm the scope that –a literary version is genuine version, true language in discourse, to which we can reply in a direct way. Such a version safely holds the reader's mind picture and makes fields for the test of the language as well.

Literature supports learners create manipulation abilities. (Lazar, 1993) says, –Literature is a specifically good base for creating learners' capacities to indicate meaning and to make explanation. This is because literary texts are often rich in variety grades of meaning, and required that the reader/learner is actively involved in teaching out the unstated implications and assumptions of the literary version.

Literature makes learners to have acquaintance with international causes and thereby stimulates them into reading. Collie and Slater argue that literature presents a much and absolutely different figure of written work that manipulates with the problems human causes. –Though the world of literature is a made the same picture, it describes contextually energetic personalities from different social domains or fields. A reader can find their imaginations, feelings, traditional beliefs, possessions; what they buy, believe in, fear, enjoy; how they speak and behave behind closed doors. This lively pictured world can hastily offer the non-native reader a sensation for the entries and meditation thoughts that furnished a true society. (Collie, 2011) Narrated that teaching through literature gives more learner's deep thinking into intended language society and reaches the cultural space.

### **The Use of Literature in English language Classes:**

The chief relation of this study part is to clarify the question “why to have literary versions in EFL classes”. Could we consider literature be taken as a language of teaching knowledge in EFL teaching classes?

The English teacher is used to focus on teaching the original parts of the expression in the language. However, in language fluency, it is clarified that English users have stopped with obstacles of understanding. Dynamic communication is more than just getting the grammar and form of the language. In other words, the ability to discuss interaction in all its all texts. For this cause, the usage of literary forms in the English classes could become an educational mode for language and self-development learners.

*Literature could enlarge the linguistic form tact because literature will increase language knowledge by having clues of concentration and lexical usage (Povey, 1972:182). Practicing literature in EFL classrooms is considerate, “for literature provides us with a convenient source of content for a course in a foreign language, and a truly notional syllabus will need to be constructed round concepts and subject matter which develop in complexity” (Clandfield, Lindsay, 2005:26). Furthermore, Malley and Duff state that “most attempts to provide motivating and communicative material for learners are strong in technique but weak in any sense of developmental structure” (Malley&Duff, 1986:124).”*

For linguists like Collie, Slater, Carter, who advocate the idea of having literature in language form lessons, there have been good causes why English Language instructors should use literary texts in their classroom as language-related subjects. Accordingly, why would students want to use literary materials instead of boredom course materials? Therefore, the literature offers a very abundant and diverse variety of written material that is

"important" and "interesting". The joy that literature gives it's inevitable. Using literature is very pleasing for learners because in this issue they take a different mode of discussing from what students will create.

Collie and Slater (1996: p.3) notified that "literature is a genuine material." By other meaning that the most literary works have specific tasks for the process of Language teaching. some texts are "authentic" samples of language; Therefore, learners of language are opened to authentic language as in dealt in social life that could be operated in a classroom style. One more cause for literature usage is the fact that the literary works could make us learn culture. Thus, literary works, similar to a T.V.'s exposition, movies, videos or newspapers, are important sources for learners to study the culture and way of life of a country.

Again, Collie and Slater (1996: p.5) suggest that "language enrichment is one of the benefits of literature." Literature brings an enrich style in which vocabulary and grammatical words are created much memorized. creation of clauses and the mode of intimating the knowledge could enhance learner's reading and imagination tact. learners who stuck with a drama, a novel or with verse, for a period, is supposed to own the strength to create clues from the context by resorting to contextualized meanings.

Under this mode, learners who study the linguistic style in literary works have to be much innovative in writing, in this way learners estimate and feel the ornamentation of the linguistic forms. Despite the fact, the major deed is to select the suitable author's work for learners. The learners' linguistic measure is one of the much significant slandered of selecting which author's written work. Every stage (beginner, intermediate or advanced) responsible for his own written work and proper learning styles.

Teaching process in fact needs another style and the instructor could bring genuine literary work in an imagination style. learners are normally have the ability to tell their view points and do their utmost to interact. Thus, if they are ready to speak, then oral communication should be a priority.

As Bassnett and Grundy (1993) suggest that "*before and after*" activities are important supportive for the intermediate level students. By this activity, EFL learners are getting busy in expecting short story beginning and ending. There are double significant stages: before class reading and inside-classroom assignment. The instructor splits learners into double categories and they are to read twice other literary works at their homes. No interaction about the sense of meaning is suggested.

"*Gossiping*" is different type of literary work which depend on a game for intermediate stage scholars, proposed by (Bassnet and Grundy (1993). It is considered as dramatic work depended on a written work, well-known short story (Little Red Riding Hood or Brave Heart are good examples here). The instructor writes on the board or spreads to learners a record of benefit sayings, e.g. I must say, if it wasn't for..., I know it isn't her fault, I believe etc. scholars are cheered to chat about the personas, feeling that they are one of them. They are to mention a stage self-saying and act it in explosion of the class. Probably differentiation of this work could be done in a dialogued style. There are many games or activities could be acted or done inside of the classroom like: quote unquote or contrasting and many other ones.

The aforementioned games which depended on thinking knowledge of the skilled proficient similar to Collie and Slater, Maley and Duff or Basnet and Grundy try to come with facts that literary works may form a base element in ELT. The EFL instructor who needs to come out with literary work into the linguistic form class which could suggest to take other example activities which are suggested by the proficient or it could make new class games to be adopted, in accordance with learners or scholars needs, grown and linguistic form stages which are related to their social life.

The universe we live is fast developing and so we have to take so near to learning other languages. Usage of literature to shape the initiative instrument in the teaching operation deep preceding the curricula appears. Literary works have used speaking interactions and literary texts without literary origin, and literature has been waiting for tens of years to be used in the classroom teaching. In current days with the jam of principle and methods of literary works of language learning and teaching process which are obtaining much and much endorsement, and coming back, but with a slogan fresh or modern style.

## Conclusion:

This paper seeks or attempts to obtain a response to the question about whether literature can be used as additional real publications in the development of teaching and learning language in various literary modes and styles.

Literary works are exposed to multiple clarification - they stimulate a lot of students 'personal responses, sympathetically attract them and motivate them to contribute with great enthusiasm to class activities and have a lot more personally and make students responsibly engaged in class assignments, leadership, exploration and creation of many interacting talented language skills.

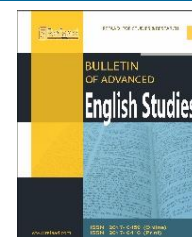
If the FL instructor is planning to recreate (gravitate) that gravity to read literature in learners by carefully following his first steps and facing the peer in a good learning skill, he must reinforce it to become familiar or practice the use of language in the accreditation method, which begins on their own distinct journey by incorporating The world of oral art and the culture of attractive, focused language.

English language on the side of our country's students who may accomplish a task of solving the process of learning the English language in a smooth manner leading to a simple academic training course, the moderate

learning process for learning the English language currently exposes the mainly teaching and learning community without using literature Or a targeted culture in the original language. Therefore, curriculum planners, school and literature teachers of English must work together to create a role for approval of teaching institutions in our country which they have be more effective and taken into account. In this study, therefore this study discusses simultaneous coexistence and symbiotic phenomenon between literature and language.

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## Practical Approaches Towards Generating Creativity and Effectiveness in the Teaching of English Language

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### Abstract:

Creativity in teaching includes learning latest skills, developing innovative insights into pedagogy and reflective classroom practices, and exploring advanced understandings of content and resources that in turn provide teachers with trove of supports and make them advance magnificently in their professional techniques. In better context of this fact, this paper aims to explore how a culture of creativity can be adequately generated in the English language teaching through the stellar amalgamation of analytical perception, critical introspection and creative thinking, and the mind-shift experienced by teachers when they position themselves as effective and organized facilitators in mutual beneficial environment.

In addition, the paper aims to examine how focused practical steps towards nurturing, developing, inspiring and motivating students to learn and grasp help teachers explore the successful role of prowess, innovation and creativity in the classroom.

**Keywords:** Creativity; effectiveness; EFL/ESL; expectation; heterogeneous classes; interaction; language learning; learning style; linguistic background; strategies; motivation; teaching methods; teaching materials.

### Introduction:

Learning an international language is the best choice in a globalized world instead of learning every single language to communicate with foreign people. Since the dependence on the English language as Lingua Franca is increased, more and more people not only demand to learn English but they also want their children to learn it (Yavuz, 2017). In today's world, the global spread of English is "unprecedented and unparalleled" (Seidlhofer, 2011). In many respects, English, widely gaining the status as a "lingua franca", has now become the preferred language of choice for international communities, especially in view of international and inter-cultural communications in a variety of domains like science, medicine, telecom, e-learning, higher education, digitization, technology, etc.

Teaching English language as **ESL** or **EFL** or else to undergraduate students warrants more than giving forth knowledge to students whose viewpoints, attitudes, experiences and associations, and sometimes cultural contexts are varying. It invites the multi-dimensional capability to enable somebody else to learn and thus it is a distinct but challenging skill that, in turn, underlines the accountabilities of the teacher since he/she "is the ultimate key to educational change" (Hargreaves and Fullan, 1992).

The teacher plays a very dominating role in the educational mechanism and chemistry, and his/her place remarkably remains unchallenged, unrivalled and unilateral even after technological and scientific advancements. He/she defines, redefines, reinforces refines and fortifies the curriculum/course materials and transforms and interprets it in a suitable angle and perspective that makes learning more festive, pleasant and fruitful for the students. Thus, it is what the teacher conjures up and executes at the classroom level that eventually determines

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what students do in the classroom. This propounds that sound and scholarly knowledge of English as subject is not a guarantee to teaching English well and appropriately. In addition, it must be taken as a challenge, a skill, an innovation and a challenge, as a teacher purposefully needs to dynamically perform multi-faceted roles in a classroom such as a corroborator, an activator, a situation-maker, a foreseer, a shaper, a facilitator, a motivator, a friend, a catalyst, a decision-maker, a counselor, a consultant, a disciplinarian, a manager, a mentor and a surrogate parent, a reservoir of knowledge. However, the dilemma is that incidentally, in most cases, teachers are permitted to teach at colleges without undergoing systematic practices of pedagogy as well as focused professional training, and even in-service enhancement training schemes.

