Postmodern intertextuality: Teachers' perceptions about the challenges and implications for EFL learners in literary texts analysis

Usman Shah Toti [1], Majmaah University, VC78+QMQ, Industrial Area, Al Majma'ah 15341, Saudi Arabia.

Majed Abahussain, Majmaah University, VC78+QMQ, Industrial Area, Al Majma'ah 15341, Saudi Arabia.

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to understand postmodern Intertextual perceptions of college-level teachers, the contribution of Intertextuality in comprehending a literary piece of work, and certain challenges facing Saudi EFL learners in meaning construction during the reading process examined in this research. The subjects were five professional teachers from two different colleges who were interviewed in a certain time framework. The researcher analyzed the teachers' personal experiences, explanations about postmodern reading intertextuality, and its intricacies in learners' comprehension emerged as dominant themes. The findings show that during teachers' semi-structured interviews, their meanings, and contents indicated that cultural background, lack of intertextual awareness, stereotype approach, and lack of postmodern literary knowledge can provide impediments in textual analysis and interpretation. Further research is needed to explore more avenues in postmodern intertextual areas and to look into viewing intertextuality from deeper perspectives.

Keywords: Canterbury tales; English teachers; intertextuality; pastiche; postmodernism.

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* ADDRESS FOR CORRESPONDENCE: Usman Shah, Majmaah University, VC78+QMQ, Industrial Area, Al Majma'ah 15341, Saudi Arabia.
 E-mail address: u.toti@mu.edu.sa

1. Introduction

Intertextuality is a postmodern concept (Haberer, 2007; Mason, 2022) that was coined by Julia Kristeva and remains the subject of diverse interpretation and a literary device shaping the meaning of a text with another text as an interconnection between similar or related works of literature (Raj, 2015). Meaning lies inside the text and the reader extracts meaning from the text during the reading process called interpretation. These ideas have been radically challenged in contemporary literary and cultural theories because a literary text is embedded with codes, history, traditions, systems, and cultures established by the previous literary work of art which is crucial to meanings. Texts, both literary and non-literary, are viewed by modern theorists are lacking independent meanings and who find these meanings in intertextual relations (Zengin, 2016; Lechtenberg, 2021). Therefore, reading is a process of exploring meaning between the texts as moving from an independent text into a tissue of textual relations. Like contemporary cultural and literary theories. Intertextuality finds its origin in the works of the twentieth-century Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure, who contributed to the notion of ''intertextuality'' and has radically influenced the established modern literary theory (Allen, 2000). He argued on the relational nature of meaning and the text. Similarly, the Russian literary theorist Bakhtin (2004) has also crucially influenced cultural and literary theories in the domain of intertextuality. Intertextual figures include: allusion, quotation, calque, plagiarism, translation, pastiche, and parody and provide a stable set of critical paradigms for interpretation (Boussaid, 2006) which is closely akin to postmodernism, post-structuralism, as a central idea in contemporary literary studies.

1.1. Literature Review

1.1.1. Intertextuality

A majority of authors adjust their texts by borrowing the philosophies and ideas from previous works to assign a multiplicity of meanings to their works. Because, when the readers read an updated text with the combination of another literary text, can provide different meanings, effects, and ideas and modifies the interpretation of the original text. Hence, learners take influences from other literary texts which support them in clarifying and understanding the meaning of the new literary text. Intertextuality provides the students the opportunities to construct their stories and infer the themes. The writers explore their ideologies and grand narrative with the help of the previous texts, references, quotations, and themes.

Poststructuralist and postmodernist theorists have contributed to the theory of intertextuality which questions the text's authority. According to Nayyar (2008), postcolonial literature has marginalized the literature and cultures of non-European countries due to colonial rule. It questions the discourse of colonialism with the purpose to dismantle the binaries of the center and margin of the Eurocentric ideology and East and West. This sort of hierarchical power is rejected in postcolonial literary works. Postcolonial literature dominantly promulgated Bakhtin's (2004) idea of Dialogism. Intertextuality is an issue of recontextualization by using the previous text as was the indigenous demand

1.1.2. Intertextuality in Reading Literary Text

Literary texts deal with a particular style of language pattern as a text-based process in which embedded a large number of references so-called intertextual elements. Intertextuality is a dominant part and the essence of reading (Ahmadian & Yazdani, 2013) which can be observed in two dimensions: intralingual Intertextuality, and interlingual Intertextuality. The first part explains that texts are interconnected among themselves as living organisms that can affect each other. While the second part argues that intertextual elements of the texts are related to the previous texts in general. According to, students may understand a literary text better if they are aware of intertextual phenomena which may enable them to go deep into reality and explore multiple layers of meaning of the texts. No reading and interpretation are completed without these cannons of intertextuality. The students can construct a better

understanding and take access to the intended meanings through meaningful interpretations. So, in a literary text, the whole, not a part, the portion should be undertaken for analysis with all its constituents, characteristics, and Intertextuality. Readers while reading a literary text can develop meaning out of the text intended. Therefore, the readers might work on the assumption that they should be aware and conscious of the text construction process in order to help them in text interpretation and analysis which may be the aim of the present study. Forster's (2018) famous masterpiece *A Passage to India,* is widely read book received applause across multi-cultural boundaries since its publication in 1924 embedded with British imperialistic discourse and anti-nationalistic discourse with its supporters among the British elite class.

