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✉ crossroads@uwb.edu.pl
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COSTANZA MONDO[1]
University of Turin, Italy
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2236-4580

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Discontinuous homecoming and community-forging storytelling in Abdulrazak Gurnah's *By the Sea*

Abstract. In *By the Sea*, written by Abdulrazak Gurnah in 2001, the theme of the homecoming is of paramount importance. The trajectory of the main characters' movement is fragmented and incomplete in the sense that they end up feeling at home in a foreign country rather than choosing their birthplace, Zanzibar. By referring to selected scenes from Gurnah's narrative, the present paper aims to analyse the images of home portrayed in the novel and the discontinuous character of the homecoming it depicts. In addition, the role of storytelling is investigated so as to show its importance for two related processes: homecoming and community-forging.

Keywords: Abdulrazak Gurnah, storytelling, home, homecoming, community-forging.

1. Introduction

In Abdulrazak Gurnah's prose, images of home are recurring threads interweaving the past and the workings of memory. As the writer himself admits in an interview, the "negotiation between memory, loyalties and ideas of home" has been "both my lived experience and an important part of my writing subject" (Iqbal 2019: 39). The theme of home and its various images is also one of the cornerstones of the novel *By the Sea*, published in 2001. As the story unfolds, Saleh Omar and Latif Mahmud, the two main characters, succeed in shaping a new definition of home: as a physical and metaphorical place, which has a decisive impact on the process of their homecoming. Having left Zanzibar separately, in different periods of their lives, both move to the UK and after many years reunite to unravel their past and tease out the garbled story of an old, grim family feud. Their journey, as it is depicted in the narrative, is non-linear and discontinuous.

Homecoming is a theme which is present in numerous ancient literary works. One of the elements that varies, though, is the trajectory of homecoming, which is generally circular (Piciucco 2017: 47). Most of the time, the trajectory represents the characters' development as well. For instance, in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, an anonymous chivalric romance dating back to the Middle English period, the homecoming of the hero is the last step of a circular path. Having successfully overcome the challenges of the

[1] Address for correspondence: Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures and Modern Cultures, University of Turin, Via Verdi, 8 - 10124 Turin, Italy. E-mail: costanza.mondo@edu.unito.it

mysterious Green Knight, the valorous Gawain comes back to Camelot with the awareness of his fallibility, a feature which was already inside him. Odysseus's famous homecoming is similar: the hero eventually manages to return to Ithaca, but prior to that he undergoes a transformation triggered by the enriching stories he hears and the adventures he experiences during the travels. Since *The Odyssey* offers an archetypical model of homecoming, references to it tellingly feature in *By the Sea*. Sometimes, the homecoming can also take different trajectories and become a spiral, as it happens, for example, in *The Sea* by John Banville, where "the curving line comes very close to the departure point, without touching it" (Piciucco 2017: 47). In postcolonial literature, homecoming often involves the discovery of a safe place to live in. For instance, one character of Christy Lefteri's notable novel on the Syrian war, *The Beekeeper of Aleppo* (2019), says: "Do you know why Odysseus make [*sic*] his journey? […] To find his home again" (188-189). In Gurnah's narrative, homecoming is discontinuous to an utmost degree as its trajectory is fragmented, and this journey does not necessarily dovetail with the return to a physical place. In Kearney's opinion, "Latif has indeed in a sense come *home*. However, this has only become possible in England"—a country so unlike his native Zanzibar (2006: 56). This condition seems to be characteristic of many refugees' lives and postcolonial writers' experiences as well. As Gurnah points out: "The danger of the postcolonial writer, it seems, is that it might have worked, or might come to work, in the alienation and isolation of a stranger's life in Europe" (2004: 27). Nevertheless, distance is paramount to perspective and liberation, and this is also true for the main characters' of *By the Sea*, who manage to settle misunderstandings and put together the different fragments of an old family feud, thus getting relief from their excruciating past.

This paper aims to analyse two paramount themes in the novel, namely the vision of home and homecoming, and the use of storytelling to build communities. Further underlining the core role of both topics, the professions of Omar and Latif relate to the notions of home and story in the sense that the former is a furniture seller, the latter a poet and professor of literature. The present analysis will firstly revolve around the theme of home and homecoming as portrayed by Gurnah. Since in the novel stories and storytelling seem to thrive and are eventually fundamental to create homes, this paper will assess their importance in forging close-knit communities and, as a result, a sense of belonging, which sets the stage for the discontinuous character of homecoming and shapes the denouement of the whole narrative.

2. Images of home and homecoming

By the Sea has been labeled as a novel of "departures and tentative arrivals," providing as it does numerous examples of unsatisfactory homecomings (Steiner 2009: 113). Even in *Afterlives*, Gurnah's latest novel focusing on the devastation caused by German colonial rule in East Africa in the early 20th century, the topic of homecoming looms large. Hamza, one of its main characters, finally comes home after a long period spent among the "askari" (African soldiers). "He […] found himself unexpectedly on the shore road. He followed that with a small thrill of recognition and walked on to look for the house where he had lived his youth, but he could not find it" (2020: 169). Hamza's homecoming takes place halfway through the novel. On the other hand, at the very beginning of *By the Sea*, the two main characters do not consider going back to their

birthplaces; they are living in or arriving in a foreign country (even though they do not feel at home there).

The novel opens with Omar's interview at the airport and his request for asylum. That he does not consider England his home is clear from a very evocative image which Gurnah weaves through Omar's consultation with Rachel, his legal adviser: "Then she spread her papers on the table and sat down, facing the door. […] I sat opposite her, facing the window with a view of a brick wall" (2001: 63). While the door represents a world of possibilities open to Rachel (a British citizen), the only future awaiting Omar and other refugees like him is portrayed by an oppressive brick wall, which can either stand for his otherness from British citizens or his decision to live isolated, as he is doing when Latif visits him. Latif has been living in the UK for a long time. However, it is clear that he does not feel at home there, notwithstanding his prestigious position of university professor. Both internal and external elements help to strengthen this impression. Although Latif has "spent over half his life in England and has carved himself a comfortable niche in academia" (Hand 2010: 79), something worries him when he thinks that other Zanzibari migrants could deem him forgetful of his roots—a behaviour which quickly takes on the hues of a betrayal, a "treacherous absence from nativity" (2001: 74). While Omar is bluntly asked to provide his passport and exhibit the permit to stay in England, Latif is eager to "confirm [his] credentials as a teacher of literature", and he longs to be considered a fully-fledged "member of the tribe" (2001: 74). Apart from an unusual choice of words, though, his behaviour tells a lot about his feelings. Most importantly, he gets touchy when he recalls the way he managed to strike up a friendship at the college in Germany: "I don't know why I feel defensive about being ingratiating and deferential. It was a wise move, all the more so for being unreflected upon" (2001: 114). Evidently, this is a soft spot for him since deep down he knows that his integration in England depends on the same attitude.

As if his internal conflict and split identity were not visible enough—upon reaching England as a boy he even decided to change his name from Ismail to Latif—external circumstances further heighten and worsen his sense of uprootedness. When upon seeing him, a passer-by mutters "grinning blackamoor," Latif is extremely puzzled and starts to reflect on the etymology of the term, as if dissecting it to bits and pieces could make it more neutral or less harmful: "that a between black and moor bothered me at once, and habit or training made me start thinking about when it came into use" (2001: 72). Instead, by riffling through dictionaries, he discovers the racial hostility is inherent in the English language (Steiner 2009: 119). This episode parallels, perhaps even in an intertextual manner, Frantz Fanon's experience described in his classic *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952) as it accentuates the suddenness of being identified as Other due to a different skin colour and the painful reflections it triggers (Hand 80). It could even be read as an autobiographical reference to the verbal abuse Gurnah had to endure in England:

> The rudeness—people felt they could say really quite unpleasant things to your face, their refusal even to try and pronounce your name and, of course more obviously negative encounters in public places, shops, etc. (Iqbal 2019: 35)

More generally, in the novel the concept of home, an important trope of postcolonial literature, is ambiguous and by no means unequivocally positive. Far from being only a physical place, in postcolonial literature home is also metaphorical space, where characters seek shelter and find home to live in. Postcolonial scholarship is

suspicious of the term itself and its potential ties with nationalism and anti-immigrant bias (Newns 2020: 119). In a similar vein, the English language (the speech of ex-colonizers) takes on problematic contours in postcolonial literature and is the object of mixed feelings among authors. For example, while the notable Kenyan prose writer Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o deserted his English and turned to Gikuyu, his native language, to address his Third World readers in the first place (his novel *Caitaani Mutharaba-Ini*, self-translated as *Devil on the Cross*, was published in 1980, i.e., after a fourteen-year long period of the author's career of writing solely in English), many scholars still disagree on the status of African literature and its potential to find adequate expression to the indigenous experience using native rather than European languages (Adejunmobi 1999: 581; Bertinetti 2010: 318; Deckard 2010: 2085). By imbuing the concept of home with alternative meanings, the singular condition of refugees and their uprootedness prompt us to re-evaluate their place within the frame of migration "especially with regard to readings of home" (Newns 2020: 120). In this sense, *By the Sea* is particularly illuminating, insomuch as "Gurnah's text about forced exile obviously undermines such a positive view of 'home'" (Steiner 2009: 114). Before discussing the diverse features of homecoming in the novel, however, it is necessary to shed light on the image of home itself portrayed in it.

It could be stated that the characters' lives—if not the entire novel—gravitate around a house, most specifically about the issue of its ownership. Being a solid presence, the house is symbolically associated with loss not only because as result of a certain trickery Latif's father, Shaaban, is forced to cede it to Omar, but most importantly because a negative aura shrouds it. Apart from the fact that when Shaaban is violent and drunk, he shouts abuse at his wife in the rooms of the house, the house is linked to characters' death, since many of them die while the feud over the ownership goes on. The abusive man himself is found dead in his bedroom: "Living alone in that house which was always shuttered and locked, he was not discovered until two or three days after his death" (2001: 237). Apart from adding a gothic detail to the novel, Shaaban's horrible death exemplifies his morbid isolation and obsessive attachment to the house. In addition, it is in his parents' house that Latif's brother, Hassan, is seduced and corrupted by the ruthless merchant, Hussein, during the English lessons the merchant holds in his room. Therefore, far from being imbued with heart-warming and positive feelings, the house seems oppressive and stifling, as if it were much more than a mere background to the story. As Newns contends, "[i]n the novel, houses do not serve as mere settings for stories but form an integral part of their narrative machinery" (2020: 125).

Apart from material homes, *By the Sea* features examples of the so-called "non-home," which is engrained in the concept of asylum. Newns considers the detention centre in which Omar is held upon reaching England a "non-home," which obviously fails to evoke warm feelings or even the pretence of such intimate space (2022: 130-131). Arguably, the term can be enlarged to include the college in Kampala, which young Latif attends, or even the island on which Omar is imprisoned, since he is held there against his will. Before managing to finally come home, both Omar and Latif have to pass through these different non-homes. Storytelling is a recurring feature in the non-homes, and it represents a means of community-forging, the element that should not be underestimated in the present analysis.

Given the deleterious and chilling atmosphere surrounding houses in this novel, it comes as no surprise that homecomings are not associated with bliss and joy. One of the first examples is provided by Latif's stay in Kampala, during which he befriends Sefu and Jamal, two of his peers. After having finished their studies, the three friends decide to spend some time in each other's houses, starting with Jamal's. Rather than strengthening their friendship, though, this homecoming eventually disrupts the close-knit group since Jamal's family is extremely impolite to his friends. Even in this case, the house is not used as a mere setting but rather as an active tool to humiliate Sefu and Latif and to underline their condition of unwelcome guests:

> [I]t distressed Jamal that we were housed in one of the stores […]. They were not really stores, the toilet in between them made that obvious, but rooms intended for the servant or the gardener. (2001: 174)

The last straw is a joke in bad taste: Jamal's cousins throw a bucket of water on Sefu and Latif while they are passing under a window. As a consequence, Sefu and Jamal have an argument and the three friends fall out. Since Sefu moves to America shortly afterwards, they never reunite again.

Omar's experience of homecoming is even more traumatic and heart-rending. After having been imprisoned for years, he comes home with the long-held desire of seeing his wife Salha and his little daughter Ruqiya again, only to be informed that they died one year after his arrest. As if that were not enough, Hassan's homecoming jeopardizes his own life in Zanzibar—the callous man asks Omar to pay off a debt and threatens him with imprisonment. Arguably, it is precisely Hassan's homecoming that triggers Omar's home-leaving. On the last pages, the novel seems to suggest the possibility of a *traditional* homecoming, insomuch as Latif ponders the idea of returning to Zanzibar to meet his recently-returned brother Hassan again. Although Gurnah has argued that some characters of his other novels are not prevented from the possibility of coming home (Mohan & Datta 2019: 3), this seems unlikely to happen for Latif.

The text of *By the Sea* is interspersed with literary references, whose value goes beyond being mere quotations as they, in fact, have a profound impact on the development of the whole story. Steiner places particular emphasis on two of them, Herman Melville's short prose "Bartleby, the Scrivener. A Story of Wall-Street" (1853) and a few folk tales from *Thousand and One Nights*: "These stories are important, as they allow us to draw direct links to the issue of migrancy, translation and the centrality of storytelling" (2009: 121). While this is certainly true, there are two other important literary references which bear the same importance when discussing the theme of homecoming, namely *The Odyssey* and *The Tempest*. Shakespeare's play is evoked in Latif's pensive thoughts upon discovering that someone with his father's name has reached England and needs an interpreter: "Those are pearls that were his eyes" (2001: 76). In the play, this expression is uttered by Ariel, who leads one character, Ferdinand, to think that his father died in the shipwreck and that his body lies at the bottom of the sea:

> Full fadom five thy father lies;
> Of his bones are coral made;
> Those are pearls that were his eyes:
> Nothing of him that doth fade
> But doth suffer a sea-change

Into something rich and strange. (Act I, Scene II)

Yet, Ferdinand's father is still alive and Ariel is lying on Prospero's orders. In a similar vein, hearing his father's name again induces Latif to briefly entertain the thought that he might be still alive. Interestingly enough, *The Tempest* involves the homecoming of Prospero and Miranda as legitimate sovereigns of the Dukedom of Milan, from which they had been chased away years and years before. Latif's hinted-at homecoming at the end of the novel is very unlikely to take place, as evidenced by his reaction to this proposal: "'Are you suggesting I should go back too? To claim my share?' he asked, a broad derisive grin on his face" (2001: 239). His painful childhood and the choices he has made deny him the possibility of a similar blissful and full-hearted homecoming.