### **ESL vs EFL:**

Although English is not the official language in most countries, it is taught as a second language (i.e. in India) or a foreign language (i.e. in Saudi Arabia) almost everywhere. This reality underlines the need to understand the difference between ESL (English as a Second Language) and EFL (English as a Foreign Language), and it can be considered with the lens of students, location, official recognition, cultural context and necessities.

ESL is English which is usually taught to students in an English-speaking country or which is mandatory to be taught with paramount importance. EFL is English which is taught to students in a foreign, non-English speaking country where English is not the primary language or not enjoying the status of official language. Beyond this, ESL and EFL teachers may teach differently in order to combat emerging challenges in classes and address ESL and EFL student needs.

Therefore, for English teachers, the teaching objectives and targets between ESL and EFL may require different lesson plans, different approaches, different techniques and different topics; even they have to deal with different cultural contexts too. Initially, the difference between ESL and EFL might seem slight to teachers, but “they do require very different teaching strategies to meet the aims and objectives of the students” ([www.brighthubeducation.com](http://www.brighthubeducation.com)).

In other words, English language students studying ESL have more immediate and demanded requirements of English. They are required to learn basic survival skills as quickly as possible. On the other hand, students studying EFL may not be as concerned about learning English as quickly as possible because they are living in a country where they speak the primary language of the country and are properly competent to cope with the necessities of daily life.

Of course, there are all kinds of valid reasons for learners to study EFL or ESL, and the English teachers will have to take the circumstances and the needs of the students into holistic account when preparing lessons, working on teaching materials and devising strategies for English language students in totality.

### **Review of Literature and Objectives of Paper:**

‘Creativity’ is not simply the exclusive preserve of the individual genius or the pathological outsider; it is a proactive phenomenon whereby something is made productive and somehow value is created. Creativity is paradoxically both common and exceptional, and in language teaching it is prominently collaborative too. Neither is creativity, it is argued, simply an act of mind; it is also a contextual act, probabilistically related to certain kinds of interaction and certain modes of communication that may be more accurately spoken of in terms of a plural ‘creativities. A contextual account of creativities in English also involves the tactful employment of different suitable approaches to all texts and study materials entailing literary variables and socially-oriented aesthetics.

This paper aims to explore and analyze the implications of the taken-into-account practical approaches towards generating creativity and eliciting positivity for the studies of English, its development as a subject area that encompasses aspects of both language and literature, and as a global phenomenon of teaching and learning.

Some students seem naturally excited about marching towards learning process. But many needs or expect their teachers to give a winning start, motivate, inspire, instigate, and stimulate them. It is in this specific context, effective learning in the classroom depends on the teacher’s professional expertise to uphold the sustenance of interest, maintain the level of motivation and sensitize students towards true and sure learning.

My teaching experience of thirty years – almost twenty-five years in India as ESL teacher and about five years in Saudi Arabia as EFL teacher augment the reality that students learn best when rewards for capitalizing learning in the classroom proportionately fulfill their own motives and aspirations for enrolling in the course/courses. Some of the prompting needs students may bring to the classroom are - the need to learn something in order to cover a particular task or activity, the need to ease learning complexities, the need to feel involved, the need to move to complacency, the need to converse with new engaging experiences, the need to sharpen skills, the need to overcome challenges, the need to be declared competent, the need to succeed and do well, the need to become comfortable in interacting through the synergy of written and spoken means with other people/organizations, the need to smarten communication skills in day to day situations, etc. It is also germane to mention here that rewards and incentives accord special fillip to learning more effectively than do grades.

### **Research Questions:**



This study purports to answer the following highly warranted research questions:

- What are the appropriate strategies to be used by the teachers in English language teaching as FL or SL?
- How to get students properly engaged and interested in grasping English lessons in the ongoing class?
- How to condition students' motivation with effective learning of English Language?
- Why does the teaching of English require on the part of teacher - the traits like insight, intuition, patience, the art of understanding other people, ability to attract and control attention, and technique to make himself realized among students?
- How can an English teacher infer and decipher students' real needs?
- What should be the solutions of the emerging hindrances in English classes as SL or FL?

### Methods:

The deliberations and findings in this paper are significantly based on the researcher's own teaching experiences of about thirty years – twenty-five years in India and five years in Saudi Arabia. The methods, adopted during discussion and elucidation are factual, behavioral, comparative, analytical and descriptive. The learners, sought under the purview of discussion, are college level undergraduate students who are taught English as Second Language or English as Foreign Language. What is found as positing, underlying and enforcing fact in discussion is the attribution of success in English learning to several aspects and factors. The discussion, in return, dissuades the myth of the absolute power or manipulating function of any single factor in language learning. The discussion, in this way, aims to investigate multi-dimensional accountabilities of teacher and also major implications for the teaching profession, in that the facilitation of Language Learning Strategies (LLSs) need to move hand in hand in symphony with other important tasks, such as the stimulation of learning interests, the amplification of learning fortitude, and the support of learning efforts on the part of students. In addition, the discussion tends to justify the logic that every good art in English teaching is not supposed to look good or bad. It is supposed to provoke target students, make them feel something encouraging and drive them move ahead. If it doesn't, it is just another framed picture hanging on a wall.

### Discussion & Analysis:

#### Strategies towards generating creativity and positivity in English classrooms:

Effective teaching involves the abilities to impart instruction that helps students develop the knowledge, skills, and understandings intended by curriculum objectives; create an instructional climate that aims to trigger positive attitudes towards institution and self; screw instructional materials so that all students take proper advantage, irrespective of their ability, ethnicity, or other characteristics; manage the classroom so that students are engaged in learning all or most of the time; make sound decisions and plans that maximize students' opportunity to learn, and respond to initiatives for curriculum change so that the new curriculum's intents are fully realized (Acheson and Gall, 2003).

These striking and practical aspects underline the importance of our deliberations towards formulating strategies and their practices in English language classrooms:

#### **A. Continuous experimentation and self-evaluation by the teacher:**

Self-assessment is a pervasive concept in education so far teaching for success (an approach to the professional development of language teachers) is concerned (contact.teslontario.org).

It is an established fact that in general situations wherein English is taught as SL or FL or any else that on the part of teacher, teaching English requires ingenuity, intuition, impulse, insight, patience, the talent of understanding other people, capacity to arouse interest and grip attention, and to make himself comprehended. It requires the ability in teacher to put himself/herself in the students' place. It is certainly a rewarding experience. It means that if teaching is to be converted to a genuinely professional venture, which it ought to be, it necessitates a never-ending experimentation and estimation by the teacher himself. He needs to develop the credible aptitude to evaluate with close discernment his own modes, practices and experience, and deal with his shortcomings, weaknesses, failures as well as triumphs adequately.

#### **B. Making students live participants in the entire process of learning:**

In English classes, students usually learn by thinking, making, doing, acting, writing, planning, creating, solving. Passivity usually tends to dampen students' spirit, motivation and curiosity. Teacher can pose learner-centered questions and promote students to look for approaches to a problem or to speculate the results-based outputs of an experiment. He/she can ask students to analyze what makes their classes more or less "motivating". He may ask students to make a list of selective aspects of the two classes that fluctuated their stage of motivation and reach consensus on aspects that lay up high and low motivation.

#### **C. Incorporating instructional behaviors:**

Researches have revealed that a teacher's expectations tend to exert a robust effect on a student's overall performance in English class. If a teacher acts as though he expects his students to be enthused, sincere, and



enthusiastic in the course, they are more likely to be so. He should chalk out realistic expectations for students while accomplishing assignments, encountering discussions, giving presentations, and grading tests. "Realistic", to these ends, employs the vital point that his standards are high enough to encourage students to do their best work but not so high that students will inevitably feel exhausted and depressed getting themselves acquainted with those expectations.

#### **D. Helping students devise achievable objectives for themselves:**

Failure to meet unrealistic goals can demoralize students. The teacher, in this respect, should propel students to concentrate on their constant improvements, without worrying about their grade on any one assignment or test. He/she should supervise students to determine their progress by fostering them to critique their own work, evaluate their strengths, and sort out their weaknesses.

#### **E. Averting undue competition among students:**

'Competition', in English (EFL/ESL) classes produces anxiety and complexity, which can interfere with learning. It is better to relegate students' inclinations to compare themselves to one another or put themselves in confrontation in course of learning. Instead, students are to be made more responsible, more immersive and more attentive, displaying better comprehension, producing more work, and getting more favorable to the teaching methods when they work collaboratively in groups rather than compete as individuals. In addition, the teacher should abstain from passing public criticisms over student's performance and comments over activities that distinguish students against each other.

#### **F. Getting enthusiastic about subject:**

Fervent zeal or tireless devotion on the part of an English teacher is a crucial factor in students' success. If he/she becomes exhausted or apathetic, students will too. Typically, a teacher's zeal stems from confidence, ardor about the content and true pleasure in teaching. If he finds himself indifferent in the material, he should think back to correct himself to the field and bring those aspects of the subject matter to vigor for his students, and also design the exciting way to deliver the material.

#### **G. Planning lecture to encourage students:**

One of the indispensable components for language learning (FL/SL) is that students should have a fascinating passion for the learning of language which can be obtained through creative and critical use of teaching methods and where they can witness language in full use and where "the language experience needs to be contextualized and comprehensive" (Krashen 1985, 1993, 1999) and "the learning needs to be transformed motivated, relaxed, positive and engaged" (Krashen).

In course of teaching, the concerned English teacher must be aware of student's strengths, weaknesses and especially interests. Why students have registered their enrolment in his/her course, how they feel about the content and subject, what their aspirations are and what they are. Then the teacher should try to present examples, case or assignments that remarkably relate the course content to student's great attention and share of feelings.

