

## **Thinking styles are embedded in Literature An analytical comparative study**

**Conducted by**

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### **English abstract:**

**Florian Coulmas** (1992) says that words are the coins of thinking and as much we have the ability to use it, consists our account. **Libntz** (1983)" cited in Florian Coulmas (1992)" says that **language is the mirror of mind**. **Coulmas** added that words do not have their meanings from their materialistic nature as a series of sounds, but from the aim/aims they serve through transferring the un-materialistic content. Language is a vehicle, not a value, but it has a value within it and its value and its spread depends on its users and their needs and importance and so any nation that ever seeks its political independence should have shown tendency towards establishing national language and coins, added **Coulmas**. **Hembolt** cited in Coulmas (1992) stated that languages differ in abilities to view ways of thinking and such a difference is due to its structure and dictionary. He added that **any given language is a natural innateness but shaped culturally**, so the interaction between these two tributaries supplies each language with a unique view of the world.

Depending on the form mentioned claims, the researcher decides to conduct this study in which he analyzed two novels (a British novel

and an Arabic one) to compare and contrast the thinking styles being embedded in these two novels which are similar in the experiences that the main characters faced. The outcome showed that the two main characters had formulated two completely different profiles of thinking styles which explains the difference in reaction. The analysis shows that Flanders's profile of thinking styles includes Monarchic, Global, external and liberal styles of thinking. On the other hand, Ahmad's profile of thinking styles includes hierarchic, local, internal, and conservative ones.

### ملخص باللغة العربية

أدعى فلورين كولمس (١٩٩٢) أن الكلمات هي بمثابة عملة العقل وعليه فإن مدى القدرة على توظيف هذه الكلمات هي المسؤولة عن تشكيل رصيدنا منها. ذكر ليبنتز (١٩٨٣) الوارد ذكره في كولمس (١٩٩٣) أن اللغة هي مرآة العقل وأن الكلمات لا تستمد معناها من طبيعتها المادية كسلسلة من الأصوات بل من الهدف أو الأهداف التي تعمل على نقلها من خلال طبيعتها المادية تلك. إن اللغة عبارة عن أداة وليست قيمة ولكنها تتضمن على قيمة وقيمتها تلك ومدى انتشارها يتوقفان على مستخدميها وحاجاتهم وأهميتها وأهميتهم بين الأمم، وعليه فإنه على أي أمة تصبو نحو استقلال سياسي أن تعمل على تشكيل لغة خاصة بها كما تعمل على طرح عملة خاصة بها أيضا. أضاف همبولت الوارد ذكره في كولمس (١٩٩٣) أن اللغات تختلف في قوتها من أجل عكس أنماط تفكير أهلها وأن هذه القوة أو الضعف عائد إلى طبيعة تراكيبها وقاموسها الخاص. ويضيف همبولت أن أي لغة هي هبة فطرية يتم تشكيلها ثقافيا وعليه فإن التفاعل بين هذين الرافدين هو الذي يهب كل لغة خصوصيتها.

استنادا لهذه الإدعاءات، عمد الباحث إلى هذه الدراسة حيث قام الباحث بتحليل روايتين (إحدهما بريطانية و الأخرى عربية) من أجل إجراء مقارنة بين أنماط التفكير المضمنة فيهما مع الأخذ بالاعتبار أن مجمل الأحداث التي واجهها كل من الشخصيات الرئيسة في الروايتين متشابهة تقريبا.

كشفت النتائج للأحداث التي واجهها شخصان الروايتين الرئيسة وردود الفعل على تلك الأحداث عن أن فلاندرز ( الشخصية الرئيسة في الرواية البريطانية) كانت تتبنى الأنماط التالية : الملكي، العالمي، الخارجي، المتحرر في الوقت الذي كان أحمد ( بطل القصة العربية) يتبنى الأنماط التالية: التراكمي، المحلي، الداخلي، المحافظ، ( على ضوء نظرية العقل حكومة ذاتية، Sternberg ( 1997 ) علما أن أيا من هذه الأنماط يهب صاحبه شكلا خاصا من الشخصية ويوجه صاحبه نحو ردود فعل بطريقة خاصة.