The novel provides readers with yet another unmistakeable intertextual reference. Homer's epic poem hinges upon the much-yearned-for homecoming of Odysseus, who manages to overcome perils and reach the shores of Ithaca. In the scene that later inspired Gurnah, Odysseus, pretending to be an elderly beggar, Odysseus is hosted by Penelope, who orders Euryclea to wash the man's feet. An old nurse sees a scar on his leg that a boar had inflicted on him when he was young, and reveals the beggar's true identity:

> as the old nurse cradled his leg and her hands passed down
> she felt it, knew it, suddenly let his foot fall—
> down it dropped in the basin—the bronze clanged,
> tipping over, spilling water across the floor.
> Joy and torment gripped her heart at once,
> tears rushed to her eyes—voice choked in her throat
> she reached for Odysseus' chin and whispered quickly,
> "Yes, yes! you are *Odysseus* […]. (*The Odyssey* 2006: 405)

This episode of Odysseus' undercover homecoming is echoed in *By the Sea*, although the contextual meaning is different. Young Latif is hosted by two friends in Germany and, after entering the house, he realizes that he has a bleeding cut on the sole of his foot. For this reason, his friend's mother, Elleke, washes his foot to clean the blood from it and avoid infection. This could be one of the "moments of relation, of small voices affirming hospitality within the violent and hostile contexts of colonial and imperialist onslaught and the exclusionary rhetoric of new African nationalisms" (Steiner 2010: 125), which Gurnah's narratives frequently depict. While washing his foot, Elleke asks Latif:

> Do you remember when Odysseus comes home, after twenty years, and does not announce himself, and his wife Penelope does not recognise him. Do you remember? It is an old woman who recognizes him, Eureclita or something like that, because she washes his feet to welcome him to the house. (2001: 127)

According to Steiner, "this kind of storytelling always leads to human connections and cross-cultural relationships, because of its nature of complicity in the telling and hearing of the tale" (2009: 113), thus touching on the subject of community-forging which will be analysed in depth in the next section of the present paper.

Contrary to what happens in *The Tempest* and *The Odyssey*, homecoming is denied to Latif, who has decided to leave his family and their petty squabbles over goods. While the Homeric hero hankers for Ithaca, Latif is eager to reach England and does not seek Zanzibar homecoming. Despite the fact that Latif knows the episode from the ancient

epic story, he quickly dismisses any sympathy towards the Homeric hero, now observed from a postcolonial perspective: "Wasn't it his idea that the Greeks should build a wooden horse and trick their way into Troy, and once in there to kill and maim and rape and set fire to the city?" (2001: 128). Rather than blindly accepting Western models, Latif rejects a one-sided vision of Odysseus, who in his eyes takes on the characteristics of a ruthless colonizer.

Other references to Homer feature throughout the plotline, ranging from hospitality to storytelling; however, the relevance given to the sea is particularly noteworthy. Embodying an angered divinity—Poseidon—and the means through which Odysseus has to travel to have his adventures in far-off islands, the sea is of paramount importance. On a more general level of critical reflection, let us add that the notions and imagery of sea and aquatic bodies play an important role in postcolonial studies. According to Gilroy, the "black Atlantic" world is "the stereophonic, bilingual, or bifocal cultural forms originated by, but no longer the exclusive property of, blacks dispersed within the structures of feeling, producing, communicating, and remembering" (1993: 3). In *By the Sea*, the aquatic element is present in the very title and features in surprisingly different places, ranging from Shaaban Mahmud's house to the island in which Omar is held captive. Interestingly, in both cases the sea is framed by and can be seen from a veranda overlooking it. Not to mention the fact that the final confrontation between Mahmud and Latif takes place near the sea, where Omar reveals to him his brother Hassan's return to Zanzibar and the reasons which prompted him to abandon his country of origin. In this case, rather than being framed, the sea itself is the frame of the discussion and may represent home. As a result, it tidally brings back a surge of memories related to Zanzibar, some of them particularly painful. After having recalled Hassan's homecoming and the reasons which led him to flee, Omar says that:

> The wind off the sea was beating strongly now, and perhaps I staggered a little, because Latif Mahmud took me by the elbow and turned me away from the sea-front towards one of the side-streets that led back into the centre of the town. (2001: 240)

The very act of leading Omar away from the sea and heading together for the inner city could be read as a powerful metaphor signalling Latif's desire to subtract his interlocutor from his harrowing memories.

The previously-mentioned Homeric reference is a perfect cesura to introduce the second section, which is concerned with storytelling as a means that enables the discontinuous homecoming of the two main characters and as a community-forging feature. Indeed, the beginning of *The Odyssey* consists of a long flashback: Odysseus is at the court of the Phaeacians and is asked by king Alcinous to recount his adventures and relate why he was found washed up on the shores of their island. Although at first he hides his true identity (as Omar does by adopting the name of Latif's father, namely Shaaban Mahmud), he eventually reveals his name before telling his chequered story, which creates a connection with the Phaeacians, who eventually agree to escort him to Ithaca. From this derives the importance of storytelling in *The Odyssey* for the hero's homecoming. Playing a similar role in *By the Sea* as well, storytelling allows the novel to reach its denouement.

3. The discontinuous homecoming through storytelling

In *By the Sea*, storytelling has been analysed as conducive to shaping transnational identities (Steiner 2009: 122). Historically speaking, stories have accomplished this aim in various ways: among the most famous figures the circulation of African-American newspapers in the 19th century, which helped to forge a shared identity and identification in a community which was scattered throughout the country. As far as migrants are concerned, though, written stories seem to be a more effective means to create bonds, since migrants are constantly travelling and not necessarily planning to settle in a determined place. While in *By the Sea* stories certainly fulfil the aim of building transnational identities (Steiner 2009: 122), it ought to be noted that their presence is not limited to Omar's or Latif's final dialogue, which develops through the recollection of the stories of their families and their feud over the house. Indeed, the narration is peppered with numerous stories, which mostly figure as tools to create communities.

Far from being linear and straightforward, Omar's storytelling is fragmented and takes a while before gaining narrative fluency. According to Steiner, the non-chronological order of the novel exemplifies "the interruption and disconnection inflicted by dispossession, persecution and exile" (2009: 112). Thus, interrupted stories seem to characterise migrants and the dispossessed. Apart from being fragmented, though, the narration paradoxically begins with a man who refuses to recount his real story. Saleh's silence has been interpreted in different ways, for example, as a refusal to use English because it might hinder his application for refugee status (Steiner 2009: 118). Another plausible reason is that he does not relish the prospect of opening up and reliving the painful, heart-breaking story of his life under the cool gaze of the airport officer, who is not interested in listening. Since Abdulrazak Gurnah cooperated with the Refugee Tales Project, it is not inappropriate to quote a brief passage from *Refugee Tales* which perfectly exemplifies the point just made: "You're not really going to listen. No one listens. You're not really going to hear. No one hears. You're not really going to care. No one cares" ("The Fisherman's Tale" 2019: 94). In line with this, Omar has packed his baggage with items which will be able to convey a concocted, pre-packaged story when examined: "It was not my life that lay spread there, just what I had selected as signals of a story I hoped to convey" (2001: 8). Summarising both interpretations, Gurnah argues that "remaining silent is a way of preserving dignity and at the same time not putting yourself into harm's way. Silence is ambivalent. It is also powerful and can be far more eloquent" (Jones 2005: 39).

Eventually, deciding to open up and relieve himself of the burden of his past, Omar designates Latif as his interlocutor in a process which is beneficial for both: "Storytelling is a cathartic experience: Latif comes to grips with his bitterness and Saleh overcomes his reclusive and threatening silence" (Steiner 2009: 116). Nevertheless, starting the conversation proves to be difficult and fraught with misunderstandings, since Latif deems Omar responsible for the loss of his home and still holds a grudge about it. In order to ease the tension, another kind of storytelling promptly comes to the rescue to establish a connection between them, namely a reference to Bartleby, the protagonist of Melville's short story, which makes Latif's eyes sparkle: "'Bartleby the Scrivener,' he said, grinning all over his face, the skin round his eyes creased in lines of surprised pleasure, suddenly happy" (2001: 156). In this case, storytelling lends itself to overcoming misunderstandings and fostering kinship, in that the mutually-shared literary reference

locates both in the same horizon of knowledge. Far from binding only the two characters, this intertextual reference—like the many others scattered through the plot—goes beyond the borders of the novel and has the effect of forging a connection between readers as well, as Gurnah underlined: "That recognition of intertextualities to some extent reintroduces us to each other as readers. We are reading the same thing, and this gives a sense of a shared textuality, and I think that's pleasing, just in itself" (*A Conversation with Abdulrazak Gurnah* 2013: 166).

Nevertheless, the binding action of storytelling is not limited to the final dialogue between the two main characters, but features in other meaningful passages. In his ground-breaking *Imagined Communities*, Benedict Anderson gives a definition of an imagined community, which

> is *imagined* because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion. (2006: 6)

Similarly, the novel provides thought-provoking examples of *recounted communities*, which are not tethered to a physical place, and whose members recognize themselves in a horizon based on stories and mutually-shared literary references. A meaningful example of these is represented by Elleke, Latif's German pen friend, who turns out never to have existed. He was all a concoction, the product of Jan's and his mother's invention, nothing more than a story:

> When I wrote to Elleke at their home address in Altonstadt, he was delighted, overwhelmed. His mother read the letter and was thrilled by it too. After he wrote his reply to me, he got his mother to check over the tone, because he was so afraid that he would get the voice of Elleke wrong. Then the mother too became part of the conspiracy. She read Jan's letters before he posted them, and sometimes added something, and she read my letters to Elleke. (2001: 124)

Nonetheless, Latif bonded with Elleke when he thought he was a German girl, and in a similar way he bonds equally with Jan and his mother, since the story brought them together. When Elleke makes an allusion to *Romeo and Juliet*, Latif chuckles with the aim of making it clear that he has caught the reference and "to make sure that she knew" (2001: 134), thereby highlighting again the importance of storytelling in community-forging.

Building communities becomes particularly pressing in dire situations, when people need to stick together and muster their strength to live through difficulties. While recounting his story, Omar recalls how he used to spend time with other prisoners: "we told stories, some remembered, some invented, laughing as if we were once again the same age as when we first heard them" (2001: 232). This is particularly revealing first and foremost because it shows that stories of life cement a connection between people who were previously strangers to each other, who end up laughing together even in the excruciating experience of imprisonment. Secondly, it puts the emphasis on the fact that some of those stories used to be recounted in childhood or youth, thereby implying that they are shared and ingrained in their culture, which increases the sense of belonging and community. During his imprisonment on the island, Omar even witnesses storytelling as a strategy of survival. Before, the British had built a sanatorium on the island which was tended and kept in order by an old caretaker, who had been living there ever since.

Although the sanatorium has been closed and the British doctors will never set foot on the island again, he still hopes that one day they will return. When Omar engages into conversation with him, the man tells him stories of the djinn he claims to have seen dozing on the shore. It suddenly dawns on Omar that

> for the old man the island was crowded with enchanted life, with British naval officers and British doctors and convalescing patients, and serpents and imprisoned women singing in the night air, and dark djinns that raced across the sea to rest from their immortal questing for mischief. (2001: 230)

By the same token, stories are not always a force for the good, since they are used by the devious Hussein to con unwary people and take advantage of them. In fact, both Shaaban Mahmud and Omar are fascinated and charmed by his stories, which they buy entirely. Eventually, it can be guessed that Hussein's stories managed to seduce Hassan, so much so that they become the boy's own and only stories: "All his stories now were Uncle Hussein this and Uncle Hussein that. Did you know he's done this or seen that or been there, and look what he gave me today?" (2001: 89).

However, storytelling is therapeutic not only for the old caretaker, it is a strategy of survival for Latif and Omar as well (Steiner 2009: 122). Apart from creating continuity between their past and present—thus granting them a future—the act of telling a story enables the foreign and the familiar to be bound together, which literally happens to the two characters (99). Indeed, halfway through the telling of the story, Latif discovers that he is related to Omar, albeit "only by marriage." Furthermore, storytelling cannot happen in isolation, insomuch as the presence of a listener is paramount (112). Alone in a foreign country, Omar and Latif are drawn to one another through their story, which takes more than one day to be fully unravelled, thus contributing to cementing their kinship. However, storytelling goes one step further, by involving human kindness as well. In fact, friendship is possible even far away from home, since storytelling allows the two men to overcome the binary distinction of victim and perpetrator (97). By the same token, though, young Latif himself acknowledged the need for a friend when he was in Germany: "I had already seen that everyone had a friend, and that those who did not looked languishing and afraid" (*By the Sea* 2001: 114). No longer at Zanzibar among known relatives and friends, both men find succour and solace in their cathartic storytelling, which draws them close to the point of becoming friends.

In order to imagine a future to inhabit and to come home once and for all, the two men need to overcome the past through the narration of their shared story, by filling the voids and settling misunderstandings. In this sense, storytelling becomes a translation of their experiences, which takes on the hues of self-affirmation: "the narrators are equally traumatized yet they refuse, through re-translating their experiences of past and departure, to be defined solely by others, be it as non-citizens after independence or as immigrants in the UK" (Steiner 2009: 99). As a consequence, they use storytelling not only to establish their identity and dignity—an element of no slight importance in order to feel at home—but also to pre-empt the "danger of a single story" (Adichie) which generally presents immigrants with monolithic, anonymous entities. If misused, "well-fitting" stories (*By the Sea* 2001: 18) can be tightly knitted on people, a variation on Fanonian white masks. While commenting on Young's conception of homemaking as narrative practice, Newns uses *By the Sea* to provide further clarification on the topic (2020: 125). Indeed, it can be said that through the recollection of their past Omar and

Latif are finally able to come home, which had not happened until their encounter. Although Latif has been living in England for several years, he was curdled with bitterness and "worn out and raw, livid with sores" (2001: 207), as he poignantly confesses to Omar. As far as homecoming is concerned, the ending of the novel is exemplary in portraying the two men's changed lives and their newly-found solace. Centred on the powerful image of the home, the final pages have the warm atmosphere of a cosy home and are filled with the tenderness of a hard-won friendship. Rather than marking the ending of the novel, this conclusion has the flavour of a new beginning. As if to underline the physical dimension of the home, and not only its abstract meaning, Omar literally guides readers through Latif's flat:

> I [Omar] wandered around the flat, looking into nooks and crannies, opening cupboards and doors, trying out the windows to see if they opened, locating the place where he worked and wrote, looking to see if I could recognize the place where I would sleep, and while I was about it, researching the possibility of clean sheets and warm bedding. (2001: 245)

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, homecoming and storytelling are of paramount importance in *By the Sea*. The author of the narrative provides readers with an interesting perspective of home—as a daunting physical presence exerting gravity, non-homes and negative homecomings—and with a discontinuous homecoming, which is ultimately possible through the therapeutic power of storytelling. This last feature becomes extremely important to give expression to past wounds and analyse them—as it did for Gurnah himself, who, like his characters, experienced the cathartic power of storytelling: "It became clearer to me that there was something I needed to say, that there was a task to be done, regrets and grievances to be drawn out and considered" (*Nobel Lecture* 2021: 2). By telling the story of their lives, the migrants Omar and Saleh come home through a homecoming process which is fragmented and discontinuous, involving back and forth movements between past and present. Considered physically, their condition of migrants enables them homecoming which can paradoxically take place only in England. Therefore, the reasons for Gurnah's Nobel Prize can be seen already in *By the Sea*, as he was awarded the prize in 2021 "for his uncompromising and compassionate penetration of the effects of colonialism and the fate of the refugee in the gulf between cultures and continents" (nobelprize.org).