#### **H. Variation in teaching methods:**

In harness with empirical observation it is apt to aver that every student of English fairly entails his/her own knowledge parameter, learning mode, cultural context, linguistic background, or individual stride of learning and progressing. He/she is always in possession of different likes and dislikes, differing styles of learning and even own agenda of learning. This means that the majority of English language classes involve students of varying skills and abilities. This particular situation provokes to create a sort of chaos for the teacher to cope with, either to concentrate on the more advanced students ignoring the remaining or "address to the less able learners at the risk of boring the more able ones as it seems difficult to deal effectively with this situation" (Ansari, 2013).

The usual divergences which set off problem after problem in heterogeneous classes are in language learning style, disposition towards language, interference of mother tongue, degree of intelligence, world knowledge, learning experience, knowledge of other languages, age, gender, personality, confidence, motivation, interests and educational level (Ur, 1996, p.304).

Mingling variety with teaching, in fact, reawakens students' involvement in the course and their energetic interaction. It is, therefore, meaningful to segment the routine by incorporating an array of learners-centered teaching activities and techniques in their course: such as debates, discussion, brainstorming, case studies, demonstration, role playing, audiovisual presentations, guest speakers, small group work, etc. An English language teacher, in the words of Rivers (1981), "cannot afford the luxury of complete dedication to each new method or approach that comes in vogue. He needs techniques that work in his particular situation with the specific objectives that are meaningful for the kinds of students he has in his classes." Also, it is here adequate to quote Akhuli (2006, p. 11), "the teacher should be psychologically and professionally prepared to vary or at least modify his methods to suit different educational situations."

#### **I. Use of technology:**

It is an agreed fact that lots of possibilities that new technologies offer have together contributed to a paradigm shift in the realm of English language teaching. Under this pervading shift, it is imperative that teachers of English take sincere initiatives to capitalize on ingredients of technology towards purposeful and communicative teaching. Researches and practices have mooted the point that "the use of computer-mediated communication tools to facilitate useful learning and support reflective practice is increasingly being acknowledged today" (Salaberry, 2001). Hence in my functional observation, technology has the potential to make the learning of English language a faster, more effective, more energizing and more collaborative process. And my exhortation to every English teacher

is that he should inculcate the propensity to use technology-aided strategies for the enrichment of English teaching/learning dynamics.

According to Dawes (2001), ICT has the potential to support education across the curriculum and provide opportunities for effective rapport and communication between teachers and students in ways that have not been realized before. Through the application of ICT, hopefully students will be able to understand and learn English language easily. "ICT also can be used to promote collaborative learning, including role playing, group problem-solving activities and articulated projects" (Forcheri & Mol, 2000). Students, in my practical view, commonly feel encouraged to have more interaction with each other especially where the usage of ICT will suitably take place during the lesson.

#### **J. Praising dexterous achievements:**

Both positive and negative comments influence the core forte of motivation, but an analysis of researches, carried out so far indicates that students in English classes get more manipulated by positive feedback and appreciation. Encouragement is a great tonic for students at all levels. Praise puts together students' self-confidence, self-dependence, self-esteem and condition their skills. Hence the teacher is supposed to identify, appreciate and assert sincere efforts on the part of students. In case, a student's performance is not up to mark, let him/her clearly know that the teacher believes he or she can surely improve and overcome with the passage of time.

#### **K. Setting goals:**

In perspective study it is observed that sometimes the students are themselves part of the problem because of poor preparation, lack of motivation, or a lack of accountability in their class performance. They therefore need to be encouraged to set their own learning goals, develop specific study objectives, and keep weekly study dairies that enable them track how they use their study time. Reinforcement and review of topics as well as prompt feedback from the teacher helps students focus on their individual performance and to trace what they do or do not know. Test-taking tips can be reviewed in class by making use of old question papers and students could be urged to seek help. Similarly, regular reminders that peers have achieved success on similar assignments will hopefully encourage most students to do their best.

Against this backdrop, it is in the fitness of things to share the purpose of each lesson with all students. This could be remarkably attained through need-based classroom plans of action, intended to accomplish and the teacher has vital role to play in letting students know the significance of language, their governing targets, their aspirations behind enrolment in the institution and, above all, what they are working towards. It is also a good idea to bring to their notice the prime goal or set of goals during the lesson, being imparted so that they can deliberate on their progress. At the finish of the lesson, students should be asked to assess their performance and achievement in the light of goal/goals. Students could test each other, then the teacher could ask for thumbs up from all of them who gladly feel they have advanced with some gains or envisaged gains in the lesson.

In my firm view, talks about the relevance and importance of English in day to day life embolden the morale of students. And this sort of narrative must be carried out in classrooms to enhance effectiveness of teaching.

#### **L. Being explicit when shifting to denying feedback:**

Denying feedback is usually risky and can lead to the creation of a negative atmosphere in class. Whenever a teacher identifies a student's weakness/fault, he must clarify that his comments/remarks pertain to a specific task, particular performance or interaction, not to the student, concerned as an individual. It is again a balancing approach to try to cushion negative comments with an appreciation about ingredients of the task/involvement in which the student fared well.

#### **M. Avoiding undesirable comments:**

Many students in class may be perturbed and flustered about their response, performance and capabilities. Faced with this adverse situation, it is wise to be sensitive on the side of teacher to how he tactfully phrases his comments/remarks and avoids off-hand remarks that might provoke their channels of inadequacy/fault resulting in their deviation from tracks of learning

When a teacher simply gives struggling students the immediate solution, he robs them of the opportunity to think critically and analytically for themselves. Therefore, it is prudence to gently dismiss student's anxiety about not getting the answer-key by concentrating on the problem at hand, ask the students to frame the answer or suggest the solution on the basis of what they actually know about the problem, withstand to answer the question "is this right?", suggest to the students an appropriate path to counter and verify the answer for themselves, and ultimately commend the students for independent steps, and even minor strides.

#### **N. Seeking regular feedback:**

Regular feedback from students is also an important factor in English classes. Students are always at the central stage of the language learning procedures and are supposed to be the best judges of every teacher. Hence it is in the fitness of things that the teacher can seek proper feedback from students at least once a week, so that this becomes a tool for him/her to look into, introspect and rectify as well. Also, he/she can benefit in desired proportion from the reactions/responses coming from the students. In truth, "the students' body language in the class is also a figurative feedback for the teacher and every teacher must observe and assess it minutely (Eble, 1988). A great language teacher is he, in this researcher's eyes, who is sheer able to read the face and psychology of his students.

**Recommendations:**

It is now clear that teaching English as SL or FL implies more than giving forth knowledge to students whose viewpoints, attitudes, experiences, associations and level of motivation are very different from the teacher. Hence on the part of an English teacher, it is essential to carry forward in language learning battle field effective, flexible and utilitarian strategic plan of actions that promotes student's capacity to determine what works for them as a whole, to prevail over or stop old strategies and be pliable in introducing new and unfamiliar strategies. It is also contributory for teachers to be heartedly open to other strategies in a rewarding environment that have been discovered to work or developed by students themselves with the heading of time. These may enclose the application of technology and the employment of personal interests that promote the eagerness and motivation to learn and spread the benefits of language acquisition beyond the classrooms. Armed with continuous updating of subject and sharpening of teaching techniques, the teaching of English language can be moved beyond learning language and related strategies, to motivating students to learn the warranted skills and to gear up students to develop critical thinking and positive learning styles that can be also used beyond classrooms in daily life situations and enhance language development as a lifelong process.

It is also a fundamental reality that the class atmosphere should be kept throughout alive to and agog with the ambience of "warmth, trust, cooperation, mutual support and respect" (Xu, 2007). In this case, the holistic rapport and mutual trust will be established if the teacher "creates an unthreatening learning environment by communicating well, obtaining and giving regular feedback" (Pu, 2008).

In addition, it is envisioned through this study that the English teachers, especially newly-appointed teachers will be qualified for categorizing and implementing the authentic tips and right practices to boost students' inclination, interest as well curiosity in learning English successfully with the strong message that - "if you have wings, we have the sky." Further, it is also recommended that English teachers must be always open and receptive to enhancement opportunities such as attending trainings, workshops, seminars on subject or teaching/research methodology; being aware of the renaissance of innovative researches in the realm of pedagogy, and keeping themselves networked with skilled and renowned professionals to give ignition and mileage to their accomplishments as well as performances.

**Teacher Development: A Key Factor:**

The researcher, on the basis of deliberations in this study, wishes to concede that what works with one class of students in a given context may not work with another class in the same or different contexts. Therefore, the English teachers have to be on their toes almost all the time amidst all opportunities. They have to strive to push their boundaries and actively create challenges for themselves, "learning from their experiences and adding to their skills and their self-knowledge" ([www.teachingenglish.org.uk](http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk)). In other words, they need to nurture a strongly-focused opinion that technical competence, ethical knowledge and language proficiency are major components for their professional development. It means they are bound to "shoulder the responsibility of their own development" (Aslam, 2003, p.22) so that, through their quality-oriented measures, they would be suitable to transform the classroom into a wonderful place to learn. It is in this perspective it is here fit to quote the inspiring words of Good and Brophy that "a perfect teacher does not exist. All of us can refine skills, discard ineffective tactics and develop new ones. None of us will ever be a perfect teacher, but all of us can become better teachers than what we presently are.... This, the continual process of improving our teaching skills, is the essence of professional teaching" (Good & Brophy, 1987, p. 524).

**Conclusion:**

On the basis of the findings in discussion, it is safe to conclude that the 21<sup>st</sup> century educational scenario requires the English teacher to be facilitator; inspirer and promoter of students' learning which may help them construct edifice of knowledge in their own way. They are highly demanded to sagaciously come up and live with the expectations of the changed educational ethos in order to grow, sophisticate and refine the various parameters of their professional life. As Wallac (1991) states, English teachers should "become reflective practitioners by reflecting on their professional experiences."