### **Thinking styles embedded in Literature**

Many researches tried to deal with the field of the interrelation between language and thought, believing that language is the mirror of mind or a vehicle to transfer thought. PET/ (1965) claimed that each language is a law to it self. Anderson (1980) claimed that categories of thought determine categories of language.

Schwebel and Raph (1973) supported the previous ideas when they said that "watching the development of sensori\_motor intelligence before the development of language in a small child, found that the roots of logic are in actions and not in words". So an early child language is often a misleading indicator of the level of the child's understanding.

If we accept that thought occurs before languages, it seems natural to support that language is the tool to communicate thought. Anderson (1980) presented evidence supporting that thought influences language. He explained that a researcher may find highly differentiated terms for a given category of language that are relevant to the life experience of those language users. Thus, it is Eskimos, who have many words for snow and Arabs who have many words for camels, lions and deserts, not vice versa.

Briton (1993), while writing about language and thought, supported the previous ideas making use of views made by Langer (1960b).

So, the shapes of languages are determined (in part) by thought is the outcome of the previous presentations and experiences, and such a conclusion agrees with the linguistic relativity approach which claims that people who speak different languages do perceive the world in different ways.

Michael Devitt and Kim Sterenly (1999) claimed that language expresses thought, meanwhile thoughts are inner states (beliefs, desires, hopes, fears..... etc). **Thoughts are behavior-controlling states** and so we need thoughts to explain behavior. This means that a language is representational and thoughts are inner representations and misrepresentations of the external world. Again, this means that we are to read and analyze a given nation's literature if we want to know how these people think and why they do behave this way or that. Such a conclusion is agreeable with Prophet Mohammad's saying "That who learns a nation's language is safe from them".

On the other hand, Belkaoui and Belkaoui (1983) claimed that because languages mediate our world view, it plays a central role in the development of cognition and perception. They added that a given language predisposes its users to a distinct belief. They added that ways of conveying messages are reflections of the metaphysics of culture and these metaphysics constitute the unstated premise which shape the perception and thought of those who participate in that culture and predispose them to a given method of perception (p111-113).

Qasaimeh (2005) claimed that those who learn the literature of two different languages have different thinking style profiles from those who learn just the literature of their native tongue.

Sternberg (1997), while analyzing factors that participate in formulating a person's styles of thinking profiles, emphasized the role of education.

To Schwebel and Raph (1973):" Ideas are only as good as the way they are expressed, because anyone who tries to read him first hand is quite taken by his lack of eloquence and even clarity.

Belkaoui and Belkaoui (1982) explained that: anthropologists had emphasized the role of language in their studies of culture. They added that Sapir's investigation of linguistic symbolism of a given culture viewed language both as an instrument and as communication of thought.

Now, the researcher thinks it is clear enough that thought determines categories of language. Besides the more languages ( as a tool of communication) a person acquires the more different profiles of thinking styles he will form, putting in consideration the belief that language is the tool to communicate thoughts, ideas, feelings.....etc.

To assess the previous mentioned ideas through literature, the researcher chose two novels being taught to students of English language and students of Arabic language at Jordan universities to analyze, compare and contrast the thinking styles that they are imbedded, attracting attention that the characters in both novels passed through relatively similar experiences. The two novels are **Moll Flanders** written by Daniel Defoe and **Khan Al-Khalili** written by Najib Mahfouz.

In brief, **Moll Flanders** (*taught to students of English language*) is a story of a woman who was born and brought up in the gloomy obscure conditions of London in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Flanders formed a unique everlasting portrait for the social mechanisms of those days from her point of view. She was abandoned from her mother when she was only six months because her mother was condemned as a thief. Her mother was a prisoner at New gate prison then to be expelled to America with a group of criminals as it was a habit those days to seize the criminal abilities to fetch that settlement treasure. Flanders stayed for a period of time between impure hands then to be moved into orphans and foundling refuge. When she was a mature she chose to continue her own life in her way rather to follow a route being decided by formal establishments. She began her free life by moving from a secure family to another to stay with a relatively noble one for a period of time Flanders found herself obliged to seize her mental abilities and beauty besides what she had learnt throughout her early stages of life as she had learnt to sing, play the piano and to speak French as a prestigious language. Her beauty, cleverness and these gained skills enabled her to seduce some of the high class members as a way to live in a high prestigious way among people who never knew lenity. As a very beautiful woman with so bad circumstances, she had limited choices to the life she imagined. She began her new stage of life by fornication with one of the noble family sons that she was living with then to marry the other son. After a period of time her husband died, so she married another person. Later, she discovered that she shifted her life from fornication stage to incest stage as her new husband was her brother and her mother in law was her real mother. Despite that, neither she nor her mother

revealed that secret. On the contrary, sometimes she used to have more than one husband at the same time.