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Costanza Mondo is an MA student of Modern Languages and Literatures at the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures and Modern Cultures of the University of Turin, Italy. Her undergraduate thesis, entitled "Uses of Satire in A Modest Proposal by Jonathan Swift and The Cockroach by Ian McEwan," is concerned with satiric devices and the ties of the genre of satire with the historical context. She is interested in Postmodernism, Postcolonial literature, and Ecocriticism.

SHIRIN AKTER POPY[1] DOI: 10.15290/CR.2021.35.4.02
Noakhali Science and Technology University, Bangladesh
https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2095-1113

A politics of *métissage*: Maxine Hong Kingston's *The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood Among Ghosts*

Abstract. In her *Autobiographical Voices: Race, Gender, Self-Portraiture* (1989), Françoise Lionnet identifies the life writing of women of color as the reflection of their heterogeneous differences and theorizes female autobiographical narratives as *métissage*. *Métissage*, nearly untranslatable, meaning "braiding," views autobiography as an engagement of the author with history, myth, and cultures, and defines it as a braid of multiple voices and disparate forms. In *The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood Among Ghosts* (1976), Maxine Hong Kingston combines numerous voices into the (auto)biographical "I" as well as various forms in the narrative to express her identity as comprising manifold, different elements. In her life writing, she neither follows the unique self-representation propagated by male writers nor validates the inner personal tradition of women. Instead, breaking the fixities of thought and expression, she juxtaposes the historical with the mythical, the biographical with the autobiographical to form a language of resistance and solidarity. The present paper argues that by articulating her identity as a braid of differences, constructing self as a braid of multiple voices, and making her narrative a braid of multiple genres and traditions Kingston enacts her life writing as a politics of *métissage*.

Keywords: differences, relational self, politics of *métissage*, Maxine Hong Kingston, blending traditions

The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood Among Ghosts (1976) is a collection of stories about growing up in an immigrant family in Stockton, California, in which Maxine Hong Kingston represents an adolescent narrator's difficult experience that is caused by the fact of being "other," and also conveys her own understanding of what "self" is. In the narrative, Kingston constantly struggles to construct subjectivities at the intersections of racial, gender, and class identities. In the process of positing herself as a Chinese American voice, she creates the "self" as a braid of multiple voices and her writing as a braid of myriad traditions. By doing so, she breaks away from the traditional concept of a "unique" and "separate" self, as well as from the Western monologic concept of autobiography as a genre. Focusing on Kingston's reclamation of oral culture, her articulation of differences, her construction of a dialogical self, her denial of

[1] Address for correspondence: Noakhali Science and Technology University, Noakhali-3814, Bangladesh. E-mail: shirin@nstu.edu.bd

hierarchical dichotomy, and her blending of traditions, the present paper argues that Kingston's *The Woman Warrior* is informed by a politics of *métissage* or braiding.

Since its publication, *The Woman Warrior* has attracted a lot of critical attention. In many instances, the scholarship focuses on Kinston's exploitation of Chinese myths. While the critics like Frank Chin, Jeffrey Chan accuse Kingston of distorting Chinese myths and stereotyping Asian American reality, David Li, for example, looks at it as a means of clashing dominant and minority cultures. Regarding Kingston's use of Chinese myths and legends, Sheryl Mylan notes that Kingston "unwittingly constructs an Orientalist framework in her book to differentiate herself from her mother and Chinese culture (Shu 2001: 200); quite to the contrary, Stella Bolaki argues that Kingston claims "a place in a maternal descent line and in Chinese folklores and legends" (Bolaki 2009: 39). Many critics highlight Kingston's boldness in creating feminist fiction. However, reading *The Woman Warrior* as an autobiography, Bonnie Melchior, and Bobby Fong tend to follow a generalized feminist perspective. In all these instances, Kingston's vision is essentialized in one way or another. The present study argues that Kingston mixes Chinese myths with American realities as an autobiographical strategy to articulate her multiple subject positions and heterogeneous strategies in the construction of a dialogical self. Applying Françoise Lionnet's theory of *métissage*, it argues that the construction of self is influenced by gender and other differences, and for such a construction, Kingston uses a dialogic language that is not discriminatory against Chinese or America. Thus, the present paper reads *The Woman Warrior* as a literary manifestation of a politics of braiding differences, voices, and forms, by means of which Kingston resists power structures and creates a bond of solidarity between oppositional hierarchies.

In *Autobiographical Voices: Race, Gender, Self-Portraiture* (1989), accentuating the influence of cultural specificities of ethnicity, class, time, and location, Françoise Lionnet, a Mauritian critic, sees autobiography as "the politics and aesthetics of *métissage*" (1), which braids "voices and textures" (95*)*. While in French, Portuguese, or Spanish the word *métis* is used "to define racial categories" (12), Lionnet is interested in its Latin and Greek homonyms. In Latin, *métis* means "mixed" that "refers to cloth made of two different fibers" (14). In Greek, "*mëtis* is the allegorical 'figure of a function or a power,' a cunning intelligence like that of Odysseus, which opposes transparency and the metaphysics of identity" (14). Lionnet uses *métissage* as "braiding" of different voices and forms as a strategy of breaking the unitary concept of identity and expression. Therefore, *métissage* not only indicates the construction of an autobiographical "I" but also refers to the representational strategy. Lionnet explains her formulation of *métissage* in the following way*:*

> [L]et me simply state that for me *métissage* is a praxis and cannot be subsumed under a fully elaborated theoretical system. *Métissage* is a form of *bricolage,* in the sense used by Claude Lévi-Strauss, but as an aesthetic concept it encompasses far more: it brings together biology and history, anthropology and philosophy, linguistics and literature. Above all, it is a reading practice that allows me to bring out the interreferential nature of particular texts, which I believe to be of fundamental importance for the understanding of many postcolonial cultures. If […] identity is a strategy, then *métissage* is the fertile ground for our heterogeneous and heteronomous identities as postcolonial subjects. (8)

For Lionnet, the long Western tradition "conceives of writing as a system that rigidifies, stultifies and kills" its own meanings by denying fluidity of unwritten means of communication and by imprisoning thought in "the cadaverous rigidity of the written sign" (3). She believes that such fixity fails to articulate the voices of marginalized people. To give voice to the people who are pushed aside because of their differences—be it of gender, racial, national, or other differences—discourse should include the "constantly changing context of oral communication" (3) since in oral tradition interlocutors enjoy the freedom to influence each other. According to such a hypothesis, *métissage* is a language of novel vision. As Lionnet asserts,

> we have to articulate new visions of ourselves, new concepts that allow [us] to think *otherwise*, to bypass the ancient symmetries and dichotomies that have governed the ground and the very condition of possibility of thought, of '*clarity,'* in all of western philosophy. *Métissage* is such a concept and a practice: it is the site of undecidability and indeterminacy. (6)

That is why *métissage* as a concept not only disregards the metaphysical notion of self but also dismisses the possibility of a single and unique way of expressing it. As a concept of solidarity, *métissage* "demystifies all essentialist glorifications of unitary origin" (9). Therefore, the interreferential nature of postmodern life writing can be read through the lens of *métissage*.

In *Life Writing and Literary Métissage as an Ethos for Our Times* (2009), Erika Hasebe-Ludt, Cynthia Chambers, et al. take *métissage* as "a counternarrative to the grand narratives of our times, a site for writing and surviving in the interval between different cultures and languages […] a way of merging and blurring genres, texts, and identities; an active literary stance, political strategy, and pedagogical praxis" (9). According to Lionnet and other theorists of the notion of life writing, *métissage* can be viewed as a research practice which braids binaries such as "colonized with colonizer, local with global, East with West, North with South, particular with universal, feminine with masculine, […] and theory with practice," language with literacy and, last but not least, familiar with strange (Hasebe-Ludt et al. 2009: 9).

In *Reading Autobiography* (2001), Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson divide autobiography criticism as the perspective appearing in three waves, where the latest phase is influenced by the avant-garde experiments, as well as postmodern and postcolonial theories. Being inspired by Derridean deconstruction, Barthesian semiotics, and Foucauldian analysis of the discursive regimes of power, the third wave of autobiography criticism challenges and dismantles "metaphysical conceptions of self-presence, authority, authenticity, and truth" (132). Moreover, it replaces individuality with relationality, and unity with fragmentation and referentiality. At such a point, the definition and generic stability of autobiography collapse into a bricolage. Under such a construction, *métissage* as a theory draws on the postmodern strategies which deconstruct the boundaries of unitary origin in the postmodern autobiographical narratives. Lionnet's concept is identified as "at once a kind of culmination of feminist positions on theorizing autobiography and a beginning gesture toward theorizing multiple, non-symmetrical differences that are inflected by both the texts under study and the critic's own cultural location" (Watson 1993: 73).

Since Lionnet identifies *métissage* as the braiding of different cultural forms that revalorize oral traditions and reevaluate Western concepts of identity, the application of

this notion as an analytical tool to read *The Woman Warrior* draws attention to the book's mixture of oral with the literary. Kingston introduces a "talk-story" to ethnic American literature. It is basically a Chinese folk-art dating back to the Song Dynasty, and E.D. Huntley defines it as "community discourse, an inherited oral narrative tradition that incorporates family tales and genealogy, history, familiar adages, folklore, myth, heroic stories, even didactic and cautionary pronouncements that have been handed down—and embellished by successive generations within an extended clan" (66). In *The Woman Warrior*, the storytelling seems to be controlled by Kingston's mother, but in her second collection of short stories, *China Men* (1980), she implies that her mother's storytelling has in fact been inspired by her paternal grandfather, Ah Goong. The narrator claims, "MaMa was the only person to listen to him, and so he followed her everywhere and talked and talked. What he liked telling was his journeys to the Gold Mountain" (127). Therefore, storytelling is neither a masculine nor a feminine practice; instead, it is a Chinese tradition in which both men and women participate on equal terms. The stories are passed from one generation to another, one gender to another, creating a long gallery of mirrors, in which one individual is reflected in another. As Kingston says, "looking through me looking through my mom looking at my grandfather" is a constant possibility (qtd in Thompson 1983: 4). In the process of telling stories, the women prefer fairy tales, and the men share their "Gold Mountain" experiences.[2] In *The Woman Warrior* Kingston relates the former. Accentuating the fact that the stories are interlocked in gendered, cultural, and ethnic/racial features, Kingston in fact tells her own story of becoming a Chinese American writer. By introducing such a narrative mode, she valorizes oral tradition and challenges the leanness of the Western form of autobiography, as well as its concept of universality.

According to Julia Watson, the concept of *métissage* assumes that "women's differences cannot be essentialized as gynocriticism, but are inflected by cultural specificities of ethnicity, class, time and location" (Watson 1993: 75). In this purview, *métissage* resonates with Neuman's concept of the "poetics of differences" (223) that locates the autobiographical subjectivity at "particular and changing intersections of race, nationality, religion, education, profession, class, language, gender, sexuality, a specific historical moment, and a host of material conditions," and "such poetics would conceive the self not as the product of its different identity from others but as constituted by multiple differences within and from itself" (223-24).

In Kingston's The *Woman Warrior*, the interplay of differences has been attempted by the use of the metaphors of silence. The text exhibits the narrator's battle of overcoming several types of silence—imposed silence of her mother regarding her aunt's story, self-imposed silence for hiding her inability to acculturate with the American language and society, and her father's silence that kept her aloof from her ancestral history. The first story from the book starts with the imposed silence that her mother enforces as a parental warning saying, "you must not tell anyone" (3). Mother imposes silence on Kingston by telling her the story of the nameless aunt who killed herself jumping into the family well in China. "No Name Woman," as Kingston calls her, gets pregnant in the absence of her husband, who has gone to the Gold Mountain with other

[2] "Gold Mountain" is a calque nickname referring to a settlement with a surge of Chinese population caused by the California Gold Rush.

male members of the family in search of fortune. Since the child is illegitimate, the villagers violently react to the conception. Breaking into the doors, ripping off her clothes and shoes, tearing rice sacks, slaughtering livestock, they raid the aunt's home on the night when she is about to give birth to the child. Saving herself from this rampage that night, she gives a "silent birth" (13) in a pigsty and drowns herself and the baby in the family well. The family denies her existence, saying that Kingston's "father has all brothers because it is as if [the aunt] had never been born" (3). Since adultery is an outrage and shame, the family reacts to it by wiping out the woman from their memory. Anh Hua observes that the story is "a testimony to the power of patriarchal erasure in history—the denial of women's sexuality and [sometimes their] existence" (79). This testimony of male power is used as a morality tale on gender roles in Chinese society. Therefore, Kingston's mother uses it as a warning against any sexual promiscuity, saying, "now that you have started to menstruate, what happened to her could happen to you. Don't humiliate us. You wouldn't like to be forgotten as if you had never been born" (5). Thus, the adolescent narrator is condemned to fall into gendered silence.

As a child of immigrant parents, the narrator's silence is linguistic, too. In the American kindergarten, the obligation to speak only English imposes such stress on the narrator that the inability to meet the requirement makes her completely silent during her school years. In other words, the silence is a camouflage to hide her failure. When she understands that she needs to talk to pass an exam, she becomes more helpless. The act of speaking, says the narrator, "makes my throat bleed and takes up that day's courage" (195). Soon she realizes that her silence is the effect of her myriad experiences of racial, national, and gendered otherness. As she asserts: "[t]he other Chinese girls did not talk either, so I knew the silence had to do with being a Chinese girl" (197).

Chinese girls' silence stemming from their linguistic differences is not different from Kingston's father's silence in *China Men*. The narrator notes that for BaBa (which is her father's proper name), language incompetence is a barrier to his success. He is hoaxed twice by gypsies, and then they accuse him of tearing new clothes. Before BaBa can defend himself that the clothes were already rags, the gypsies call a policeman and concoct "a big story in English" (13) against him. The narrator says, "you couldn't speak English well enough to counteract it. Fell for it twice. You fell for it twice" (13). The racial and linguistic differences merge with one another since BaBa not only falls prey to the gypsies' trick because of his language incompetence, but he has to hide his resistance out of the fear of deportation.

Kingston demonstrates that racial otherness, gender difference, and linguistic inability intersect with one another. The victimization of Moon Orchid— Kingston's maternal aunt— as a gendered, racial, and linguistic "other" by her husband, is a good case in point. Through Moon Orchid's story, Kingston brings to light how, being branded by multiple forms of otherness, the aunt marks out the "play of differences" to which Kingston is ultimately exposed. Moon has been alone in China for thirty years since her husband left her searching for a fortune in America. Although he sends money to support Moon and their daughter, he betrays Moon with a Chinese American wife. When confronting her husband, Moon cannot claim anything, "all she did was open and shut her mouth without any words coming out" (180). The "rude American Eyes" (181) make the woman feel "stiff and frozen" (179). It is not only the husband who denies her rightful claims, but also the Americanized husband, a successful brain surgeon, a self-made

Franklinian-American man, who disregards her as a Chinese "other." Here the husband's patriarchal authority is doubly empowered with his internalized American racism, which victimizes Moon for her gender and racial identity.