As a matter of fact, English language learners are always prone to variations not only in terms of learning objectives, but also in terms of individual divergences in learning because of their grasping, cognition, educational, ethnic, and cultural diversities. Hence to make teaching successful and creative, the teacher must respect and recognize students' diverse learning styles/receptions and make calculated efforts to build optimal and favorable learning environments for students.

In all, if the teacher follows the steps, discussed above, his students will be able to develop efficiencies to showcase greater patience and to act by dint of at their own pace of competence. And by working through the problem, students will experience a strong feel of achievement and self-assurance that will shoot up their motivation level to learn. All this will prove genuine creativity in the classrooms. Despite all this, it is fit to imbibe the fact that "all existing learning style instruments and learning strategies are in their infancy, and need further testing through classroom applications" (Oxford, 1990).

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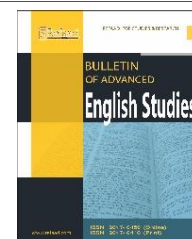
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# Ali Salem's *The Phantoms of New Egypt* (1968)<sup>1</sup>: A Subversive Reading of Post-Independence Dystopia

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## Abstract

The current study aims to establish Salem's *The Phantoms of New Egypt*<sup>2</sup> as a dystopian drama to expose the collapse of utopia and the rise of dystopia within the national pitfalls of the ruling class in post-independence Egypt. This provides an explanation of the title of the present paper since dystopia has been perceived as an escape to dismal socio-political conditions while utopia has been considered as an escape from a grim historical reality to an ideal hypothetical one. Moreover, the present study examines the close relationship between dystopian drama and dark satire since each of them is a counterpoint to the vision of utopia. Satire foregrounds the huge cleavage between a utopian dream and a dystopian bleak reality to underscore acts of resistance and struggle. Salem's *The Phantoms of New Egypt* is as a perfect example of the 'totalitarian laughter' which is a prominent feature in Bakhtin's notion of 'grotesque realism'. This highlights post-independence grotesque power which is both incongruous and monstrous. Power abuse is also scrutinized fantastically within Foucault's 'panoptic gaze'<sup>3</sup> to create normalized and docile subjects.

**Keywords:** *Dystopian Drama; Grotesque Laughter; Dark Satire; Egyptian Theatre.*



## Introduction: The Dramatist-Activist Political Satire:

Salem's view of realism is stated in his famous play, *The Buffet* (1967) through the character of Writer: I don't reproduce it [reality] as it is. I'm not a photographer. I do something completely different. I take our life apart and then I put it back together according to my taste, in my own way. It comes out as something else, something completely different. However, if we observe it closely, we find that it's exactly like it ... this is what I do. (p.140)

*The Phantoms of New Egypt* can be labeled a political play, or to put it more accurately, a play that becomes only meaningful if it is read in a political light. Thus, Eagleton's exhortation in his *Literary Theory* (1989) is especially meaningful to this play: "You simply have to argue about politics. It is not a question of debating whether, 'literature' should be, related to 'history' or not; it is a question of different readings of history" (p. 209). Post-independence Egypt is transfigured from a utopia into a dystopia because of the political class's harsh ruling policies which have proved to be pointless and inhuman as well.

The performance of *The Phantoms of New Egypt* was banned after one week because of its severe political implications. It appeared after the performance of an earlier play, *The Man Who Fooled the Angels*, which poked fun at Nasser's regime. This explains the scarce references and articles since no Egyptian critic could dare to write a word at that time, especially after witnessing the police official measures to close or in particular to seal off the theatre, Al-Corsal. In general, Egyptian critics such as Nadia Farag-Badawi and Shukry Ayyad classify Salem's plays

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into two categories: the real and the fantasy plays. However, their studies lack the analysis of the essential qualities of the literature of the fantastic, a gap which this study attempts to fill in.

On the linguistic level, 'fantastic' appears simply to refer to the adjectival version of the noun fantasy. Yet, Tzvetan Todorov relates the fantastic to a category which he calls "the uncanny" (1975, p. 46). He states that "the uncanny" is primarily associated with supernatural devices: "events which may be reality accounted for by the laws of reason, but which are, in one way or another incredible, extraordinary, shocking, singular, disturbing or unexpected" (1975, p. 46). This is different from "the marvelous" which is an echo of fantasy and "appears a good deal more difficult to define" (Armitt, p. 30) since it is categorized as "hyperbolic marvelous, exotic marvelous, and scientific marvelous" (Armitt, p. 30). In *Magical Realism: Theory, History, Community* (1995), Lois Zamora and Wendy Faris agree that "magical realism is a mode suited to explore and transgress boundaries, whether the boundaries are ontological, political, geographical, or generic. Magical realism facilitates the fusion or coexistence of possible world, spaces" (p. 5).

Thereby, the aim of the study is to capture the potentiality of magical realism in order to assault basic structures of rationalism and realism, thus, my endeavor centers on impossible or strange events to indict political indignation and to transgress existing inevitable ideological totalitarianism. Through my analysis, *The Phantoms of New Egypt* is interrogated within the paradigm of Bakhtin's theories of 'degrading humor' and the notion of 'grotesque realism' to highlight the features of 'totalitarian laughter' as theorized by Bakhtin to expose the unacceptable tactics of physical torture adopted by a ruthless police power.

### **Heliopolis Police Station: A Spatial Signifier of a Repressive 'New Egypt':**

*The Phantoms of New Egypt* is a provocative dramatic text on account of its rich political implication. The hypothesis is that the play can be an outstanding example of what Foucault believes that one "fictions" a history starting from a political reality that renders it true, one "fictions" a politics that does not as yet exist starting from a historical truth. (1979, p. 74-5). In *The Phantoms of New Egypt*, I attempt to discover the "frames of reference" or the "ideological subtext" (p. 261), in Jameson's words. One of the most forceful "frames of reference" or dramatic signs in the play is that connected with place and when it is deciphered, it signifies the semantic depths of Salem's political message. "New Egypt" is both a title and a place which is Heliopolis Police Station, the dominant setting that gives vent to an ideological stand which is the disenchantment with post-revolution Egypt. Salem's purpose is to expose a turbulent post-independence Egypt.

"New Egypt" –as shown in the play's title- seemingly refers to Heliopolis, a refined and a classy district in Cairo. On the underlying level, Salem subtly refers to post-independence Egypt with all its ideals and lapses. "New" is ironically used to represent the two stages experienced by the Egyptians: the initial euphoria and enchantment with the newly-born regime and later its deterioration and failures. Heliopolis police station allegorizes the shift from bliss to nightmare stressing the state of dialogism which is meant to re-invoke ironically the ugly reality of "New Egypt".

The prefatory scene introduces the setting through non-verbal means. The setting is described as "elegant", "beautiful", "relaxing" and "quiet". Salem's stage directions exhibit a kind of the fantastic to suit the early utopist atmosphere of "New Egypt":

#### **Stage direction:**

The place is very elegant .... The lighting is quiet and relaxing, paintings decorate the wall, a series of iron chain hanging on the wall in a beautiful layout. This is not the ordinary iron-chain we know – it is made of colored plastic and it is used as ornaments ... The place is beautiful and elegant to the degree that we could not believe that it is a police station unless we read "the police is in the service of the citizens", the large illuminated placard hung against the wall. (*Italics mine, The Phantoms of New Egypt*, p. 9).

This setting is apt to introduce the concept of theatrical space in terms of the "mobility" of the sign to outline the nature or specificity of the theatre sign. "This consists of", as De Toro comments, "the constant mutation theatre signs experience. This mutation has a close relationship with the icon/index/symbol" (p. 70). Thus, the dramaturgical reading of the "theatre object" includes both the text's structural articulation and ideological components.

To illustrate, within the theatrical space, the shapes which are deployed on stage exist in an iconic capacity and the setting as depicted by Salem undergoes a change which could explain the "constant mutation of theatre signs". In Heliopolis police station, the paintings, the colored-chain and the lighting - as signs- enjoy a tremendous degree of "transformability" and "mutability". They are constantly shifting from the iconic to the indexical to the symbolic. In Act One Scene One, the depicted theatre objects [the paintings, the colored-chain and the lighting, etc.] are indexical signs of a utopia where everything is full of glamour. As the plot progresses, these ideal police station shifts to the symbolic level and this generates the "symbolic space" which refers to political turmoil in post-independence Egypt, a condition delineated within the fantastic realm. Thereby, the setting's "transformability" emphasizes the kinetic element inherent in the theatrical space so as to create a mood and in this particular setting, a grim one.

These idealistic police station brings to the fore the deployment of "the fantastic" that is described by Richard Mathews as being a "powerful, vivid mode of human consciousness" enabling man "to enter worlds of an infinite



possibility [via] imagination" (p. 1). It is "a type of fiction", as Mathews continues, "that evokes wonder mystery or magic – a sense of possibility beyond the ordinary material, rationally predictable world in which we live" (p. 1). Salem consciously breaks away from the "mundane reality" which he paradoxically seeks to expose its other ugly side.

Roger Caillois draws a basic distinction between fairy tales and the fantastic

... in the fantastic, the supernatural appears as a break with the principle of universal coherence ... the fantastic comes after the fairy tale and practically replaces it ... the fairy tale is set in a world where enchantment is taken for granted ... The fantastic presupposes the solidity of the real world but only to ruin it more radically. (Italics mine, pp. 9-10)

Thus, the police station –as a setting deployed by Salem- could be analyzed within the fantastic paradigm since it deviates from the norm of being a place of interrogation, torture and confinement. It is, on the contrary, portrayed as a gallery or a museum. It functions in opposition to the audience's expectation of any normal police station, a point raised by Mustafa, an ambitious journalist and a friend of the Heliopolis police Superintendent:

**Mustafa:** *Impossible!* This cannot be a police station ... if so, what does the museum look like, then?

**Superintendent:** Oh man .... These are very normal things.

**Mustafa:** *Impossible. This cannot be normal.* What do I hear? Is this music?!!

**Superintendent:** Is it a *strange thing* to hear music *here*?

**Mustafa:** Yes, of course ... this is *the last thing* I could hear in police station.

**Superintendent:** Then, *what do you expect* to hear in a police station?

**Mustafa:** To hear the yelling of a criminal being beaten ...

**Superintendent:** Please, don't compliment me.

Do you like my police station?