As a conclusion, she started her life as a whore, to marry five times throughout the second stage of her life. In the third stage of her life she acted as a clever cutpurse then to enter prison in the last stage of her life. There, she showed repentance and sorrow asking God for condonation especially after seeing one of her husbands being taken for his fate preceded by seeing her name among those who will be hanged, believing that her deceiving attitude was behind that husband's death.

All these events were presented in a clever way which enables the reader of that novel to live the real atmosphere of that woman story and make the reader about to agree with her justifications for that shameful attitude during her lifespan.

**Khan Al-Khalili** (*taught to students of Arabic language*) is a kind of social record of Egyptian people including their sufferance during the 2<sup>nd</sup> world war. It formed an attractive portrait of an Egyptian low class family throughout different stages of life including different contradicting trends and tendencies. Ahmad Akif, that typical employee who was born to a poor family whose father struggled against life circumstances receiving these circumstances with different moods. Sometimes he appeared as a wise old believer and at other times he appeared as a recalcitrant person, even when his eldest son died which added a very bitter feeling to the feeling of poverty that they were living.

Ahmad graduated from the secondary school with highly blazing dreams to face the mishap of his father's retirement for a fault he committed accidentally. Ahmad's dreams to study law for competing with Sa'ad Zaghlool were to be forgotten for the sake of

his father and his family livings. Ahmad started a new stage of his life as a humble employee in the Ministry of Public Works. He tried to compensate what he had put aside of his dreams by reading as many books as possible, but the available books between hands were all old with old useless ideas.

The old useless ideas he was gaining<sup>\*</sup> in addition to his isolation from the daily life created a very weak easily embarrassed talkative person which made his friends to feel frustrated from him. When Egypt entered the 2<sup>nd</sup> world war as a part of Othmani Emperor, his family moved from Al-Skakiñi to Khan Al-Khalili district, believing that the second area is safer than the first because it includes Al-Husseïn bin Ali tomb. This movement abandoned him from his second try to fall in love as his first try was with a young Jewish girl. As a young man in his forties and still unmarried with two fizzled love experiences, he seized the first chance of love to start thinking of marriage. His profile of thinking styles was the reason behind loosing that chance. His eldest brother's graduation from the college to work in a bank in a remote area was the motivation of thinking to marry and the same brother's work movement in Cairo was the reason behind loosing that chance as Ahmad discovered later that the girl he was thinking to marry had created a love relation with his eldest brother. S o, Ahmad had the belief that he should forget about that girl and to give up thinking about marrying her. This shock of feelings was quickly followed by another shock when he discovered that all the gained knowledge and ideas, which he was proud of, were rot and educated people had passed over them since a long period of time. Such shocks made Ahmad to escape from his state by more visits to the public café then to agree with Mo'alim Nono who had invited him many



times to visit Mo'alimuh Aliyyat home where he was able to find different taboos like dancing, singing, alcohol, ...etc. That was the first and the last visit to such a place as it seems he was mindful to what was going on and didn't let his mind's eye to lead him. The time for the hardest shock that Ahmad's family was to receive came, when Roshdi, Ahmad's eldest brother, caught tuberculosis. None knew about that at first and Roshdi didn't pay attention as he was busy in the world of bad women and taboos. The first to notice Roshdi's sickness was Ahmad who insisted on him to visit a doctor. The news of Roshdi's sickness began to be known by his parents, his neighbors then his beloved girl and her parents who obliged their daughter to give up meeting him. This sickness obliged Roshdi to be far away from his home then to come back there for a few days before his death. Ahmad's father devoted the rest of his life for reciting Holy Qur'an, meanwhile his mother had the feeling that she had to suppress her emotions and to soothe her husband's sadness and to think about her only son, Ahmad. But Ahmad added this shock to the many ones as if he had become accustomed, refusing to revive the old feelings of love. Ahmad had the belief that reviving the old feeling of love with that girl was a kind of disloyalty or faithlessness to that dead brother. Ahmad began searching for another home in another area to move to as a way to let his parents the chance of escaping from their state. One of Ahmad's friends offered him an empty home at Al-Zaitoonah district where he started his new stage of life by landing a new hope to marry a widow after receiving unsure news that he would be the head of a department that had four employees.