Becoming an American, the man identifies himself with supremacy and power, as a result of which the Chinese wife is treated as an exotic other, as "people in a book [he] had read a long time ago" (182). Thus, underscoring the points of intersectional differences, Kingston exemplifies *métissage* as a mutable term for "the racial and linguistic complexity of diasporic […] peoples one that resonates with the linguistic, cultural, and ethnic superimposition of multiple identities" (Zuss 1999: 87). Depicting the aunts' silence as well as her silence of early school years, Kingston, in *The Woman Warrior,* implies that women's differences, which are braided with the ethnic, racial, and linguistic specificities cannot be essentialized in a monolithic notion of gynocriticism.

Like identity, the female model of self is a *métissage* or braiding of multiple voices. It is in this context that Lionnet critiques St. Augustine's classic concept of subjectivity or self-consciousness exposed in his *Confessions.* She states that "Augustine's search for plenitude and coherence leads him to emphasize wholeness and completeness, whereas for the women writers, it will become clear that the human individual is a fundamentally relational subject whose 'autonomy' can only be a myth" (27). "[F]rom autobiographical writings" of women we can learn "a new way of listening for the relational voice of the self" (248). As she further asserts that

> [i]f the self must become other, must lose itself in the other's essence, all possibilities of transformation into a third term—as happens in the *métissage* … — are blocked. What we have instead is assimilation, incorporation, and identification with a mirror image. (67)

Reflecting on the validity of Lionnet's claim, we need to remark that in *The Woman Warrior* Kingston challenges the egoist American "I" that, basically, tells men's individual stories. Instead of defining herself "through individuation and separation from others" (Schweickart 1986: 54), Kingston has created a flexible ego boundary that defines herself in affiliation with other women. In "White Tigers," for example, she tells the story of Fa Mu Lan—a mythical and legendary woman in Chinese culture—whose back is carved with the words of vengeance. Fa Mu Lan "took her father's place in battle" (24). In men's attire and haircut, she fights against the oppressive baron and returns victorious. The narrator identifies herself with Fa Mu Lan—the woman warrior—as she says "the swordswoman and I are not so dissimilar […]. What we have in common are the words at our backs" (64). While Fa Mu Lan carried words in her body, the narrator carries them in her first-person narrative.

In "Shaman," Kingston recalls her mother, Brave Orchid, a storyteller. She learns how, working as a doctor and exorcist, Brave Orchid served her people in China. By driving "the sitting ghost" out with the oil and alcohol, Brave Orchid relieved not only her roommates but also the entire medical school from the grip of ghost. Freeing babies and grown-ups from the torments of the apparition, Brave Orchid saves her people the way Fa Mu Lan has saved her village from the apparition of barons. Thus, she becomes a real-life warrior woman. The immigration to America robs off Brave Orchid's potential and confines her to the enclaves of Chinatown. She is reduced to menial labor like her male counterparts. To earn extra income, she does her best to look young by dyeing her hair so that the "farmers would hire her" (123) and she can send money to her people

back in China. In fact, Kingston's growing up is intensely affected by her mother's stories of both victimized and victorious women. Mother creates "alternative text[s] of female vulnerability and victimization" (Smith 1987: 162). In many tales, she depicts victimized Chinese women in such a way that they make Kingston feel "lonely and afraid" of her own limitations. The young narrator denies the stories, claiming that they show no logic and "scramble [her] up" (240).

However, the "autobiographical" Kingston reconciles with the mother by internalizing the mother's power of telling stories. For the narrator, having a voice is synonymous with finding the ability to produce narratives. After many years of her early silence, when at last she gains the ability to resist verbally, she says, "I saw that I too had been in the presence of great power, my mother talking-story" (24). In her adult years, she finds herself diffused with her mother as she says, "I am really a Dragon, as she is a Dragon […] working always and […] dreaming the dreams about shrinking babies and the sky covered with airplanes and a Chinatown bigger than the ones here" (129-130). In Chinese culture, a dragon is a symbol of power and authority. By telling the stories of her people in her writing, Kingston exercises power by serving her people the way Brave Orchid and Fa Mu Lan did.

The story entitled "Eighteen Stanzas for a Barbarian Reed Pipe" introduces Ts'ai Yen, a woman whose words reflect the racial and gendered milieu of her childhood and teenage years. Kingston adds the multivocality of "self," reflecting both the mother and Kingston herself. Ts'ai is captured by the chieftain of the barbarians when she is twenty years old. Making her sit behind, the barbarian chieftain "rode like the haunted from one oasis to the next" (247). Ts'ai Yen "fought desultorily" (247). Like other captive soldiers she, "cut down anyone in her path during the madness of combat" (247). During her twelve-year stay with the barbarians, "she had two children. Her children did not speak Chinese. She spoke it to them when their father was out of the tent, but they imitated her with senseless singsong words and laughed" (247). Then, out of Ts'ai Yen's tent

> the barbarians heard a woman's voice singing […] about China and her family there. Her words seemed to be Chinese, but the barbarians understood their sadness and anger. Sometimes they thought they could catch barbarian phrases about forever wandering. Her children did not laugh, but eventually sang along. (248)

Ts'ai Yen is ingeniously projected in the last tale to serve Kingston's autobiographical purpose. After so many other stories and other characters, Kingston's endeavor to reconstruct her subjectivity achieves a meaningful mastery in the character of Ts'ai Yen—one, who speaks transculturally. When the poet is brought back to her people, she "brought her songs back from the savage lands, and one of the three that has been passed down to us is 'Eighteen Stanzas for a Barbarian Reed Pipe,' a song that the Chinese sing to their own instruments. It translated well" (248-49). While the poet is mythically and historically celebrated as a sign of Chinese ethnocentric and patriarchal supremacy, Kingston "dramatizes interethnic harmony through the integration of disparate art forms" (Cheung 1988: 172). Instead of her return, her return with the words—that can join "disparate art forms"—is significant to Kingston.

Unlike Ts'ai Yen, Kingston does not go back to China, but like Ts'ai Yen, Kingston creates a song that connects China with America. She believes that the material of her ancestral culture has been translated well into her present language. Instead of struggling against each culture's degenerative forces, Kingston celebrates the "poet who

sings to foreign music" (Cheung 1988: 172). Throughout the book, Kingston pieces "together cultural myths and personal experiences to develop her sense of self" (Patel 2019:1). It is an intersubjective self, which is dialogically related to many other women of her family, history, and myth. This dialogic engagement with her ancestry enables the author to materialize a complex, multi-layered "dynamic self-fashioning" (Lionnet 1989: 68) which is "not only constructed by differences but also capable of choosing, inscribing and making a difference" (Neuman 1992: 225).

The characters in all five narratives seek expression through words—Fa Mu Lan's words of revenge, Ts'ai Yen's words of anger and sadness, the mother's words of her talk stories, and the aunt's muffled words of denial, submerged in silence. Kingston shows that instead of merging with the "other," the self accommodates, assimilates, and identifies numerous other voices in itself. Therefore, the self-consciousness she opts for is not isolated, fixed, and close-ended. Rather her self-consciousness is relational, fluid, and open-ended. Not only does it not break the concept of an isolated individual but also "asserts its rhythms everywhere in the community" (Friedman 1998: 79). Instead of asserting an autonomous individual, Kingston constructs a group identity, the idea which resonates with Hubert J. M. Hermans' concept of the dialogical self since it is "populated by the voices of other people, decentralized with highly open boundaries, and historically and culturally contextualized" (90). By constructing such a self, Kingston posits that "subjectivity (and writing) is always already filled with the voices of others" (Lionnet 1989: 68).

By internalizing suppressed voices, Kingston indirectly formulates bitter comments on sexism, communism, capitalism, and racism, implying that "[it is] the reporting [that] is the vengeance—not the beheading, not the gutting, but the words" (64). She retaliates against the misogynistic clichés such as "Girls are maggots in the rice. It is more profitable to raise geese than daughters" (52), which in the 1970s were still prevalent in immigrant communities. Her report attacks also the pervasive racism that would notoriously dehumanize the Chinese people in America. She deplores America that makes her mother dye her hair to look young so that she can be hired in the field to pick up tomatoes. She vents her anger about the hardships of her family, the loss of their laundry business in the process of "urban renewal" (58) She denounces her disappointment with the American lifestyle, its racism, and the sexism she is subjected to. Although she knows that the so-called normal "Chinese women's voices are strong and bossy" (204), the narrator she creates needs to resort to whispering if she wants to live up to American cultural standards. But even the muffled voice cannot save her a job. By reporting on all sorts of anomalies of the power structure, *The Woman Warrior* gives voice to the self that simultaneously constructs and reconstructs itself from multiple marginalities and differences.

Returning again to the key term of reference in the present analysis, we need to note that *métissage* is the language of solidarity which can be achieved through non-hierarchical modes of expression, and

> it is only by imagining nonhierarchical modes of relation among cultures that we can address the crucial issues of indeterminacy and solidarity. *Métissage* is such a concept and a practice: it is the site of undecidability and indeterminacy, where solidarity becomes the fundamental principle of political action against hegemonic languages. (Lionnet 1989: 5)

Kingston pitches on such a notion of alliance in her life writing. Instead of creating new modes of hierarchy, she gives equal importance to different senses of belonging and different cultures. Moreover, she challenges the monocultural discourse of civility and savagery by comparing the modes of oppression her family faced both in communist China and racist America. Against the violence of communist China, the narrator puts the slum violence of Stockton, California, as she says, "The corpses I've seen had been rolled and dumped, sad little dirty bodies covered with a police khaki blanket" (62).

The narrator's adolescent adherence to American culture apparently exhibits her preference for the American promises of empowerment and freedom. However, the authorial Kingston asserts that while the Chinese female "I" turns the women crooked and subservient, the English "I," considering women as "the second sex," as Simone de Beauvoir famously puts it, keeps no room for her. In this connection, L.D. Li claims that the English "I" is divinely empowered, and "has an alien effect on the female bearers of the language" (504). Hence, the narrator of the text is silenced both by the Chinese and English tongue as a woman—one enslaving her, another keeping her just unacknowledged, respectively. Portraying the mother and the mythical foremothers as symbols of powerful women, Kingston demonstrates that if empowerment of women is possible in America, the possibility is not completely erased in China. Thus, Kingston denies the monocultural hierarchical dichotomy. Leaving home, the autobiographical narrator wants to embrace American individualism, dreaming the dreams of a bigger Chinatown. Thus, she neither places America over China nor creates a new hierarchy of China over America; rather, she forms a bond of solidarity between her different senses of belonging.

Finally, the strategy of braiding can be observed in the textuality of *The Woman Warrior*. Lionnet identifies female textuality as *métissage* "that is the weaving of different strands of raw material and threads of various colors into one piece of fabric" (213). Weaving different genres into a piece of life writing Kingston enacts *métissage* of such kind: the story of the nameless aunt reads like a cautionary message, and the account of Fa Mu Lan resembles an adventurous revenge story; the narrative of her mother brings to mind a ghost tale, and the last section of the book combines the autobiographical with the historical and mythical. Kingston's story of Fa Mu Lan matches neither the popular culture nor her mother's version. Sau-ling Wong pinpoints three major traditions on the basis of which Kingston conflates the story. Fa Mu Lan's yarn mixes some elements of Chinese martial-arts novels and their contemporary equivalents in the Kung Fu cinema with the stories of peasant uprisings in classical novels and the well-known legend of general Yüeh Fei, a general in Song Dynasty whose back has been carved with the words of patriotism and loyalty by his parents. In "Maxine Hong Kingston's Genre-Defying Life and Work," Hua Hsu remarks that "bookstores labeled it [*The Woman Warrior*] fiction, nonfiction, sociology, anthropology, biography, women's literature, Chinese literature, and Asian literature" (1). Indeed, it is a collage of genres, it defies rigid classifications, and it is "at once a novel, an autobiography, a series of essays and poems" (Blinde 1979: 52). Bobby Fong considers such a blend of folk legends, folk tales, essays, poems "wholly appropriate to the genre of autobiography" (123). Thus, the intertextuality and genre blend in the narrative, prefiguring bricolage, a female text, and a *métissage* of forms (Lionnet 1989: 214).

To sum up, the complex experiential history of race, gender, generation, and ethnicity anchors the autobiographical subject in multiple locations, from which Kingston "meanders along the streams of Chinese mythology and American culture" (Ludwig & Alexoae-Zagni 2014: 35) to formulate her individual and collective vision. From the ever-changing narrative of Chinese "talk-story," Kingston creates autobiographical narrative, where the "self" constructs and reconstructs itself, simultaneously continuing with and discontinuing from the Chinese and American tradition. Believing, as Lionnet does, that the Western form of writing imprisons meanings in a set of signs which fail to articulate the voices of minorities, Kingston has made a conscious mutation of Chinese oral tradition with American writing form to liberate writing from a static condition. Kingston's life writing has woven different strands into a new fabric—a postmodern autobiographical narrative—where revitalizing Chinese oral culture, rewriting history are instrumental in giving voice to the "silence" originating from differences. In other words, by embracing a politics of *métissage,* the narrative of *The Woman Warrior* constructs a dialogical self, privileges a non-hierarchical mode of expression, and fuses various genres together.

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Dr. **Shirin Akter Popy** is an Associate Professor in the Department of English, Noakhali Science and Technology University, Bangladesh. Her research articles have appeared in reputed peer reviewed journals like *Crossings, Harvest, Commonwealth Review, Dialogue* and *Overtones.* Her area of interest is autobiography studies. She is currently involved in a research project on selected South Asian Women's autobiography.

DOMINIKA ROMANIUK-CHOLEWSKA[1]
University of Białystok, Poland
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9920-1050

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An introduction to a machine translation post-editing (MTPE) course

Abstract. This article introduces a machine translation post-editing (MTPE) course intended for universities educating translation trainees. The aim of the course is to accelerate the adaptation of translation education to the current requirements of the European Master's in Translation (EMT) Competence Framework 2017 and the needs of translation students. The course is firmly grounded in existing research on MTPE and studies of translation didactics. The author assumes that MTPE as a process should include most of the contemporary translation tools such as CAT computer-assisted tools, TM terminology management, ML machine learning, MT machine translation and its variations, AI artificial intelligence, TQM translation quality management. The course is divided into 15 meetings of 1.5 hours each, with the syllabus structured in such a way that the trainees systematically learn and improve the MTPE process and develop an understanding of MT tools. Therefore, it can be treated as a means to achieve the goal set by EMT.

Keywords: MTPE course, translation didactics, EMT competence framework, machine translation post-editing, translation technology.