**Mustafa:** Like it!! The cell *here* is thousand times much better than my room in the hotel where I live. Please arrest me and let me sleep in your cell. Can you rent it to me? You'll not change anything, you'll just put a small note: '10% Service'.

[He looks at the cell once again]

Certainly ... *it is a dream*: a bed, a basin, a radio, magazines.

**Superintendent:** And cool air conditioning *will be* installed so soon. (Italics mine, *The Phantoms of New Egypt*, p. 9)

"Here", as an index sign, is seen "abnormal", "strange" and dreamy. The irony is that the idealistic Superintendent seeks a better "here" as seen in the use of "still" in conjunction with the use of the future tense "I will". The dialectic relation between the present tense and the future one highlights the structural function of the title which is itself a clef of post-independence Egypt. The title serves primarily to focus attention on the collapse of the "here" which later proves to be a dystopia.

As the dialogue progresses, the audience gets to know that the Superintendent is about to be awarded the "State prize and the Shield of Absolute Security" for having had no crime records in his police station for three years:

**Superintendent:**

Don't envy me, Mustafa. There's still an hour to complete three years. At exactly 12 o'clock, I'll announce the passing of three years after the last reported accident. (Italics mine, *The Phantoms of New Egypt*, p. 12)

The Superintendent's personal philosophy rests on enhancing what he calls the "precautionary security measures" (*The Phantoms of New Egypt*, p. 12) to reduce the crime rate till it becomes zero. This idealism as usual foreshadows the forthcoming tension which is a dominant feature in the drama of dystopia. That is because the Superintendent's utopia is unreal with no strong pillars to sustain it, therefore, it will be doomed with the appearance of the first crime record before the time is twelve o'clock at night.

In Salem's play, "New Egypt" could be read "in adjacency to a semi-magical world of recognizable reality" (1994, p. 107), to use Gilbert's words. It is post-independence allegory which "contains the capacity to open ... a gateway into the received codes of history, a way of reading the past, and the investment of the present in it, through a liberating process of imaginative reconstruction" (Selmon, 1995, p. 164). The police station is constructed on a theoretical assumption without any genuine study of the harsh socio-political condition. That is why it fades when it confronts a dismal reality. In his attempt to reread history, propagated as a utopia by a newly-born post-independence regime, Salem resorts to magic realism as a "gateway" to undermine this utopia which proves to be dark. He manipulates the fantastic for the harsh realities of post-independence Egypt. Thereby, *The Phantoms of New Egypt* is not a pure fantasy since Salem does not dramatize a fairy-tale, but he pokes fun at the Superintendent's idealism which urges him to carry out unrealistic measures to create an ideal police station.

The plot acquires a new turn with the appearance of the first crime record reported by Sohair, Professor of Logic, who narrates "a strange story" (*The Phantoms of New Egypt*, p. 16) as she terms it, that is, the vanishing of

her husband, Professor of Law at the University of Cairo. She gives a detailed account of the wonderful night she and her husband spent at the cinema. On returning home, she says the following:

**Sohair:** I was standing beside the wardrobe and he was near  
the coat-hanger taking off his jacket. At this moment,  
the electricity went out for a second and when it came  
back, I didn't find my husband. (The Phantoms of New Egypt, p. 24)

Her words are received with mockery and disbelief:

**Sohair:** Please sir ... Watch your words. I am not hallucinating  
or making up stories. I am not crazy. The story happened  
as I have narrated it. (The Phantoms of New Egypt, p. 26)

Sohair's past narration shocks and interrupts the cheerful present of the Superintendent. She explains that the point is not "how long has my husband been vanished?" because "the important point", she continues, "is his way of disappearing- how he has vanished?" (The Phantoms of New Egypt, p. 23). Scene One in Act One ends on a dramatic note:

**Superintendent:** ... the signals say that the light went out in many  
different places for a second and when it came back,  
someone disappeared. (The Phantoms of New Egypt, p. 28)

At this moment, the telephone rings and an unknown voice delivers a direct threat to the Superintendent to abandon his investigation concerning Professor Sohair's report:

**The Voice:** Abandon this case. You'll achieve nothing.

Do not dare play with us. You're not up to us. (The Phantoms of New Egypt, p. 28)

In a typical expressionistic technique, this recurrent threatening voice is an offstage auditory clef that dominates the entire dramatic events. This offstage clef involves what Elam terms "a triple discursive orientation" (1984, p. 72):

First, there is an orientation to the dramatic universe itself and its individuals, taken as objects of discourse. Second comes the context of utterance as it emerges directly from the dialogue (I-you and here-now of the speech exchange). And the third element is an orientation towards the co-text, i.e. the verbal context of the discourse with its internal semantic and syntactic structure. (*Italics mine*, 1984, p. 72)

The dramatic universe of *The Phantoms of New Egypt* is the "strange" event of disappearing which is associated with electricity that goes out at the moment of disappearing. The context of utterance is established through the (I-you) exchange between the Superintendent and the unknown voice on the one hand, and between him and a group of electricity experts on the other. The experts are hired to find out logical reasons behind the technical problems of electricity. As for the co-text, the structure is revealed in a traditional narrative: introduction, a set of complicated events and a dramatic/tragic conclusion.

Mustafa's recurrent use of "impossible" and Professor Sofair's persistent repetition of "am not hallucinating" and " am not crazy" can make *The Phantoms of New Egypt's* dramatic structure fall into magic realism which disregards the physical laws. It is often an explanation on the inexplicability of the world - physical, political, cultural, interpersonal- in which we live, therefore, the logic of the narrative is the logic of the fantastic. It is Salem's strategy of "destabilization" and the fantastic becomes a foil against which reality takes on startling intensity in order to debunk "New Egypt" in the post-independence era. Thus, Salem's "strange event" crystallizes unknowable possibilities of ordinary experience under pervasively sad socio-political circumstances. This emphasizes the importance of political satire which is a response to a grim reality and is full of deep and convoluted social and political commentary. Magic realism differs from pure fantasy in the sense that it is set in a normal, modern world with authentic descriptions of humans and society. It involves the fusion of the real and the fantastic, or "an amalgamation of realism and fantasy" (Moore, p. 1).

Moreover, Salem's technique of the fantastic arouses the audience's new perceptions and baffles their automatic habitualization through the poetics of "indeterminacy". That is because the Superintendent is now -after the numerous mysterious calls which he receives every now and then- in a state of 'indeterminacy', that is, he has to fill the gaps he will onward face. Salem's play – from the outset- is as enigmatic as a riddle. With meaning left unexplained and opaque, the recurrence of the "strange events", as well as the unknown calls, generate a number of blanks which are meant to achieve 'an estranging style'.

Scene Two is set in the same police station after seven days of the first reported crime and the Superintendent is seen "very exhausted" (Stage direction, p. 29). That is because the number of the wives who have lost their husbands in the same manner as Professor Sohair's is rapidly increasing:

**Superintendent:** The number of these women is increasing ... at night  
they come to me in my dreams ... filling all the streets  
of Heliopolis ... many of them ... thousands ... sitting  
on the ground silent ...waiting .... with sad eyes. (The Phantoms of New Egypt, p. 30)

As a result, he quickly holds an emergency meeting with the concerned people [an electrical engineer, a physician and a foreign expert of electricity] to solve this crisis and to find out logical reasons for the disappearing of men especially the humorous ones and whose feet size is forty-two:

**The Engineer Al-Enbaby:** We examined all the electrical cables in the reported places. And with the aid of Mr. Opetic, the foreign expert, we concluded that all the electrical connectors are in their proper position and there is nothing wrong with the electricity in the places where you claim the light went out.

The whole story is all a lie, an imagination or as superficial as newspaper unless there are phantoms. The electricity is ok 100%. (*The Phantoms of New Egypt*, p. 34)

Being a Professor of Logic, Sohair proposes a number of interpretations to figure out why the electricity has gone out

**Prof. Sohair:** There can be more than one interpretation. Is it a gang that belongs to a foreign country sending a certain ray as a secret weapon to be directed against us?

**Dr. Mansy:** You mean a radiation that changes the substance to energy and then reconverts it to a substance in a different place.

**Prof. Sohair:** .... There is another interpretation. It can be a gang from another planet using a type of radiation which we do not know.

**Eng. Al-Enbaby:** Since it is a gang - as you assume which belongs to a different planet - why do you say it is the responsibility of the Ministry of Electricity. Go and outsmart the phantoms.

(*The Phantoms of New Egypt*, p. 38)

Again, "impossible" is repeated to enhance the illogicality and the absurdity of the whole situation. Salem juxtaposes a world of realism with that of a fantasy through the use of lighting as rendered in the Superintendent's account of a number of "strange" events. He narrates a number of incidents in which a pilot while landing, the light goes out for a second and when it comes back, the pilot, has vanished. The same has happened to a bus driver and to a famous surgeon. "The custom in our country says there are phantoms", as the Superintendent comments, "What, then, do the people say in your country?" (*The Phantoms of New Egypt*, p. 39). The foreign expert answers: "impossible, there are no phantoms. There is science. There is nothing called a ray to stop electricity" (*The Phantoms of New Egypt*, p. 39).