Comparing and contrasting the events that the main characters faced and their reactions and attitudes, the researcher will find a kind of parallelism or similarity between the events and

experiences but a kind of contradiction in re-actions due to the difference in styles of thinking that the characters formulated.

In Moll Flanders, the two brothers were in a love relation with the same girl, putting in consideration that the first brother who had the illegal relation not only insisted on her marriage to his brother to conceal his delict/crime but he stayed on that illegal relation and Flanders willingly played the two illegal and legal roles.

In Khan Al-Khalili, Ahmad not only receded from competing with his brother in the love scene while he was alive but also refused to revive that relation even after his brother's death, believing that such attitude was a kind of disloyalty.

In Moll Flanders, Flanders being a gentle woman in her own way of thinking, she tried every possible way to achieve that goal never putting in to her consideration any social or creed constrains or limitations. Flanders has no objection to make an alliance with Satan if such an alliance secures her goals or a way to her goals.

In Khan Al-Khalili, despite the many frustrations Ahmad had during all his life stages as he didn't follow up his education to compete with Sa'ad Zaghlool, failed to create a successful love relation, being unmarried, his father' retirement and his eldest brother's death that created an inner feeling of yell as he didn't deserve off that had happened to him, but he never lost his conscience or bridge over his beliefs and thoughts. On the contrary, Ahmad stayed adhered to his beliefs and thoughts, to his family despite the many frustrating shocks, to his brother even after Roshdi's death, to his society despite the necessity to forget his state, not to forget the availability to do taboos that was through

Mo'alim Nono misleading tries and Mo'alimuh Aliyyat home facilities.

The only two similar ways of thinking between characters through the two novels are Flanders in the first novel and Roshdi in the second became repentants and both of them recommended their affairs to God after having the feeling that they were about to leave life.

Looking back again at the characters reactions through the different experiences in their different stages of life, believing that thoughts are behavior-controlling states and we need thoughts to explain a given behavior which is just a reflection of the thinking style profile that the subject had formulated, the researcher is able to trace or elicit different thinking style profiles making use of the theory of Mental self-government.

The researcher traces the Monarchic form in Flander's profile as she was predominated by a single goal that was being a gentle woman without any other parallel or equal goal, meanwhile Ahmad in the second novel formulated the hierarchic form as he had given up more than an aim for the sake of another one, like forgetting about his dreams of learning law and competing with Sa'ad Zaghlool for the sake of his family livings and leaving/forgetting the girl he loved and dreamt to marry for the sake of his eldest brother 's happiness. Again, the researcher elicits the Global level in Flander's reactions as she was thinking of her problem in general that was being a gentlewoman but never been concerned or bothered in details of how to achieve that, but she was ready to seize any opportunity or chance that might help in achieving her goal without any consideration to beliefs, constrains or social customs .....etc. On the other hand, the Local level can

be traced in Ahmad's reactions as he was always concerned with solving his family's problems as when his father was retired, when Egypt entered the 2nd world war, and after his eldest brother's death. Flanders had formulated the external style of thinking as she was a co-operative social-oriented person; meanwhile Ahmad appeared to be an internal one as he spent most of his time in isolation and he was not ready to exchange ideas with others, attracting attention that it isn't a male tendency to be a self-disclosure person. The conservative leaning is clear in Ahmad's reactions as he always deals with the shocks or problems in typical old ways minimizing change, avoiding ambiguous solutions, but Flanders was completely liberal as she was ready enough to try any new way or strategy that might lead to achieving goals never being interested whether such a way had been tried before or not or even accepted or not.

In conclusion, Flanders approved a profile of thinking styles which includes Monarchic, Global, external and liberal styles of thinking. On the other hand, Ahmad's profile of thinking styles includes hierarchic, local, internal, and conservative ones. We should know that each combination of styles of thinking comes out with a different personality and a different way of thinking which decides difference in understanding and reactions or responses.

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