1. Introduction

This article introduces a proposal for a course in the field of translation technology, namely post-editing of machine translation (MTPE). The MTPE course is intended to be implemented in the second year of a Master's degree in translation studies or as part of a postgraduate programme. It was designed to meet the formal requirements of translation programmes offered in Polish institutions, but, possibly with some modifications, it can also be delivered to translation trainees in other countries. Its implementation is likely to accelerate the alignment of the education of future translators with the European Master's in Translation (EMT) Competence Framework 2017, market demands and student needs. One of the five skills identified by the EMT is technological literacy. The author assumes that MTPE as a process should encompass most of the currently used technological translation tools, such as CAT computer-assisted tools, TM terminology management, ML machine learning, MT machine translation and its variations, AI artificial intelligence, TQM translation quality management. The MTPE course proposal offered in the present paper builds on earlier research and developments in the field of machine

[1] Address for correspondence: University of Białystok, Faculty of Philology, PL. NZS 1, 15-420 Białystok, Poland. E-mail: d.romaniuk-cholewska@uwb.edu.pl

translation. In view of the above, it may contribute to adapting translation studies in Poland to the pace of technological development and related changes in the image of the contemporary translator. This work may also serve as an inspiration for further research on MTPE issues in the global scope.

The present paper is organized into five sections. Section 2 provides a rationale for including an MTPE course in the translation curriculum in higher education. It draws attention to the problem of insufficient consideration of the ongoing changes in the translation discipline and the way modern translators work. Section 3 presents a review of the literature on the subject. It discusses the most important findings of researchers investigating MTPE and presents the development of the field in the last two decades. Section 4 provides a description of the MTPE course proposed in this paper. It presents its objectives, methods, intended learning outcomes, the participant profile, and contains a detailed description of the course structure. Section 5 offers some conclusions, and indicates the challenges that the implementation of the course may involve.

2. Rationale

The pace of development in many areas of life is often very intense and therefore demanding. The transformation also affects scholarly disciplines such as translation studies, where technological solutions are increasingly influencing the work of translators. Despite some resistance on their part, innovations often prove to be helpful. Many micro-and macro-level studies described in *Post-editing of Machine Translation: Processes and Applications* by O'Brien et al. (2014) indicate that the appropriate application of innovative solutions, such as machine translation, facilitates, accelerates and improves the translation process. For this to happen, however, a key factor is required: proper training, including that of machine translation post-editing (MTPE), which this paper focuses on. Although machine translation (MT) is not a new phenomenon, interest in this area has increased significantly only over the last decade (Folaron 2019: 430 f.). However, the amount of attention given to it in the process of educating future translators is still limited.

The problem of inadequate attention to ongoing changes in the translation discipline was raised in European Master's in Translation (EMT) Competence Framework published in 2017. The European Master's in Translation network underscores the need to fill the educational gap in the field of technology in translation studies. Of the five competencies described, 'technology' ranks third. Others are 'language and culture', 'translation', 'personal and interpersonal' and 'service provision'. Interestingly, apart from 'technology' competence which encompasses IT, MT and CAT tools, the skills of MT pre-editing and MT post-editing are also outlined in the description of 'translation' competence. The authors argue that these are "essential for access to the translation industry and to the wider labour market" (2017:4). The need for consistency and precise guidelines in the education of future translators is further confirmed by Nikishina (2018) and Tomaszkiewicz (2019). In a similar vein, Esfandiari et al. (2019) argue that translator training programmes should be prepared to ensure that there is no discrepancy between the competencies of graduates and the actual demand on the market. Such observations provide a justification for developing new courses related to machine translation, such as the MTPE course proposed in this paper.

Preliminary research shows that out of thirteen institutions providing BA and MA English language and translation studies in Poland, eight include computer-assisted tools

(CAT) in their curricula, of which only four introduce machine translation (MT) and two MTPE. While CAT is present in five postgraduate programmes, MT and MTPE have been entirely omitted. Interestingly, in almost every case, MT is a part of the computer-assisted tools laboratory that, in general, encompasses 30h. However, it should be mentioned that the Jagiellonian University in Krakow offers CAT Tools & Post-Editing, and the University of Warsaw provides Machine translation and post-editing (Cholewska 2021:19f.). Given that, according to Perspektywy University Ranking 2021 (online 2021), these are the two best universities in Poland, the result is auspicious. It points out that the trend for teaching post-editing is already present but still leaves considerable scope for improvement. Most universities offering translation studies in Poland have not yet sufficiently considered the impact of technology on the work of the translator in their education offer. One of the reasons for this situation might be the lack of an appropriate course in machine translation post-editing. The proposal offered in this paper is intended as a step towards enhancing the process of introducing MTPE in higher education, both in Poland and in other countries.

3. Literature review

A promoter in the development of MTPE research is undoubtedly Sharon O'Brien, Professor of Translation Studies at the School of Applied Language and Intercultural Studies at Dublin City University, who in 2002 published "Teaching Post-editing: A Proposal for Course Content". Next, Belam (2003) introduced a workshop on PE guidelines in a machine-assisted translation course. Further, Kliffer (2008) presented PE teaching as part of the MT programme for translation trainees. Later, Depraetere (2010) investigated a corpus of texts post-edited by ten translation students and concluded a distinct demand to expand the students' understanding of specific MT errors. Pym's (2013) research is particularly noteworthy, as he presented a list of ten skills organised into three categories: "learning to learn, learning to trust and mistrust data, and learning to revise with enhanced attention to detail" as guidelines for technology-adapted translation education. Flanagan and Christensen (2014) highlighted competency gaps that may cause difficulties in interpreting PE guidelines and consequently proposed training activities to address these gaps. Another step towards adapting translation technologies into translation studies was Doherty and Kenny's (2014) study on developing and evaluating an SMT curriculum for postgraduate students in translation studies at Dublin City University. However, one of the more recent studies and in line with the topic of this article is that of Guerberof Arenas & Moorkens (2019), who presented a description of a machine translation and post-editing course including an MT project management module.

Among Polish scholars, it is worth referring to Świątek (2015), who discussed the potential and limitations of statistical machine translation. She concluded that the computer is not an adversary but a tool in the hands of the translator and that translation automation will develop positively. Similar conclusions may be drawn from Witczak's (2016) study, which stated that translation automation could not exist without an essential participant in the process – the translator. Witczak also conducted a study on translation students' perspectives towards the introduction of a post-editing component to a computer-assisted translation course. The results show that while MT in the case of technical texts brought "positive surprise", in the case of journalistic texts, it was described as "some disappointment". However, Witczak stressed the need to give

translation education a direction in line with technological developments. Similarly, research by two other scholars, Nikishina (2018) and Tomaszkiewicz (2019), highlighted the lack of consistency and precise guidelines in the training of future translators. Tomaszkiewicz (2019) further emphasised the need for EMT-compliant education. Brożyna-Reczko (2020) also investigated digital tools in translation didactics, stating that technological tools for proofreading, glossaries and corpora, which translation students can use to improve the translation process, facilitate the translator's work and therefore deserve a place in education. Overall, it is clear that the translation community is unanimous in calling for research into standardising translation curricula in line with available technologies, which is also the aim of this study.

4. The MTPE course proposal

4.1. Objectives

The purpose of the course is to accelerate the alignment of translation education with both the current requirements of the European Master's in Translation Competence Framework 2017 and the needs articulated by translation trainees themselves[2]. Since, as mentioned above, MTPE as a process includes most of the modern translation tools, this course, in addition to introducing theoretical knowledge, provides guidance on using these instruments. It further aspires to equip translation students with skills that meet the needs of the market and the currently changing image of the translator. Finally, the programme also aims to encourage students to reflect on the future of post-editing machine translation and the role of the translator in this process.

4.2. Teaching approach and directions

As noted by Esfandiari (2019), there is still disagreement over teaching models in the field of translation didactics. The beginning of the 21st century marked a shift away from the product- or teacher-centred teaching model (Esfandiari 2019:4). Hence, the course proposed in this study employs a student-centred and process-oriented approach to achieve the intended learning objectives. According to Gonzales-Davies (2004: 16), the student-centred approach assumes an active role of the student in the process of acquiring knowledge and skills, while the teacher acts as a guide in this trajectory. Additionally, the process-oriented approach to teaching translation includes a problem-solving methodology that requires cooperation between teachers and learners as well as learning procedures that are suitable to the actual social situation in the classroom where learning takes place (Fox 2000: 115). As Gonzales-Davies (2004: 14) underscored, these classroom dynamics corresponds to a 'transformational' approach, where "a student and learning-centred context that focuses on collaborative study and exploration of the translation process with the teacher acting as guide and where procedures that bridge class work and extramural practice have a place". To embrace the abovementioned directive, both inductive and deductive directions are used. Prince and Fedler (2006: 126) support this view, suggesting that "learning invariably involves movement in both

[2] The results of the study "Machine Translation Post-Editing (MTPE) from the Perspective of Translation Trainees: Implications for Translation Pedagogy" that indicates translation trainees' positive attitude towards MTPE as a part of the educational programme were presented at MT Summit 2021 (the paper may be accessed at: https://aclanthology.org/2021.mtsummit-up.15/).

directions, with the student using new observations to infer rules and theories (induction) and then testing the theories by using them to deduce consequences and applications that can be verified experimentally (deduction)."

4.3. Methods

The course is based on an analysis of existing research devoted to MTPE and studies on translation didactics. The methods selected for the course correspond to three areas of student learning outcomes: acquiring theoretical knowledge, developing skills and reflecting autonomously on the studying subject. Table 1 presents the above methods in a detailed way.

Table 1. Methods of the MTPE course

ACQUIRING THEORETICAL KNOWLEDGE	brainstorm, discussion, individual work, teamwork, video watching, reading, writing definitions, phrase-picture association, matching
DEVELOPING SKILLS	brainstorm, individual work, teamwork, interactive game, translation, word-chain, worksheet, quiz, glossary implementing, project, back-translation, working with guidelines, post-editing of website MT content,
REFLECTING ON THE SUBJECT OF STUDY	discussion, essay

Methods used to obtain students' feedback on the course itself are discussions and essays written after it is completed.

4.4. Learning outcomes

The course is designed to achieve a specific set of student learning outcomes. After completing it, students should possess rudimentary knowledge on the following topics:

- various MT tools;
- three types of machine translation methods;
- the dynamics of change and trends in the MT sphere;
- the errors that may occur in MT;
- the principles implied in pre-editing: Controlled Language (CL) rules for MT;
- CAT tools (software, online versions);
- the working environment of CAT tools;
- CAT functions;
- translation memories (TM);
- terminology management via CAT tool;
- the possibilities of implementing glossaries into CAT tools;
- the concept of quality assurance (QA);
- the possibilities of the QA tool in view of CAT;

- the post-editing of MT;
- guidance and evaluation tools of MTPE.

Further, students should demonstrate the abilities to:

- assess the quality of the various MT tool outputs and estimate the amount of post-editor work;
- distinguish between different MT methods;
- assess which tool is most valuable and future-proof for translator's profession;
- identify errors in MT outputs and distinguish between different types of errors;
- apply CL rules to texts from different disciplines;
- adapt appropriate vocabulary;
- prepare a glossary in order to facilitate the MT process;
- translate in a high-speed manner;
- evaluate MT outputs and correct them;
- perform MTPE in the website environment.

Additionally, the course will enable students to strengthen their abilities to work in a team, test their knowledge acquired during the course; evaluate the possibilities of Computer-Assisted Literary Translation (CALT), and whether MT empowers LT; make a comparative analysis of the workload of a traditional form of translation with technology-assisted translation; analyse the quality of the output of HT and MT. CAT tools, as mentioned above, are already present in eight of the thirteen higher education institutions offering translation programmes in Poland. Nevertheless, since the aim of this paper is to contribute to the standardising MTPE training, this part was also included. This study adopts the definition of MTPE which considers this translation method as a process consisting of pre-editing, machine translation and post-editing, and therefore covers the tools that facilitate the translator's work in this field. Finally, each section can be adapted to individual needs for both research and teaching.

4.5. Participant profile

The course is designed to teach translation students who are preferably in their second year of MA studies or a postgraduate programme. Therefore, it is essential that participants have acquired a thorough knowledge of translation theory and a high level of linguistic skills prior to undertaking the course. MTPE programme participants develop their skills in text/translation editing to adapt to the culture-specific features of the target language, to correct linguistic and logical errors, choose the translation method most suitable for the project, etc. For this reason, they should demonstrate considerable knowledge of each of these aspects. The level of expertise in the above factors may impact the outcomes of the course. It is thus advisable to conduct the course in the final year of translation studies to achieve better results.

4.6. Course modality

The format and structure of the course allow for both traditional classroom settings as well as an online class. A dual-mode may be fundamental in light of the current

coronavirus pandemic and how it has impacted education. If the course is held in the classroom, certain conditions must be met. Namely, classes should be conducted in a classroom equipped with computer stations for each participant, with access to the Internet and beamer.

4.7. The structure of the course

The course covers 15 meetings of 1.5 hours each, which is the standard length of courses offered by Polish universities. One lesson scenario corresponds to one session. The tasks are arranged in such a way that the trainees systematically learn and improve the MTPE process. Upon completing the course, the participants should be equipped with basic knowledge of the discussed field and skills that will enable them to work independently in processing machine translations within various fields.

The MTPE programme is structured to include an introduction, the three stages of the MTPE process, time for exercises to consolidate and test the knowledge and skills acquired, as well as a discussion on the future of post-editing and students' evaluation of the course. The first part, lessons 1 and 2, introduces MTPE and different MT methods. The second stage, consisting of lessons 3, 4 and 5, focuses on the first phase of the MTPE process, pre-editing. Students are introduced to different types of errors that occur in MT outputs and rules of Controlled Language for MT. They also learn the basics of developing glossaries. In the next part of the course, students are guided through a computer-assisted tool, CAT, with a machine translation function. Due to the complexity and variety of possibilities offered by CAT software, this part of the course consists of 5 meetings (lessons number 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10), during which students acquire knowledge and skills concerning translation memory, terminology management, introducing glossaries into CAT software and quality assurance. Lesson 11 covers the post-editing component, where students are introduced to post-editing guidelines and assessment tools. In the next part, students test and train their newly acquired skills by creating a project (lesson 12) in a CAT programme, taking part in a human translation versus machine translation of a literary text competition (lesson 13), and translating a website in WordPress interface (lesson 14). The last class (lesson 15) is devoted to discussing the future of post-editing and the implications for its development. It also includes participants' essays evaluating the course, which allows assessment of the effectiveness of the course from the participants' perspective and helps to improve it. The subjects of the lessons are as follows:

1. Introduction to MTPE process: MT tools
2. Three types of MT tools. Rules-based machine translation, Statistical machine translation, Neural machine translation.
3. MT - Finding and naming errors.
4. Controlled Language (CL) rules for MT: create your own list of pre-editing rules.
5. Pre-editing: creating a glossary
6. Introduction to CAT: possibilities, different tools
7. CAT part one: Creating CAT project

8. CAT part two: Creating and implementing glossary
9. CAT part three: working on a project with implemented glossaries
10. CAT part four: downloading texts and checking
11. CAT part five: Translation memories
12. Creating a new project with glossary and TM
13. Competition: Human VS MT
14. Website MT translation
15. MT spoken translation – implications for future development.