This highlights Tzvetan Todorov's concept of the fantastic which marks a break with the common order of things, an emergence of the inadmissible into the unalterable everyday legality. For Todorov, the fantastic requires the fulfillment of three conditions. First, the text must oblige the reader to consider the world of the characters as a world of living persons and to hesitate between a natural and a supernatural explanation of the events described. Second, this hesitation may also be experienced by the characters and it becomes one of the themes. Third, the reader has to reject allegorical as well as 'poetic' interpretations (1975, p. 25). In *Fantasy, The Literature of Subversion* (1981), Rosemary Jackson claims that the fantastic "reveals reason and reality to be arbitrary, shifting constructs, and thereby scrutinizes the category of the 'real'. Contradictions surface and are held antinomically in the fantastic text, "as reason is made to confront all that it traditionally refuses to encounter ... what emerges as the basic trope of fantasy is the oxymoron" (p. 21). This can be seen in the following dialogue in which Abdu, the astronomer, appears on stage asking for help because he feels that he will vanish that night:

**Superintendent:** What do you mean 'I feel'? Talk logically.

**Abdu:** What has logic to do with my words. I'm a very sensitive person and I feel that I'll disappear today.

**Prof. Sohair:** Feeling like what. Describe it exactly to me?

**Abdu:** As one feels hatred, love. It's a very strong feeling, very concrete. As one feels the mightiness of music, the bitterness of defeat. (*Italics mine, The Phantoms of New Egypt*, p. 46)

The dominant feature is that of "contradiction", that is, the combination of the opposites: love and hatred, triumph and defeat, music and bitterness. In this context, the audience exercises their power of "hesitation" in relation to Abdu's feeling of disappearing. This state of "hesitation" has become a serious theme to be analyzed in a logical manner. What Abdu feels asserts Salem's view of "New Egypt" that is not based on natural or physical laws or objective reality. This emphasizes the fact that irrational ruling diverts humanity from a normal reality, so "impossible events" can happen, even brutal ones.

This is in line with the technique of magic realism which crystallizes "two conflicting perspectives, one based on a rational view of reality and the other on the acceptance of the supernatural as prosaic reality" (Moore, p. 1).

Salem uses both perspectives in a hyperbolic way to express the political frustration of "New Egypt". This explains why the dictatorial regime arrests humorous men because laughter has the power of liberation as M. Bakhtin argues: laughter "demolishes fear and piety [it is] a vital factor in laying down that prerequisite for fearlessness without which it would be impossible to approach the world realistically" (qtd in Morson et al., 1990, p. 23).

The timing of the mysterious telephone calls asserts the fact that living under a repressive regime means living in a secretive and lawless state. The voice is a signifier of detectiveness as the Superintendent is always seen over watched. This means that Salem offers a view of post-independence Egypt which undergoes a state of terrorism. The Superintendent is haunted by a number of menacing, unknown calls from different places at different times: a call from Assiut and another one from Paris. The aim is to weaken the Superintendent's will. These mysterious calls symbolically refer to the turmoil in post-independence Egypt:

After the 1967 defeat, the regime continued to open its prison gates in the worst of manner. Fear dominated and surrounded people everywhere .... Political organizations resorted to dirty tricks to arrest people. During this turbulent period, some plays were performed using themes and techniques based on symbols and puns ... (Yusuf, p. 43)

The menacing calls in *The Phantoms of New Egypt* signify the transgression of law owing to the fact that the post-independence regime is based on a lawless system which itself depends on violence to legitimize its fearful existence.

In addition, this mysterious voice can act as a "hierarchical observation" (Dreyfuss et al., p. 156) – to borrow Foucault's phrase- which functions within the act of being looked over. This explains that control depends on what Foucault terms as "optics of power" (Dreyfuss et al., p. 156). This "hierarchical observation" is a central technique of what Foucault also calls "disciplinary power"<sup>9</sup> (Foucault, 1979, p. 26) which anchors on repression, domination and punishment for the disobedience is always close at hands. "Discipline", here, means "a technique not an institution" and it seeks to "make docile" individuals, that is, "it is the specific technique of a power that regards individuals both as objects and as instruments of its exercise" (Foucault, 1979, p. 170) and its aim is to "normalize surveillance" (Foucault, 1979, p. 23).

The shift from a blissful condition to a nightmarish one can be analyzed within Foucault's concept of "effective history" which seeks to put everything in motion" (Italics mine, Foucault, 1977, p. 153). This stands in contrast to the "suprahistorical" (Foucault, 1977, p.153) perspective that seeks to totalize history. Like the Foucauldian genealogist, Salem dissolves the comforting illusion of human existence as well as all the ideals of truth and beauty. Professor Sohair's dramatic presence before twelve o'clock as well as the occurrence of the telephone calls represent a moment of "rupture" and "discontinuity". This "rupture" denotes the absence of "fixed essences", finalities and "discontinuous development" (qtd in Dreyfuss et al., p. 106) –to use Foucault's words.

This moment of "rupture" and "discontinuity" is a signifier of the shift from utopia to dystopia. It is a shift which refuses all the forms of determinism or historical teleologies adopted by a dictatorial regime to impose fixed ideologies which only serve their imperial interests. This is dramatically depicted in Salem's stage direction of the police station which has been radically changed in Act Two:

**Stage direction:** The police station has lost part of its elegant appearance ... the colored plastic chain is replaced by an iron real one. Flowers no longer exist and the station gradually starts to be like any other normal police station. (Italics mine, *The Phantoms of New Egypt*, p. 51)

As a result, Heliopolis police station starts to appear normal in the sense that the cells are full of criminals and crimes record registered in the police files, a point raised by the warrant officer, Hussein:

**Hussein:** [Shouting] ... this thief inside the cell ...

**Superintendent:** What's wrong with him?

**Hussein:** He stole the basin and the radio and got them out of the cell window to one of his mates. The problem is he denies that the cell used to have these items .... The crimes have spread fiercely everywhere ... theft, burglary, arson and pick pocketing ... (*The Phantoms of New Egypt*, p. 53)

History is, thus, never a progression towards a better human situation, but rather a cycle that does not confirm to any rational end, but rather obeys its own law of recurrence. The Superintendent himself, in the closing scene, vanishes in the same manner of the Professor and Abdu. He is caught somewhere away when he holds a press conference to announce the "truth" behind these mysterious calls. Consequently, the Superintendent's disappearing can be interpreted within Nietzsche's view of history as a story of petty malice, of vicious intentions, of high-sounding stories masking the lowest of motives (Nietzsche, 1956, p. 288).

In a word, *The Phantoms of New Egypt* reveals deep estrangement and abysmal dissatisfaction with all the claims of promised security that have brought nothing but ontological loss. This proves that the utopian discourse has been shunned because ideal systems have turned into nightmares. Hence, the construction of unshackled imagination involves the use of allegory as seen in the use of magic-realism.



## On the Grotesque:

Abdul-Fadl is an actant of the grotesque with all its incongruous and terrifying nature. Bakhtin's notion of 'grotesque realism' is very functional to analyze 'degrading humor' to underscore the brutal role played by a ruthless regime whose theory of security is based on physical torture. This, thus, gives a bleak picture of what has gone grotesque in post-independence Egypt.

### 3.1. 'Grotesque Realism' Revisited

The multifarious studies of the grotesque fail to provide a constant definition due to its "jellyfish nature" (Harpham, 1982, p. xv). The pivotal point is to formulate the understanding of the grotesque in close relation to specific historical circumstances and consciousness at a particular time:

Rapid industrialization, unprecedented scientific and technological advances, wars, migration of masses of people, totalitarian regimes, were among the most important although diverse factors responsible for altering people's understanding of the world. (Krzychlkiewicz, p. 9)

The focus of analysis is on the terrifying aspects of what I call post-independence grotesque particularly in "New Egypt".

Generally speaking, the grotesque is defined as "an artistic device", a "mode" of expression, a "tone" for the "entire work" and as it is a departure from the norm, "it is frequently used in satire to expose the immediate and identifiable vices and follies of human beings" (Krzychlkiewicz, pp. 1-2). It is also recognized as "an effect of something distorted, absurd, incongruous, or estranged", when something is presented to us not only as different from what it is, or from what it might be, but is also presented in "a way which does not fit our familiar logical or imaginative power pattern" (Foster, 1966, p. 75). In the *Grotesque* (1972), Philip Thomson refers to the grotesque in relation to "disharmony", a mixture of both the comic and the terrifying being and "the unresolved clash of incompatibilities" with "the ambivalent nature of the abnormal as presented in the grotesque" (p. 27).

Moreover, Wolfgang Kayser – in his *The Grotesque in Art and Literature* (1981) – believes that the grotesque world promotes "the awareness" that the "familiar and apparently harmonious world is alienated under the impact of abysmal forces, which break it up and shatter its coherence" (p. 37). In other words, the grotesque is determined by... the abolition of the law of statics, the loss of identity, the distortion of 'natural' size and shape, the suspension of the category of objects, the destruction of personality and the fragmentation of the historical order. (Italics mine, Kayser, p. 185)

In the play, Professor Abu Al-Fadl is defeated by seemingly incomprehensible phantoms depicted as demonic forces which are responsible for the estrangement of "New Egypt". Herein lies the modern grotesque which is seen as an exceptional monstrosity of horrid ugliness. This enhances the interwoven threads between satire and the grotesque to assert the dystopic condition.

Salem's use of satire foregrounds Bakhtin calls "degrading humor" defined as "a downward movement from the upper to the lower bodily stratum" (Dentith, p. 83). The core function of the grotesque is "not to hide, but to expose" (Mann, 1966, p. 122). Evoking sentiments of revulsion is meant to defamiliarize the world by altering its norms. In Bakhtinian view, laughter can be read as satire to "inspire disgust of fear" (Bakhtin, 1984a, p. 63). This brings to the fore what Bakhtin also terms as "grotesque realism" which will be analyzed within the realm of 'degrading humor'. That is, central to 'grotesque realism' is the principal of 'degradation': "the lowering of all that is high, spiritual, ideal, abstract ... to the material level, to the sphere of earth and body in their indissoluble unity" (Bakhtin, 1984a, pp. 19-20). He also adds the "bodily element" in 'grotesque realism' is viewed as "deeply positive":

... The material bodily principle is contained not in the biological individual, not in the bourgeois ego, but in the people, a people who are continually growing and renewed ... This exaggeration has a positive, assertive character. The leading themes of these images of bodily life are fertility growth, and a brimming-over abundance ... (Bakhtin, 1984a, p. 19)

Bakhtin stresses the Rabelaisian loftiness of eating and drinking in human life and "strives to justify them ideologically ... to erect a culture for them" (Morson, 1990, p. 439). In fact, Bakhtin's exaltation of the bodily emissions - [digestion – urination – defecation – copulation] as evidence of the human form in a constant state of growth and change – represents his utopian Socialist vision.

This utopian vision is dismantled in *The Phantoms of New Egypt* whose aesthetics are centrally characterized by 'degradation', by a 'downward movement' into the material and 'the bodily element'. 'Degradation' appears in a negative vein, retaining none of those regenerative features of Bakhtin's beliefs. In fact, Salem sees degradation in a traditional way that raises the intellect above the body. Salem allegorizes the brutal role played by the regime to give a bleak picture of which has become so grotesque. Thus, Salem's 'grotesque realism' offers a realistic historic awareness which encounters dehumanization, so fabulous heroes have vanished in both the literal and metaphorical sense.

### 3.2. A Grotesque Body in Pain: A Sign-System of the Politics of Coercion

Salem uses parallel scenes to emphasize the gross abuse of power in post-independence Egypt. The first scene marks the return of the Professor of Law, Abu Al-Fadl who avoids answering all the questions concerning his disappearance. The same happens with Abdu, the astronomer. What arouses the Superintendent's attention is that both men are unable to sit probably because they have "pimples" at their back:

**Abu Al-Fadl:** It's my right to have pimples at any time.

**Superintendent:** I know that the freedom of pimples is a legitimate right to all people. (The Phantoms of New Egypt, p. 67)

The vitality of the Professor's and the Superintendent's dialogue lies in what Elam calls the "context-of-utterance", i.e., (I-you-here-now) since the central [I-you] dialectic is defined by the principle of interchangeability ... [It is] the primary exchange in the drama, from which its tension and dynamic derive" (1980, p. 143). The dialogue of both characters is structured on the abuse of the 'felicity conditions' which render the dialogue defective. I mean that the Professor of Law performs a sequence of individual illocutions and the irony is that he is fully aware that his speeches are defective. He abuses the felicity condition of sincerity as he does not say what he believes, thereby, the relation between the signifier and the signified collapses since he avoids logical answers which are supposed to be uttered by a Professor of Law.

On the other hand, the listener recognizes the speaker's illocutionary intentions as rendered in his satiric reply. Austin calls the listener's recognition of the speaker's illocutionary intentions the "'securing of uptake' ... without it, the intended illocution is doomed to failure" (1962, p. 117). On this point, Elam explains the fact that the abuse of the 'felicity condition' is an integral verbal sign in comedy: "Comedy is full of such "infelicities' caused by the non-securing of up-take, the result usually being a form of 'talking at cross-purposes' where the interlocutors reciprocally defeat each other's attempts at conversational progress" (1980, p. 164).

These illocutions, therefore, are comic verbal signs of the politics of coercion as adopted by a fearful regime. The bodies of the Professor and the journalist are disfigured because of brutal 'disciplinary' tactics. These disfigured bodies are signs of the aesthetic nature of the grotesque which violently resists concepts of beauty, order and harmony because "pimples" may contain puss which is something unclean and causes feelings of revulsion and has nothing of the regenerative features of Bakhtin's notions of human growth and fertility. In this sense, Kayser ponders that "we smile at the deformations, but are appalled by the horrible elements as such" (1981, p. 31).

Actually, Salem's choice of a Professor of Law and a disreputable journalist -who is only responsible for the marginal parts as the Zodiac and the Cross-word Puzzles - is apt and suggestive. The significant implication is to refer to the haphazard arrest. Not only does the regime arrest political activists or dissenters, the concentrated camps are also directed against all people and against freedom of speech to impose fear and to create 'docile' and brainwashed puppets:

**Superintendent:** The accidents of disappearing are increasing all over the world ... this causes man to feel panic in every place ... thereby destroying the human civilization ... imagine if all the thinkers disappeared, imagine if all the genius men disappeared ... all the people who have a vision to lead humanity, to build a great civilization disappeared ... (The Phantoms of New Egypt, p. 72)

This is a sign of a terrifying 'grotesque' which is based on a punitive system. This is in opposition to the essential role of the state power whose prime function is to maintain order and security. Salem's parallel scenes are a dramatization of subordination which confirms the existence of an undebated political institution. This random arrest creates a psychological state of "regularity" denoting "a custom" interpreted as "the banality of power" which is defined as "the repetition in everyday actions and gestures within systems of domination" (Mbembe, p. 166). Fear is the worst sensation that can be felt asleep or awake. It is identical to the worst nightmares. Yet, in "New Egypt", it has become "a habituation" to avoid clashes with the regime:

**Superintendent:** How did you come back?

**Abu Al-Fadl:** I haven't come yet. Yes, I'm not the same old person. I've left all what was inside me there. (The Phantoms of New Egypt, p. 69)

**Superintendent:** [Satirically]. They've taken from you all what was inside you and have only left you a pimple.

What a strange gang! (The Phantoms of New Egypt, p. 70)

This dialogue recalls the following words by De Toro:

The contextualization of discourse, in both the dramatic text and in the performance text, is carried out by means of deixis and anaphora that impregnate the speech act. The use of deictics and anaphora is an inherent part of the speech act and its function is very important in the communication of the message and in the determination of the verb tenses. (p. 13)

"There" and "yet" refer to a spatio-temporal deixis which works both by means of time adverbs and verbs. The anaphoric reference to the Professor's "strange event" marks the shift from the iconic deixis to the symbolic one because the deictic workings of theatre discourse are different from every day discourse. This is attributed to the fact that

in the latter the deictic dimension does not need to be inscribed semantically within the verbal fabric of discourse itself, remaining a pure and simple index while in the former, the indexical dimension is semanticized, becomes iconic (being inscribed, with a surplus of information, within the verbal-pragmatic fabric) and becomes symbolic (entering into the paradigmatic axes of a text-action which, far from retaining the fragmentary or



'spontaneous' character of a collection of everyday utterances, appears as an organic and 'fictitious' structure). (Serpieri et al, pp. 165-166)

"There", therefore, is a symbolic index of a wasteland where man experiences the most fearful physical torture. Throughout the dialogue, the Professor resorts to pauses and silences performing a set of deliberate illocutionary acts. This spot lights on his emotional vulnerability. He resorts to silence as he is quite conscious that he is under ceaseless inspection.

A ceaseless inspection can be analyzed within Foucauldian panoptical system of domination:

Foucault interprets the panoptic prison as an apparatus that not only renders the prisoners pliable, but transforms them. The all-pervasive, normalizing influence of an omnipresent disciplinary power reaches via training the body, in every day behavior and produces the motivation for regulated labor and an ordered life. (Italics mine, Habermas, p. 84)

The main function of the panopticon is to "alter" behavior, to "train" or "normalize" individuals. This is a vital stage in the regime's adoption of "disciplinary power". Both Abu Al-Fadl and Abdu have been subjected to physical punishment. This forces them to "police automatically" their behavior and answer none of the Superintendent's questions. In this context, Foucault claims that the use of "disciplinary power" is so effective because it "induce[s] in the inmates a state of conscious and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power" (1995, p.201), thereby; "visibility is a trap" (1995, p. 200) set by a merciless regime to curb any opposition.

To appear normal, the Professor of Law inaugurates an Institute for Belly Dancing while Abdu opens an office of hypnosis to practise the art of fortunetelling and to decode the unknown future from the remaining marks in a cup of coffee:

Inevitably, the grotesque confuses or even completely shatters our own value system; what to us is insignificant is presented as significant, what is trivial is awarded recognition, while what we consider holy is placed amidst mundane banality. (Italics mine, Krzychlkiewicz, p. 14)

Belly dancing and hypnotism are signifiers of mere physicality and intellectual coma. This is post-independence Egypt after the 1967 defeat which shattered many values and ideals; therefore, Law has lost its significance and has been converted into belly dancing tunes. When a totalitarian regime deprives people of their inner feeling of safety, it creates fake needs such as the unreasonable eagerness to know the future:

**Abdu:** [Enthusiastically]. Thank God! My clients are very high,  
Sir. Yesterday, three important men from the Ministry  
of Planning visited me. I did what made them feel happy  
and they left my office satisfied. (*The Phantoms of New Egypt*, p. 80)

The endeavor to appear normal in an abnormal society is a clear sign of 'mental sickness'. It is a kind of 'adjustment' to provide a fake feeling of peace and security. Abu Al-Fadl creates a make-believe world and Abdu's office of hypnosis is a kind of powerful intoxication to remain unconscious. Both men have lost their personal identity; they have lost the power of reasoning and the capacity for a right choice. They both swallow a large dose of some strong intoxicant to appear normal, hence, undergo a state of "de-individualization". To reduce "human diversity" to "the subhuman uniformity" is the dehumanizing system of a totalitarian regime that forces people to escape from responsibility and morality into a kind of animal mindlessness.