4.8. Procedure

Accordingly to the approach stated above, the procedure of lessons consists of the following components:

- Pre-activities – acting as an introduction to the topic of the lesson or a warm-up activity;
- Whilst-activities – consisting of exercises and activities devoted to the topic of a lesson;
- Post-activities – acting as a summary and consolidation of the acquired skills and knowledge from the lesson.

Table 2 provides a comprehensive overview of the components, including activity descriptions and materials.

Table 2. Procedure of lessons: a detailed overview

LESSONS	MATERIALS	PRE-ACTIVITIES	WHILST-ACTIVITIES	POST-ACTIVITIES
Lesson 1	**File**: *Lesson 1 text*, a blackboard/ whiteboard/ beamer.	**Brainstorm** (5 min): The participants are asked to provide their associations with MT. The teacher writes them all on the blackboard. Then the students elicit all MT tools from the list. **Discussion** (15 min). The participants are asked to answer the following questions, and the teacher completes missing information: • What is machine translation? • Have you ever used a machine translation tool? • Which tool do you use most often and why? • Have you ever post-edited MT output before? • In your opinion, does post-editing of MT output require different skills than traditional translation? Do you	**Task 1** (20 min): The participants are given Lesson 1 text and are asked to use four MT tools (e.g. Google Translate, DeepL, Systran, Yandex). Then, they assess translations in groups and choose the best one/s in their opinion. The participants are asked to justify their choice/s. **Task 2** (20 min): In groups, the trainees make a list of features that the translations they have chosen fulfil and a list of mistakes and corrections that should be made in order to improve the quality of translation.	**Quick individual-work project** (20 min project and 10 min evaluation): The participants work individually for 20 min. They are asked to correct the discussed text by implementing the list of corrections they outlined in the previous task to the MT output of their choice. After completing the task, the participants read their post-edited translations and listen to the comments of the rest of a group. Students are also asked if their views on MTPE have changed after the completion of the tasks.

		consider post-editing a meaningful way of producing translation?		
Lesson 2	**Files**: *Lesson 2 pictures*, *Lesson 2 three texts, Lesson 2 definitions*.	**Phrase-picture association** (10 min). The teacher presents trainees with three pictures. The first depicts a dictionary of grammar and language rules, the second presents statistical diagrams and the third – neurones. The teacher asks the participants to guess the connection between these pictures and MT. All guesses are written on the blackboard, and then the teacher tells the participants the subject of the class.	**Task 1** (30 min): Definitions. The participants work in three groups. Each group receive one definition of the MT method and then formulate two incorrect definitions to make it difficult for the other group/s to guess the correct one. Then each group read all three definitions. The other groups have to choose the correct one. After all groups have read their definitions, they exchange the correct ones once again. **Task 2** (20 min): Discussion. The participants work in the same groups and choose one of the three MT methods and justify their choice. The teacher puts the names of the three methods on the board and notes student's arguments pro and against them.	**Task 3:** (30 min). Three texts evaluation. The participants receive a worksheet presenting one text translated by three different sources. Based on the worksheet, they guess which MT methods could have been implemented in which text and assess which text they think reads best and why. Then they share their views with the group.
Lesson 3	*Spell Checker Poem* (1992) by Jerrold H. Zar, files: *Lesson 3 errors for students, Lesson 3 errors for teachers, Lesson 3 three*	**Poem** (10 min). As a warm-up activity, the teacher provides trainees with the Spell Checker Poem (1992) by Jerrold H. Zar. The trainees are to find spelling errors in the poem. Then a volunteer presents errors and reads the poem aloud. The teacher provides the participants with	**Task 1** (30 min): The participants are given a set of sentences, each containing one type of error (based on Michael D. Kliffer Post-Editing Machine Translation as an FSL Exercise) and are asked to find and name these errors. **Task 2** (30 min): In pairs, the trainees compare their findings. Then they receive a set of cards representing the types of errors according to Kliffer and	**Task 3**: (20 min): The participants work individually. They receive three short extracts from different fields (e.g. medical, technical, journalistic) and try to find and identify the types of errors that occur. Then the results are discussed together.

	texts.	the background of the poem as an example of the imperfect functioning of machines and explains the subject of a class — finding and naming errors that can occur in MT outputs.	try to match these types with sentences. They also evaluate their performance in the previous task. Next, each type of errors is discussed by the whole group.	
Lesson 4	Controlled Language Optimised for Uniform Translation (CLOUT) by Uwe Muegge (2002); worksheet *Lesson 4 worksheet*.	**List composing** (20-30 min). The participants are asked to compose a list of 3 principles that could be helpful when pre-editing the text. The first group write their rules on the board, and the next group are invited to give arguments for introducing these rules. Then the roles change, and the second group state their rules (as long as they are not repeated), and the first group support them. If there is an odd number of participants and, therefore, an odd number of groups, the teacher distributes the tasks in such a way that each group have a chance to support the principles of the other group.	**Task 1** (15 min): The participants are given a form of Controlled Language Optimised for Uniform Translation (CLOUT) by Uwe Muegge (2002) containing free space for additional students' notes and are asked to familiarise themselves with these rules. They also assess whether the list contains their principles or not and rewrite the rules from the blackboard that do not occur on the formal CL list. **Task 2** (20 min): The participants work individually. They are given a worksheet containing a text in English (ST) and a table divided into four categories: selected sentences from ST; MT of selected sentences, sentences corrected according to CL, and MT of a corrected version of sentences. First, the students are asked to read the text and select five sentences they find most problematic and write them in the first column of the table. The students then enter MT of, e.g. DeepL and assess the readability of the output.	**Summary** (25 min): The last task to sum up the CL topic is to correct the sentences from Task 2 according to the rules provided (CLOUT) and entered in Task 1. Then they translate the corrected sentences and compare outputs with the sentences in the second table. The participants are asked to give their opinion on the tasks completed and assess the usefulness of using CL.

Lesson 5	printed cards from the file *Lesson 5 the world's most difficult word to translate – cards*, file for students *Lesson 5 terms for students* and answers for teachers *Lesson 5 terms for teachers,* worksheet with texts *Lesson 5 worksheet*	**Game** (10 min). "The world's most difficult word to translate". The participants take turns to pick one English word from the list and translate it into their native language as quickly as possible.	**Task 1** (20 min): Students are handed a list of English terms divided into three categories: medical, EU and technical terms. Each category contains terminology specific to a given field. They first assess their knowledge and ability to translate phrases from the list without using any tools. Then, they assess which tools would be most helpful in preparing translations of terms from each group separately. Finally, the teacher suggests reliable knowledge sources, prepared respectively for each category (diseases: Dictionary Medicine; European Union: https://europa.eu/european-union/documents-publications/language-and-terminology_pl; technical instructions: English-Polish Dictionary of Science and Technology) and with the help of these sources, the participants prepare the translation of the phrases. **Task 2** (30 min): The participants receive a worksheet with three short texts from different disciplines (medical, EU, technical) and choose one. They then extract from the ST words, phrases and concepts which, according to them, may be problematic during translation. After selecting the vocabulary, students justify why the wording they have	**Task 3** (30 min): The participants work independently. The assignment is to translate the text from the previous exercise. The task is divided into pre-editing, i.e. following the CL rules from Class 4, and post-editing, i.e. correcting problematic phrases from the MT output using the glossary prepared in Task 2.

			chosen might be a barrier to machine translation. Then, they group according to the chosen category of the text and examine whether their choice was justified, i.e. they attempt to MT the phrases. Then, they check the exact phrases with the help of suggested sources and evaluate the correctness of the MT output.	
Lesson 6	A picture depicting a cat lying in front of the computer/monitor (*Lesson 6 CAT picture*), a word file with an article on CAT tools (*Lesson 6 Abstract from Bowker, Lynne & Fisher, Desmond 2010. Computer-aided translation),* a form created by SDL Limited - now part of the RWS Group	**Picture riddle** (10 min). The teacher shows the participants the picture depicting the cat lying in front of the computer/monitor (Lesson 6 CAT picture) and asks them to guess this class's subject. The person who guesses first answers the questions (written on a blackboard): 1. What is CAT? What does CAT stand for? Then the rest of the group join in answering the following questions: 2. Have you ever used CAT? If yes, which one? **3.** Do you know how to operate a project in a CAT environment?	**Task 1** (10 min): The participants receive a What is a CAT Tool? Form by SDL Limited - now part of the RWS Group (Lesson 6 What is CAT tool) and tick the statements they think are true. **Task 2** (25 min) The participants watch an introductory video on CAT software (https://youtu.be/5GhX1XA_vsA) or read 'What is a CAT tool? - Video Transcript' (https://www.trados.com/solutions/cat-tools/translation-101-what-is-a-cat-tool.html). After watching/reading, the participants review their answers from 'What is a CAT Tool?'. The participants are asked if they have any questions so far. **Task 3** (40 min): The participants start working with a CAT programme of the instructor's choice, in this case, SmartCat.com free online CAT platform. The participants create a free account on	**Discussion** (5 min): the participants evaluate their experience with the CAT tool and comment on Task 3. It is also time for any questions the participants may have after using the CAT tool.

(Lesson 6 What is CAT tool)	SmartCat.com and, with the help of the teacher, become acquainted with the different functions of the platform in the following steps: • Open 'My Tasks' • Click 'CREATE PROJECT' • Click 'SELECT A FILE' • Choose a file named Lesson 6 Abstract from Bowker, Lynne & Fisher, Desmond. (2010). Computer-aided translation. (created and distributed by the teacher in advance, the file is a Word document containing an abstract from an article on CAT tools of approx. 250 words) • Click 'Open' • Click 'NEXT' • Write project name or leave suggested name • Define source language as English (United Kingdom) • Define Target language as Polish • Tick 'Use machine translation' • Tick 'Use for free with feedback' • Click on 'Setting on the left' (⚙) • From the list of MT, choose every possible option to see the differences later

		• Click 'SAVE' • Click 'FINISH' • Under the segment Documents, click 'OPEN' next to the name of the created project • Translate the first unit using MT suggestions on the right • Confirm the translation by pressing CTRL+ENTER	
Lesson 7	**Game** (10 min): If this is the answer, what's the question? – The participants form questions to the following answers (all connected with previous class) and create a project on SmartCat: • Click 'SELECT A FILE', • Tick 'Use machine translation' and choose from the list, then click 'SAVE' • Click 'OPEN' next to the name of the created project • By pressing CTRL+ENTER Example answers: How to add a file to a project? How to implement MT to a project?	**Task 1** (35 min): The participants open their projects from the previous lesson on SmartCat.com. The teacher guides the participants through the platform, briefly discussing the various functions: • Confirm all segments • Go to the next unconfirmed segment • Go to a segment by number • Undo the last action • Redo the last action • Copy source to target • Clear target • Insert a special character • Change the case • Insert a tag • Segment length limit • Revert the segment to the previous stage • Open the custom dictionary • Concordance search	**Discussion** (5 min): The participants enumerate functions they have used during their work on the project.

		How to open a project and start working on it? How to confirm a segment?	• Merge the segments • Split the segment • Search in source • Search in target • Case-sensitive • Replace • Remove all filter • Refresh segments • Filter (and its options) • History • QA check • Comments (segment, document) • In-context preview • View options • Download The participants may ask questions during and after the tour on SmartCat. **Task 2**: (40 min): The participants try to use the discussed functions to translate the remaining segments and finish the project.	
Lesson 8	a video (https://youtu.be/MmsBe7BitG4), *Lesson 8 Translation Memory* form by SDL Limited, TMX file	**Word-chain** (20 min). The teacher gives the first participant a letter; the participant has to say a word beginning with that letter, the participants who follow repeat the word and say another word beginning with the last letter	**Task 1** (20 min): The participants receive a Lesson 8 Translation Memory form and are asked to tick the statements as they watch the video (https://youtu.be/MmsBe7BitG4). **Task 2** (25 min) Creating definitions. The participants work in groups of four. As there are 15 TM terms, the teacher	**Task 4**: (5 min): Discussion: the participants evaluate their experience with TM, how it may influence their translation work and answer if they are willing to start using it.

of the first participant's word (e.g. lecturer says 'M', the participants one says 'Machine', participant two says 'Machine and Engine', participant three says Machine, Engine and Energy' and so on). Then, the participants answer the question: • What is necessary to master this activity? (the expected answer is 'a good memory') Then, the teacher explains the subject of the class: TM and says that they have already created their first TM by completing the project on SmartCat.com. The participants then open their projects and download the file in TMX format, which is the TM. The teacher explains that they can use this file for their next translation project.	divides terms evenly, e.g. if there are three groups, each obtains five terms. The task is to write one wrong definition to each term. The list of terms includes 100% match, alignment, auto-propagation, AutoSuggest, concordance, context match, field, fuzzy match, LookAhead, penalty, pre-translation, segment, TMX, translation unit, uplift. When all groups are ready, they read definitions (correct and wrong), and other groups have to choose, in their opinion, the correct one. After all groups have read their definitions, they exchange correct ones once again. **Task 3** (20 min): The participants go to the SmartCat platform and, with the help of the teacher, learn how to implement TM to a project by following these steps: • Open My Tasks • Click 'CREATE PROJECT' • Click 'SELECT A FILE' • Choose a file named 'First CAT project' (used previously) • Click 'Open' • Next to the segment Translation Memories, click 'ADD' and choose the previously downloaded TMX file • Click 'Open'	

			• Click 'NEXT' • Write project name as TM check • Define source language as English (United Kingdom) • Define Target language as Polish • Click 'SAVE' • Click 'FINISH' • Under the segment Documents, click 'OPEN' next to the name of the created project • Evaluate how TM changed the translation in comparison to the first project without TM	
Lesson 9	game on wordwall (https://wordwall.net/play/15920/911/927) or printed (lesson-9-tm-quiz.pdf), a video (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ACW9VFDwmww), files *Lesson 9 TM terms*, *Lesson 9 Glossary CAT project file*	**Wordwall quiz** (5 min). As a warm-up activity, the participants play a quiz in pairs. They receive a link to the game on a wordwall (https://wordwall.net/play/15920/911/927) or printed (lesson-9-tm-quiz.pdf), where they have to choose the right one out of 4 possible alternatives. When all the participants are finished with the game, they answer whether it is challenging to choose the correct word knowing the context and having the hints.	**Task 1** (20 min): To better familiarise the participants with the topic of the lesson, they watch the first 5 minutes of the video "What is terminology management?" prepared by SDL Limited, which is now part of the RWS Group (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ACW9VFDwmww), and note answers to the questions: • What are the three key elements of the terminology management process? Answer: identifying, storing and managing terminology. • What is the name of the place where terminology can be	**Discussion** (5 min): The participants evaluate their experience with the terminology management process, how it may influence their translation work and are asked if they are willing to start creating their own term bases.

stored? Answer: termbase
- Is the termbase multilingual? Answer: yes.
- Are termbase and translation memory similar? Answer: The former stores single words and short phrases, while the latter even stores whole sentences, longer fragments.

Task 2 (60 min) The next task addresses the question: What does terminology management mean in practice? The participants start working on creating a glossary in the CAT work environment and follow the instructions below:

- Log onto https://smartcat.com/workspace
- Go into 'My linguistics assets'
- Click 'Glossaries'
- Click 'CREATE GLOSSARY'
- Enter glossary name as DEMO 1
- Set language 1 as English
- Set language 2 as Polish
- Click the sign '+' and choose language 3 as German
- Click 'SAVE'
- Then click 'ADD ENTRY'
- Enter the terms from file Lesson 9 TM terms
- After adding each of the terms,

			click the tick sign to confirm your entry • Then click 'BACK' • Create a new project on SmartCat with the file Lesson 9 Glossary CAT project file • Go to 'LINGUISTIC ASSETS' • Tick glossary named 'DEMO1' • Go back to the project and open it • To translate the file use suggestions from the implemented glossary. Phrases from the glossary (DEMO1) are highlighted, in the bottom right part of the page, click CAT info□Glossary demo1□ Go to term • Finish the project	
Lesson 10	files: *Lesson 10 scenario fast translating, Lesson 10 scenario fast translating – glossary,* website https://help.smartcat.com/hc/en-	**Scenarios discussion** (15 min). Scenarios to discuss: • A client sends in a so-called draft text on the reorganisation of the company's work and asks for it to be translated on short notice, assuring that it does not have to be perfect but fast.	**Task 1** (reading 10 min + project 60 min): The participants open the website: https://help.smartcat.com/hc/en-us/articles/115002017352-Quality-assurance and read the content. Then they receive a scenario for the project: • A client sends a short text that she wants to quote in her article on the impediments to astronomical research and measurement due to external	**Task 2**: (5 min): Discussion: the participants evaluate their experience with the QA, how it may influence their translation work and are asked if it facilitated their performance.

	us/articles/115002017352-Quality-assurance	• Question for the participants: What will the translator do? • A similar situation —a client sends a text, also a draft, this time concerning side effects of a new drug and again asks for it to be translated on the spot, at the same time assuring that it does not have to be perfect, but fast. • Question for the participants: What will the translator do? • Do both situations require the same or a different approach to the translated text?	interference. The client also reports that she has tried to use MT for translation but does not know why the TT is unintelligible. She is very anxious about time as the deadline ended a week ago. Fortunately, a translator (here participants of the course) has worked with this topic before, so he/she has a glossary ready. The participants log onto SmartCat. They receive two files: one with a text in English to translate into Polish, the other with a pre-prepared glossary needed for the project. First, they go to *My linguistic assets*, create a new glossary, and then click upload□choose file□IMPORT. They create a new project called scenario – fast translating. They are allowed to use MT of their choice and perform task independently, but still, the teacher assists if needed. They are asked to remember about assigning the glossary to the project.	
Lesson 11	Files: *Lesson 11 ST The US President Invites King Hassan of Morocco,*	**Back-translation** (30 min). The participants are divided into row A and row B. Each person receives two short texts translated into Polish: one is the so-called raw MT output,	**Task 1** (15 min): The participants receive light and full post-editing guidelines and familiarise themselves with each. Then, in pairs, they discuss what the differences are between light and full post-editing. Each team gives	**Task 3**: (5min): Discussion: The participants evaluate their experiences with LPE and FPE, compare this stage of the MTPE process with pre-editing and translation, and estimate their workload for each step.

	Lesson 11 Light and Full post-editing guidelines, Lesson 11 A B The US President Invites King Hassan of Morocco (pl), Lesson 11 Worksheet light and full post-editing	and the other is the post-edited version. In row A, the first text is the raw version, while in row B, the exact text is the post-edited version, and in turn, the second text in row A is post-edited, and in row B, the same text is raw. Now, the participants are asked to back-translate the texts into English. Afterwards, students from row A compare their versions with students from row B. They answer the questions: • Are the backtranslations from row A and row B different? In what way? • What was more accessible to back-translate – the post-edited or raw version? • What are the conclusions?	two examples in which situations light and full post-editing can be used. **Task 2** (40 min): The participants receive a worksheet with MT output and, without the ST, do light post-editing according to the light post-editing guidelines. Then they receive the source text and perform a full post-editing, but also following the guideline.	
Lesson 12	Files: *Lesson 12 Article: Is the Internet killing our brains*	**Translation chain** (10 min). The participants are divided into groups of four. The teacher informs students about the warm-up rules:	**Task 1** (15 min): The teacher gives the students a scenario for the lesson: You work in a translation agency, and your team specialises in MTPE. Each person in the group is responsible for a particular stage of the MTPE process:	**Discussion** (5 min): The teacher asks the participants how they evaluate the teamwork on the project.

		• Person A expresses in English his/her view on the statement that the Internet is killing our brains. • Person B summarises A's view to person C in Polish. • Then Person C repeats B's summary to person D in English. • Finally, person D refers received information to person A. • Then person A assesses the level of agreement between his/her opinion and what he/she heard from person D. Summarising the exercise, the teacher asks each group how they assess the level of agreement of the final version of person A's statement.	• person A assesses the original and makes the necessary corrections to the sentences of the ST so that the text is more accessible to MT, • person B assesses the text for vocabulary and prepares a glossary, • person C receives the corrected text of the ST and the glossary and carries out the machine translation, • person D deals with the post-editing of the text without seeing the ST. The participants in the group divide themselves into roles, with a hint that they can also use the draw of lots (provided by the teacher). The translation is carried out in any environment, e.g. on the SmartCat platform.	
Lesson 13	Files: *Lesson 13 Literary translation.*	**Find the match** (10 min) Participants, working in groups of two, are asked to match English proverbs with	**Task 2** (60 min): Competition: Students are divided into two groups: group A and group B. Group A is to translate the first page of the file provided (an extract from	**Task 3** (15 min): Evaluation of translation and discussion: Group A compares their translations of two passages with Group B's translation. Together they evaluate which

		their Polish equivalents. Next, they receive a list of the same proverbs, but translated using MT, and evaluate the possibilities of machine translation in relation to such elements characteristic of literary translations.	the untranslated book Malcolm X: A Life of Reinvention By Manning Marable) using HT, i.e. without MT and CAT tools, but are allowed to use dictionaries, including online dictionaries; group B translates the same fragment using the CALT method with the help of MT, e.g. on the SmartCat platform. Both groups have 30 minutes to complete the task. After the time is up, the groups swap roles. Group A translates the second page of the file using the CALT method with the help of MT, while group B performs HT. The participants in the group divide themselves into roles, with a hint that they can also use the draw of lots (provided by the teacher). The translation is carried out in any environment, e.g. on the SmartCat platform.	method in a given situation (literary translation) was better for them and why; they also evaluate the quality of the translated passages in terms of the differences between machine-assisted and human translation.
Lesson 14	Website launched for the purpose of this course https://www.test30148.futurehost.pl/MTPE/ the details to log onto the website would be provided to	**Task 1** (15 min). The participants answer whether they use MT of websites, e.g. with the help of Google Website Translator. They then familiarise themselves with this function by going to https://www.visitqatar.qa/en/things-to-do/wellness-spa and activating the website	**Task 2** (60 min): The participants are introduced to the lesson scenario: The Visit Qatar organisation has commissioned you to analyse and improve MT (from English to Polish). Follow these steps to start your post-editing work: • log onto https://www.test30148.futurehost.pl/MTPE/wp-admin/ according	**Task 3** (15 min): The participants evaluate the quality of MT made by the WEGLOT plugin and their work on the MTPE of the website. The teacher asks the participants how they imagine the future of translation.

	participants by email, each participant would have a separate account.	translation function (right mouse button□przetłumacz na język polski (translate into Polish). The participants read the MT of the mentioned page and rate on a scale of 1 to 5 the quality of this translation (1 means very poor and 5 excellent).	to the details sent by the company, • go to the WEGLOT plugin • click on Edit my translations • then click on Total translated words • analyse the phrases that require your intervention, and then apply corrections.	
Lesson 15		**Task 1** (15 min). The participants work in pairs. Their task is to write down what qualities they think a post-editor should have and how this role differs from the traditional role of a translator. Then each pair shares their thoughts.	**Task 2** (45 min): Discussion: The participants are asked to address issues related to the development of MT: • MT limitations —will post-editing solve all problems of MT? • Indigenous, regional, minority languages and MT —what does it look like? • Is post-editing in literary MT the answer to books that should have been but were never translated? • MT and democratisation • What does the future hold?	**Task 3** (30 min): The participants are asked to write an essay in which they evaluate the MTPE course they have taken and how prepared they feel to be an independent post-editor.

Supplementary sources of information

The lessons were also supplemented with the following additional sources of information:

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5. Challenges to implementation and concluding remarks

There may be several challenges to the implementation of the course. Meeting all the stated objectives and outcomes will be a challenge as it assumes that each lesson will follow the outlined structure without interruptions. Unexpected situations, such as questions from the participants, the need to repeat material, spontaneous discussions during the lessons, may result in modifications to the programme. A related issue is time estimation. The author also assumes that there may be different results for classroom training and remote modes of course delivery. In addition, the discrepancy in results may be related to the students' level of expertise, which may affect the course outcomes. Finally, the very structure of the course may be subject to revision due to the pace of

development in the field of translation technology. In conclusion, during the implementation and delivery of the course, teachers must remain vigilant and relatively flexible. They are required to consider many factors such as unexpected situations, technological developments, and participants' reactions.

Further research based on the individual elements of the course is recommended. Lesson 3 (MT – Finding and naming errors) could be expanded to include a broader analysis of errors since, as Depraetere (2010) notes, a clear demand to expand students' knowledge of specific MT errors should be addressed. Given the emphasis that Nikishina (2018) and Tomaszkiewicz (2019) place on consistency and precise instruction in the training of future translators, it is worth adapting Lesson 4 (Controlled Language rules for MT: create your own list of pre-editing rules) to explore supplementing guidelines specifically designed for specific language pairs, in this case, PL-EN. Finally, Lesson 13 (Competition: Human VS MT), which is grounded in Rybicki's (2021) observation that the difference between human and machine translation is becoming less and less apparent in light of the progressive development of neural machine translation, may inspire further research into the problem of the changing image of the modern translator. In conclusion, this study can be a valuable resource in both translation didactics and translation studies, providing an impetus for further consideration of the topic of MTPE.

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Dominika Romaniuk-Cholewska is a graduate of the University of Białystok, majoring in English Philology and Translation Studies, and currently a PhD student in Linguistics. Her research interests oscillate between foreign language didactics and translation studies. She is particularly interested in the problem of integrating modern technological tools into the work of teachers and translators. Her current research concerns technological competence in translation didactics.

Book reviews

DANIEL KARCZEWSKI[1]
University of Białystok, Poland
https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8255-6018

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Foreign Language Pedagogy in the Light of Cognitive Linguistics Research (Series Second Language Learning and Teaching), edited by Grzegorz Drożdż and Barbara Taraszka-Drożdż, Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2020, 131pp. ISBN: 978-3-030-58774-1. EUR 48.14

The volume under discussion includes a collection of papers that use insights from Cognitive Linguistics (CL) to illuminate various issues in language pedagogy. The book is divided into two parts, each comprising several chapters that focus on two different sub-themes, such as cognitive underpinnings of language teaching and pedagogical applications of cognitive theories. As such the collection of studies reviewed here reflects a wider trend in scholarship that investigates the intersection of CL and language pedagogy within the realm of an applied cognitive framework.

The first part of the book opens with a discussion by Paul Wilson and Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk on how the presence of a native or non-native teacher in an L2 class can affect students' emotions. The chapter begins with a concise summary of studies on emotions, such as shame, fear, hopelessness, anxiety, anger, and pride, with respect to L2 learning and highlights how these emotions might influence L2 students. Some of the negative effects include withdrawal and avoidance tendencies, lower grades, or a decline in working memory performance. The results of the questionnaire-based study conducted by the authors seem to indicate that in the native versus non-native scenario it is the former that would elicit more negative emotions, anxiety in particular. The statistical analysis, however, showed no significant differences between these two scenarios in respect to the remaining emotions that were examined.

In the second chapter, Katarzyna Kwapisz-Osadnik employs the Langackerian (1987) notion of imagery to propose her own theoretical model, referred to as global visualization grammar, with a view to showing how to teach tenses and moods in French more effectively. The model outlined proposes that students must be made familiar with some basic concepts, such as imagery, conceptualization, scene, or the theory of mental spaces (Fauconnier, 1985), before proper teaching can begin. The model assumes the simultaneous presentation of all tenses and moods with the help of drawings. In the last

[1] Address for correspondence: University of Białystok, Faculty of Philology, Centre for Linguistic Studies, Pl. NZS 1, 15-420 Białystok, Poland. E-mail: dakar@uwb.edu.pl

section, Kwapisz-Osadnik summarizes the advantages of the model, which, for instance, prevents "the automatization of the so-called prototypical tenses and moods" (p. 26) and thus allows learners to be more flexible in their constructional repertoire.

The first part of the book concludes with a chapter by Grzegorz Drożdż, who takes advantage of some of the notions in Langacker's Cognitive Grammar (CG); they include epistemic distance, granularity and scope in presenting tenses, and conditional clauses in a unified account. The bulk of the chapter concentrates on a comparison of the past and present uses of the constructions, present simple, present continuous, past simple, and past continuous, to achieve this goal. The chapter also discusses several pedagogical implications that stem from the treatment of the constructions in question in a unified manner, and this might be helpful in overcoming some general challenges that ESL/EFL learners face when mastering tenses. On the whole, the chapter convincingly illustrates that a handful of CL concepts has the potential to improve the treatment of this troublesome aspect of English grammar.

The second part of the book commences with a chapter by Agnieszka Kaleta, who puts the cognitively oriented treatment of post-verbal complementation to the test to determine its effectiveness. Given the fact that the body of literature on the topic is peppered with inconsistencies, I would consider the chapter's succinct presentation of the cognitive linguistic account of verb patterns to be one of its strengths. The empirical part of the chapter focuses on the research study design, participants recruited, and results, which are underpinned by some statistical evidence that strengthens the validity of the findings. Kaleta showed that the experimental treatment (CL-style intervention) was more effective than the standard treatment in the control group; however, it remains to be seen whether the results can be extrapolated beyond the sample studied.

The following chapter by Barbara Taraszka-Drożdż—the only lexically oriented study in this volume—discusses a lexical technique that aims to help "grasp the nuances of meaning that are revealed by a linguistic unit in different contexts" (p. 82). The chapter begins with a discussion of the CG account of polysemy and is followed by an explication of the five-step technique that is embedded in Langacker's (1987) network model. The technique, which can be used in foreign language classes when learners encounter unfamiliar words, is illustrated with three case studies of French lexical units accompanied by visually pleasing illustrations. The last part of the chapter addresses the advantages of the technique, one of which is that it encourages learners to reorganize their word association networks, which can be of value to foreign language learners.