### 3.3. The Professor of Law: A Degraded 'Carnivalized Personality'

The locus of 'degradation' is rendered in the depiction of the Professor of Law, Abu Al-Fadl, within the mode of a "carnivalized personality" (p. 234) as propagated in Bakhtin's Dostoevsky. The Professor's dilemma is that he is involved in a dystopic situation which "places a person in extraordinary positions that expose and provoke him, it connects and makes him collide with other people under unusual and expected conditions ... " (Bahktin, 1984b, p. 105). The Professor's confrontation with his wife marks a radical change in his personality. She is shocked by his decision to give up his academic career and instead run an Institute for Belly Dancing:

**Prof. Sohair:** Before making a revolution in the conception  
of the oriental dance ... tell me what is the secret  
behind your mental metamorphosis. (*The Phantoms of New Egypt*, p. 84)

His defense seems only logical to him. He justifies his strange action in terms of money:

**Abu Al-Fadl:** I'll be responsible for their [the belly dancers]  
advertisements, arrange their concerts and I'll  
take a very big commission. I can earn 600 per  
a night ... even in hard currency. (*The Phantoms of New Egypt*, p. 89)

In another justification, he states that "magazines only publish the photos and the latest news of the famous belly dancers even the news of the retired ones"

**Abu Al- Fadl:** Show me one magazine cover with the photo  
of a Professor of Logic. Show me any news  
about Law. (*The Phantoms of New Egypt*, p. 90)

Logic and Law are no longer signifiers of reason and justice. They only exist as abstracts without any real or functional effect. Professor Sohair, in her attempt to talk logically to restore him to sanity, replies:

**Prof. Sohair:** ... Is the whole matter fame and money? Our real  
concern is to establish civilization.

**Abu Al-Fadl:** Not only Law and Logic can establish civilization.  
I'll establish another one by my own standard,  
by the tune of belly dancing music. Excuse me, I have  
to leave. I still have a lot of work to do. I need to  
choose the music and design the belly dancing  
costumes. (*The Phantoms of New Egypt*, p. 92)

This dialogue involves a speaker (S1) who produces an act of persuasion, a listener (L1) who should produce a perlocutionary act, i.e., being persuaded and a topic of discourse (T1). If Sohair (S1) succeeds in achieving her aim to dissuade her husband from collapsing his academic career and L1 (the Professor of Law) provides the desired perlocution, the role of grotesque realism will be suspended. It is worth noting that in order for the act of persuasion to be, as J. R. Searle argues, a "happy act", the speaker whether S1 or S2 should be in a position to perform an act of that kind" (Searle, 14). In the present situation, S1 is in a position to perform a happy act as far as she is concerned to keep her marriage alive, yet S2 is in no position to be persuaded since he has become a distorted grotesque image who is not any more fit to be a decent husband to a respectable wife. In terms of 'degradation', he decides to have "a joyful acceptance of the materiality of the body" (Dentith, p. 66) as theorized by Bakhtin. This is dramatically demonstrated in his selection of the belly dancers' photos:

**Abdu:** This is a divorced dancer. She is fond of belly dancing.  
She has a very elastic body.

**Abu Al-Fadl:** She is a little bit fat. Never mind. While practicing,  
we can make this part lose weight and make that part  
gain some extra weight.

**Abdu:** Every part in this dancer's body plays perfectly without  
music. (*The Phantoms of New Egypt*, p. 93)

It is a celebration of what is physical at the expense of what is intellectual. He breaks all his connection with Law and instead he cherishes the carnival or celebration of the materiality. As a result, the Professor rejoices in a temporary suspension<sup>12</sup> of all hierarchic distinctions as exemplified in his new relation with Abdu who greets him "what a musical night" calling him 'Abu Hameed' [the slang nick name of Ahmed]. The Professor's everyday low slang language is distorted too as he asks for cigarettes and beautiful dancers.

Salem's use of 'degrading humor'<sup>4</sup> is seen in the drastic change from an interest in Law to an interest in "Mesakaa مسقعة" [a famous and oriental Egyptian food] (*The Phantoms of New Egypt*, p. 88), the shift from the "head" to the lower parts of human body, from the notions of "national economy" to the "employment of fifty belly dancers to cover the need of the local market as well as that in Europe" (*The Phantoms of New Egypt*, p. 87) as Abu Al-Fadl puts it. This highlights the dehumanizing role played by a dictatorial regime whose aim is to distort human psyche and create instead mutilated beings:

**Prof. Sohair:** [In a dismal reaction]. Where have you been, Ahmed?  
Where is this place on earth one can go and return void  
from within. Where and why? For who's benefit?  
Where is this place which seizes people and take from  
them their faith .... Why not in light? (*The Phantoms of New Egypt*, p. 91)

"New Egypt" is associated with darkness where illogical and abnormal tactics are practised. Under a totalitarian regime, physical and cheap satisfaction replaces genuine refined art. Man's innermost life is imprisoned in stereotyped frames which keep him away from any authentic and liberal thinking. This is in line with Thomson's following words in which he states that "the most potent grotesque images" are those in which human being retains all "real characteristics" but is no more than "an empty shell". He also adds that despite being "animated" beings, they are "lifeless". These "lifeless" beings are apt to be "simultaneously comical and eerie" – comical because of their "imperfect" behavior and eerie probably because of the "age-old, deep-rooted fears in man" (p. 35).

The Professor's wholeness is splintered into a "plurality" of persons and he becomes dialogically conscious of his duality. "Consciousness" in Bakhtinian thought refers to a personality which is in a state of dialogism which itself is an enterprise to "visualize and portray personality as another, as someone else's personality" (Bakhtin, 1984b, pp. 12-13). In other words, the "carnivalistic" mode of "consciousness" is "polyphonic" and in the "polyphonic" world, ideas are transformed into "images" of people.

The Professor's moral and physical courage are ideas linked with collapse and degradation; accordingly, he interacts as one image to another not as one person to another. While sleeping, Abu Al-Fadl sees nightmares to the extent that "his body shakes violently and he screams loudly" (*The Phantoms of New Egypt*, p. 85) as his wife tells him. This is actually the terrified being, the collapsed one which he denies or tries to forget by replacing it with the degraded one when he wakes up. In this context, Bakhtin writes that the "consciousness of self is constantly perceived against the background of other's consciousness ... 'I for myself' against the background of 'I for another'" (1984b, p. 207), thus, the person addresses the self as another. As being conscious of his dialogized self, the Professor of Law ends his marital life:

**Abu Al-Fadl:** Indeed, I'll take everything except the books.  
I've no space for books in the Institute ... My  
whole life has no room for books any more. (*The Phantoms of New Egypt*, p. 94)

Books, as signs of intellect and reason, are juxtaposed to the Dancing Institute to highlight the Professor's inner conflict or "carnivalized personality" (1984b, p. 234) as Bakhtin terms it. Professor Abu Al-Fadl hates his mutilated self due to the fact that it is imposed upon him by a demonic super force. This is described by Bakhtin as "carnivalisation of passion" (1984b, p. 159) characterized by "ambivalence", namely, an alien self creates in him a peculiar hatred towards his personality as a whole:

**Abu Al-Fadl:** I used to believe that we're working in the most important fields; Law and Logic. I used to believe that we work together to make our world better .... At last, I've discovered that we should not lecture the students as parrots. The recorder can do the whole job much better than us. At least, it will not feel tired or even grow old. Even if it is broken, it can be repaired with little money. Yet, if a professor is internally broken, he can not be repaired. (*The Phantoms of New Egypt*, p. 95)

It is not a separation between a man and his wife. Abu Al-Fadl's breakdown of his marriage is a signifier of the separation between Law and Logic whose relation has become pointless in a lawless post-independence Egypt.

Obviously, physical torture is central to the textual/structural pattern of the play which is combined with a dialogized/dehumanized self. Physical torture is responsible for the tense life experienced by the Professor and this results in "inappropriate speeches", that is, all sorts of violations of the generally accepted and "the established norms of behavior" (Bakhtin, 1984b, p. 117). This is the normal outcome of the fear of punishment in "New Egypt". The grotesque quality, therefore, has become a signifier of conflicts and themes of tragedy that tackle human fate, the meaning of existence and the discrepancy between absolute power and human fragility. This pinpoints the mutual relation between the grotesque and tragedy. The only difference is that tragedy brings catharsis, while the grotesque offers no consolation.

In conclusion, the selected play conveys the ambiguities of living under post-independence regimes that are secretive, lawless and repressive. The practices of these lawless regimes are the ugly face that pinpoints the stage of disillusionment as experienced by the Professor of Law. For the dramatist, the very *raison d'être* of *The Phantoms of New Egypt* becomes –to use Jameson's term– "a retextualization of History". History, as Jameson rightly argues, is the experience of 'Necessity': "Necessity is the inexorable form of events; it is a narrative category in the enlarged sense of some properly narrative political unconscious which is a retextualization of History. Therefore, drama of disillusion is not merely a historical account of post-independence Egypt, but it is "*history which hurts*" the nation's sensibility to instigate action the depicted brutal military regime.

#### Endnotes:

- [1] The current paper is adapted from my PhD. Dissertation entitled, Post-Independence Drama from Utopia to Dystopia in Selected plays by Wole Soyinka and Modern Egyptian Dramatists, submitted to the Department of English Language and Literature, Faculty of Arts, Cairo University, 2010, supervised by Prof. Amal Aly Mazhar, Panel Committee: Prof. Nihad Seleiha and Associate Prof. Naglaa Al-Hadidy.
- [2] All the translations rendered in *The Phantoms of New Egypt* are done by the present researcher.
- [3] In *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (1979), the French archaeologist of 'knowledge', M. Foucault describes the process of 'normalization' through his analysis of Bentham's Panopticon, a 19<sup>th</sup> century prison system in which the prison cells were arranged around a central watch tower from which the supervisor could watch inmates, yet the inmates could never be certain when they were being watched, therefore, overtime, they began to police their own behavior. The Panopticon has become the metaphor for the processes whereby disciplinary 'technologies' together with the emergence of a normative social science, 'police' both the mind and the body of the modern individual (Dreyfus et al., pp. 143-167).

١. عبده : يا مسا السيكاً .... المسائل كلها في الحشوب التمام ... مسا الليل يا مدام.

(بعض الكلمات التي سيتبادلها ليست مفهومة و لا تعنى شيئاً محددًا).

أحمد : أخبار المدافع ايه ... ؟

عبده: آخر تمام ... (يخرج عليه السجانر و يعطيه سيجارة و يشعلها له)

دي بقى أنقح من بتاعة امبارح.

الدكتورة سهير (ترافقهما باشمأزاز شديد)

أحمد : و أخبار الشبك ؟

عبده: غمزت ... (يخرج بعض الصور الفوتوغرافية ) (عفاريت مصر الجديدة، ٩٣).

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