The penultimate chapter by Aleksandra Paliczuk proposes an alternative to teaching Italian prepositions to Polish learners whereby a relationship between a preposition and objects or concepts is brought to the fore. The study takes its theoretical inspirations from Langacker's CG (1987), the notion of imagery in particular. The first part of the chapter addresses the standard treatment of prepositions in Italian grammar with its focus on formal classifications of objects and adverbials. Then, Paliczuk lays the cognitive foundations for the alternative treatment of prepositions in Italian by discussing in turn spatial, temporal, and abstract uses of prepositions. The discussion is exemplified with the diagrams illustrating relations between a given preposition and objects or concepts. The final part of the chapter comprises sample exercises (gap-fills and a translation task) that could be used to address the shortcomings of the standard teaching of Italian prepositions.

The last chapter in this volume, by Łukasz Matusz, argues that teaching phonetics and phonology at the university level could benefit from the implementation of some elements of the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT). This idea is first explored from the theoretical standpoint by means of a literature review, which shows that CMT has played an important role in various areas of language pedagogy. Then various extensions of the metaphor LANGUAGE IS MUSIC are presented to demonstrate their potential for teaching phonetics and phonology. More specifically, by showing analogies between two domains, LANGUAGE and MUSIC, students will better understand phonetic and phonological notions. The empirical part of the study discusses a research design that uses a questionnaire as a data collection tool. Seventy-three students were requested to provide definitions of some notions such as phonemes, stress, or intonation, and as a result, the questionnaire collected 438 definitions. The results of the study showed that 11 students came up with 22 definitions in which manifestations of the LANGUAGE IS MUSIC metaphor can be identified.

More than a decade ago, Pütz (2007: 1143) predicted that two CL theories, Langacker's CG and Lakoff and Johnson's theory of metaphor (1980), would be likely to emerge in the applied cognitive framework. By looking solely at this volume, one can say that this prediction came true. Five out of seven chapters in this book are grounded in the most comprehensive theory of grammar within the CL enterprise, and the cognitive view of metaphor provides a theoretical account for another one. Interestingly, if we take a cursory look at the last decade of research investigating the effectiveness of CL-style interventions on grammar and vocabulary that is available on the Scopus and Web of Science databases, this prediction also fares well. Therefore, on the one hand, the comprehensiveness of these two theories has been proved, and on the other hand, it has also been proved that each theory is "an important empirical test" (Langacker 2008: 8).

From a cognitive linguistic perspective, language is seen as "systematic and governed by regular processes" (Tyler 2017: 75). This assumption manifests itself quite strongly in the contributions in this volume: the studies here emphasize the meaning-driven approach to language teaching and learning rather than rote memorization. Hopefully, in the long run this assumption might lead to a reduction in the dogma of arbitrariness looming over the classroom.

The studies in the present volume also do well in terms of the visual representation of meaning in the drawings and diagrams that they utilize. This is perhaps the most perceptually salient reflex of embodiment (Tyler 2017: 77) in CL-oriented L2 learning, which tends to rely on diagrams and drawings to facilitate, for instance, the discovery of schematic grammatical meanings. The effectiveness of this type of instruction has been demonstrated by some scholars (e.g., Tyler, Mueller & Ho 2010), thus giving support to the dual coding theory (Paivio 1986); however, it requires further empirical testing.

Another assumption, which manifests itself to a lesser degree in this volume, is the need for explicating "the differences between the target language and the learner's first language" (Pütz 2007: 1151), which, as Soffritti and Dirven (2004) argue, might facilitate language learning. In consequence, by allowing learners to grasp the cross-linguistic contrasts between the target language and the first language, L2 learning might become easier for them.

Following Achard (2018), the editors of the volume under review note in their introduction that applied CL research "is still below its potential" (Drożdż & Taraszka-

Drożdż 2020: vii). Curiously, a comment along similar lines was made by Luo (2021: 264), who, following Pütz (2007), states that "applied CL is still in its infancy." One might wonder why, despite more than thirty years of applied CL research, sentiments like these are frequently expressed.

To my mind, an answer to this question was elucidated by several scholars (Boers 2013; Littlemore 2009; Tyler 2017), who argue, for instance, for the need for longitudinal rather than small-scale studies or distributive learning to determine the effectiveness of cognitively inspired L2 research. Others (e.g., Boers 2011), based on their assessment of CL-oriented studies, offer a ready-made checklist of methodological flaws that bring studies' conclusions into question. Some of the flaws include the absence of (1) pre-tests, (2) delayed post-tests, or (3) detailed quantitative data. Although Boers (2011) evaluated only CL-oriented vocabulary research, the list of the identified shortcomings could be used as a checklist for grammar-oriented interventions, as well.

Taking the above into account, only two of the studies in this volume, one by Wilson and Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk and another by Kaleta, employed any statistical methods to determine the validity of their hypotheses. I believe that some of the claims and arguments expressed in the remaining chapters might be strengthened by adopting a more experimental approach to the phenomena under investigation and thus take the studies to a new level of refinement. This is a much needed development if applied CL research is to reach its maturity and fulfill its full potential soon.

To sum up, *Foreign Language Pedagogy in the Light of Cognitive Linguistics Research* covers a wide range of topics that could be of interest to researchers working at the intersection of CL and language pedagogy. One of the strengths of this volume is its inclusion of chapters by researchers investigating CL-oriented learning in languages other than English. It is my hope that future work will also explore the role of L2 teachers, who are often unfamiliar with applied CL research, to promulgate its ideas.

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Daniel Karczewski is an Associate Professor in the Center for Linguistic Studies at the University of Białystok, Poland. He was the prize winner of the Polish Cognitive Linguistics Association competition for the best Ph.D. dissertation in cognitive linguistics in 2014. He is the author of *Generyczność w języku i w myśleniu. Studium kognitywne* (Genericity in Language and Thought. A Cognitive Study). His current research interests include the generic overgeneralization effect and the phenomenon of normativity.

GRZEGORZ MOROZ[1]
University of Białystok, Poland
https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9593-0224

DOI: 10.15290/CR.2021.35.4.05

The 1940s: A Decade of Modern British Fiction**,** edited by Philip Tew and Glynn White, London, Bloomsbury Academic, 2022, (PDF) x + 347 pp., ISBN ePDF: 978-1-3501-4303-6. £117

The 1940s: A Decade of Modern British Fiction, published by Bloomsbury Academic, is the seventh book in the 'The Decades Series,' which was inaugurated by *The 1970s: A Decade of Contemporary British Fiction* in 2014. *The 1940s* is edited by Philip Dew and Glynn White, who open it with their "Critical Introduction: Reappraising the 1940s." The first three parts of this Introduction ("Socio-historical contexts," "Dunkirk and other propaganda," "Reappraising the 1940s") highlight the most characteristic features of the decade from the historical, social as well as literary perspectives, pointing out its uniqueness and watershed character, as well as factors influencing the literary output of this decade, such as the overtly propagandist use of literature, paper rationing and censorship. The next three parts of the Introduction are (perhaps a bit surprisingly) mini critical essays aimed at three groups of novels and novelists. The first of them, "Not the usual suspects," presents two novels by writers better known as poets: Philip Larkin and Stevie Smith. The second is "Waugh time" (a pun which Evelyn Waugh probably would not have liked, as he did not like *Waugh in Abyssinia*), which focuses on two Waugh's wartime novels: *Put Out More Flags* (1942) and *Brideshead Revisited* (1945), and concludes with the statement "that Waugh and others […] were necessarily raised in the pre-war world with all the experiences that entailed" (19). "From the ranks," the third mini-essay, is a survey of shorter fiction and novels written by Gerald Kersh and Julian Maclaren-Ross.

The ten chapters of *The 1940s* can be roughly divided into two parts. The opening part, consisting of the first three chapters, contains three surveys of the literature of the decade in question (but also, to a considerable extent, of the 1930s), while of the remaining seven chapters/essays, six are more like case studies of narrower groups of texts/writers. The three opening chapters have different focal points and perspectives. The opening chapter of the book, written by Ashley Maher and entitled "The Finest Hour? A Literary History of the 1940s," examines the decade's "divisions and continuities from three angles: historically, through the blurring of war and peacetime, self and state; geographically, through migration and the dissolution of empire, amid the changing formation of British identity and literature; and literary historically, through the co-existence of late modernism, realism and incipient postmodernism" (38). Maher's survey focuses on both the shorter and longer fiction of George Orwell, Christopher

[1] Address for correspondence: University of Białystok, Faculty of Philology, Centre for Literary Studies, Pl. NZS 1, 15-420 Białystok, Poland. E-mail: g.moroz@uwb.edu.pl

Isherwood, Virginia Woolf, Elizabeth Bowen, Patrick Hamilton, Roger Mais, and Victoria Reid.

The second chapter of the book, Philip Tew's "British Blitz Fiction of the 1940s: Another Finest Hour Myth or Propaganda?" surveys British civilians' literary responses to and representations of the Blitz in the fiction, diaries and interviews of a wide range of writers: Phyllis Bottome, Elizabeth Bowen, Daphne de Maurier, Henry Green, Graham Greene, Patrick Hamilton, James Hanley, Norah Hoult, Winifred Peck, Jocelyn Playfair, Noel Streatfield, and Virginia Woolf.

The third of the survey chapters, Deborah Philips's "Genteel Bohemia: Capable Women in Women's Fiction of the 1940s", approaches novels which, even though written in the forties, were often set in earlier periods, but, as Philips argues "[n]ontheless, the effects are there to be read: the experience of war necessarily permeates women's writing of the period" (93). Philips analyses such novels as Mary Renault's *The Friendly Young Ladies*, Stella Gibbons's *Ticky,* Nancy Mitford's *The Persuit of Love*, Jean Rhys's *Good Morning, Midnight,* and *The Parasites* by Daphne du Maurier.

Chris Hopkins's "The Ship and the Nation: Royal Navy Novels and the People's War 1939-45" focuses mostly on two popular novels about the experiences of servicemen in the Royal Navy *I Am a Stranger Here Myself* (1943) by Anthony Thorne, and *Very Ordinary Seamen* (1944) by J.P.W. Mallalieu. Hopkins argues convincingly that "popular fiction accounts of naval crews were seen as entirely appropriate foci for discussions and relationship between 'warfare state' and 'welfare state', the character of English society and its potential for post-war reconstruction" (116).

The fifth chapter, written by Karen Schaller and entitled "Feeling Political: Elizabeth Bowen in the 1940s," focuses on Bowen's short stories written during this decade. Ultimately, Schaller claims that "[r]ather than a reality to be represented […] feelings in Bowen's writing *are* representations, ones that are, in that period to be performed, fine-tuned and recalibrated in order to signal, sign—and counter-sign—one's orientation to Britain, and to each other" (159).

Támas Bényiei's "The Life of Animals: George Orwell's Fiction in the 1940s" is an extremely lucid and well-written essay, which is also a tribute to George Orwell as an essay writer, novelist, and political thinker. The essay starts with a short survey of praise of Orwell as a writer by influential critics and scholars such as Richard Rorty and Raymond Williams, and also by those who are less well known: John Rodden, Issac Deutscher and David Dwan. The profound analysis of Orwell's short piece "Revenge is Sour," published in *Tribune* in November 1945, allows Bényiei to present Orwell's dilemmas and solutions on such key issues as the banality of evil and the futility of revenge, and argues that "Revenge is Sour" "is predicated on contrasting the mental world generated by language […] or ideas […] to the empirical world of objective experience, clearly endorsing the primacy of the latter" (165). The second part of Bényiei's essay concerns Orwell's two masterpieces, *Animal Farm* and *1984,* the analysis of which is used to refute Christopher Norris's statement that Orwell's belief that "the truth was just out there to be told in a straightforward, common-sense way […] now seems not merely naïve but culpably self-deluding" (quoted 167).

Rebecca Dyer's "Masters and Servants, Class and the Colonies in Graham Greene's 1940s Fiction" opens with a discussion on the presence of servants in Graham Greene's

life, non-fiction and fiction to analyse the master-servant relationship as being "in some ways analogous to the power relations between colonial officials and colonized populations" (192). Dyer looks into master-servant relations in the fiction of P.G. Woodhouse, Ivy Compton-Burnett, and Robin Maugham. Afterwards, the focus returns to Graham Greene and shifts between the generically diverse *Journey Without Maps, The Heart of the Matter*, "The Basement Room," and *The Fallen Idol.*

The eighth chapter, Charlotte Charteris's "Purposes of Love: Rethinking Intimacy in the 1940s", surveys a considerable range of 1940s texts authored by Mary Renault, Jocelyn Brooke, Francis King, Denton Welch, Nancy Mitford, Barbara Comyns, Monica Dickens, and Henry Green. Therefore, in my opinion, it would be better placed alongside the first three chapters of the book. Charteris borrows the title from Mary Renault's 1939 debut novel, the analysis of which introduces the key theme of the chapter: the link between intimacy, trauma and rehabilitation, questioning the privileged status of marriage, and the changing role and representation of sexuality in the context of Mass Observation's 1949 'Little Kinsey' report.

The two final chapters of *The 1940s* move beyond the spectrum of British fiction in this decade and address it in the wider context of writers-refugees from National Socialism, and transatlantic crime film connections. Andrea Hammel's "No Concession to 'English Taste'? Refugees from National Socialism Writing in Britain" considers a group of German and Austrian writers, both relatively well-known, such as Stefan Zweig, and those less-known or virtually forgotten, such as Robert Neumann, Hilde Spiel, de Mendelssohn, Hermynia Zur Mühlen, and Anna Gmeyner. Hammel's paper ends with the conclusion that "[a]lthough the works in this chapter have generally been neglected or marginalized, their publication and readership at the time testify to the existence of wartime cultural imaginary—a heterotopian conception of the possibilities of elsewhereness—that was international" (272). Glynn White's "Un-British: the Transatlantic Crime Film Connection" focuses on the connections "between popular fiction of the crime genre and the British cinema in the 1940s, particularly adaptations made in the second half of the decade of works of Graham Greene, James Hadley Chase and Gerald Kersh, by tracking transatlantic currents in film and literature and mapping their varied critical receptions within the context of 1940s criticism" (275).

Handy timelines of works, and national and international events, as well as short biographies of writers whose works appear in the book are provided at the end of the volume. Overall, *The 1940s: A Decade of Modern British Fiction* is a coherent volume which is potentially useful both to newcomers to the field as well as to more seasoned researchers.

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Grzegorz Moroz is Professor of British Literature at the University of Białystok. He has published monographs and many articles on Aldous Huxley, and on Anglophone as well as Polish travel writing, including: T*ravellers, Novelists and Gentlemen: Constructing Male Narrative Personae in British Travel Books from the Beginnings to the Second*

World War (Peter Lang, 2013) and *A Generic History of Travel Writing in Anglophone and Polish Literature* (Brill/Rodopi, 2020).