Das (1979) in his article **"E.M. Forster, TS Eliot, and the 'Hymn before Action, 1979), has searched out similar elements of Intertextuality between the poet and the novelist. He explored that both these authors portray similar thematic backgrounds of the collapse of Christianity and the horror of World War 1. He found a resemblance in looking for spiritual sources for optimistic aspiration in them. As a true humanist, and a liberal intellectual, Forster (2018), traveled to India to reconcile the two contradictory cultures such as East and West, British and Indian. Western culture was secular and materialistic and the Eastern culture was spiritual which could hardly associate with each other. However, the author attempted to fill up the gap through understanding and reconciliation. Forster (2018) found the principles of Buddha's philosophy of a meaningful life in a spiritual vision in the birth of Krishna in the novel ''A Passage to India''. However, a cluster of symbolisms in Eliot's (2019) ''Waste Land'' run parallel to the texture thematic values to indicate close correspondence between the two texts. Both textual clusters visualize the resolution of the crisis by revisiting to traditional and religious spring of water. Both texts are embedded with Christian references and holy quotations like the arrival of rain. Similarly, Coleridge has also richly employed spiritual symbolism in his famous works '' The Rime'' and the ''The Wandering of Cain''. ''In Passage to India,'' the British imagination of 'winter and ''spring'' show resemblances with ''ice'' which runs contrary to the active moment and ''spring'' phases of life. As they visualize the ''land'' as a desert, barren and horrible with heat which needs resolution through religious and non-religious texts of blessing rains. Similarly, the play *The Tempest* by Shakespeare is an adaptation of Aime Cesaire's play in which Shakespeare parodies from a post-colonial perspective such as he transforms Prospero, a magician, the owner of an island, into a slave-owner. The purpose of using the Intertextuality technique is to express the images, pictures, and themes of power, slavery, and colonialism. *A Passage to India* is divided into two main structures- Mosque, Temple, and Caves. Each part represents a spiritual journey undertaken by the characters in the novel. The mosque reflects a point of meeting of two different cultures, a place of consolation and an introduction to the conflict, caves, represent Mara bar caves, a place of no return and the first encounter with real India, and Temple has been represented a solution and redemption of the problems of cultural conflicts. Similarly, *Waste Land* by Eliot (2019) has also been divided into parts and each part represents a thematic value for the readers. These parts are The Burial of the Dead, A Game of Chess, The Fire Sermon, Death by Water, and What the Thunder Said. Eliot (2019) describes the April month as the cruelest month of worries, and depression as a reference against Chaucer's Prologue *to the Canterbury Tales*, a month of April which was the month of enjoyment and happiness. The poem was published in 1922 after the second world war1 which begins on a pessimistic note with an epigraph in Latin, and Greek, taken from the Satyr icon by Arbiter (1781). He represents Fisher King, as a historical legendary reference who infertile Europe in his poem, ''Waste Land''. Weston and Frazier, describe the ancient stories of healing the Fisher King to make the land more fertile again and to illustrate the deteriorating conditions of modern society. Similarly, another legendary figure, the Holy Grail legend was believed to be a cup of holy blood collected by Jesus Christ with healing power. The legend of Oedipus was another legendary figure represented in ''Waste Land'', the king of Thebes; Oedipus unknowingly killed his father and married his mother invoking the wrath of the gods. So, when he became blind, the whole land became fertile. Similarly, the legend of Tiresias was

gifted with prophecy and immortality that was later punished by goddesses Hera on looking at her bathing naked and changing into a woman.

The history, the text, and the reader are important factors that may contribute to the interpretation of the text. Kristeva (1980) says that writers do not construct their texts from their thinking but build them from previous texts. She further says that a text is not a single, isolated entity but rather it is a combination of tissues made of so many other texts. A text is an implied dialogue with other texts which are closely related to social and cultural values and possess ideological structures. Intertextuality contains knowledge and standards for the student's development. Intertextuality presents a link among texts between what is described now and what was previously said. The students can share their feelings, and information while focusing on quotations and references within the texts due to which the texts grow. Intertextuality indicates the close association with the relevant texts and depends on previous knowledge happening in another text as one text is related to the text.

Kristeva (1986), a post-structuralist theorist, and a public intellectual writer, first coined the term ''Intertextuality'' in her research article ''Word Dialogue and Novel.'' Kristeva was mush impressed by Mikhail Bakhtin's theory of ''Dialogism'' and extended her work to develop the theoretical basis of Intertextuality (Allen, 2000). However, she took the idea of Intertextuality from Bakhtin, a Russian thinker due for certain reasons. First Bakhtin (2004) discussed the idea of '' Intertextuality'' in his work, '' Dialogism'' as an open and unrestricted notion against the closed-structure idea. Second, He explained that there is no single authorial meaning of the discourse that anyone may agree upon because a word uttered or written, has a plurality of meanings rather than fixed meanings and he further argued that every word is a response to the last words.

Similarly, Roland Barthes, a public intellectual, extended the meaning of Intertextuality by giving it a new theoretical paradigm saying that a text is not a definite object and that it should replace the traditional notion of classification (Allen, 2000). He argues that a text is embedded with references and echoes other texts in structure (Hale 235-39). In support of his arguments, Julia Kristeva claimed that text is a process of production that includes the reader, author, and subject which enables the reader to produce the text (Allen, 2000). Allen (2000) asserts that ''Intertextuality'' has been developed on the foundation of Saussure's theory of signifiers and signified relationships which lead us to a vast network of similarities and different systems of language. He further says that a writer of literary works derives words, images, references, quotations, ways of narration, themes, plots, characters, phrases, and sentences from literary works done before. Therefore, a reader might know that signs refer to the literary system, not the object from which the text is constructed. Allen (2000) asserts when a modern author presents a character of Satan, he might bear in mind Milton's traditional epic poem, *Paradise Lost.*

Similarly, Eliot (2019), in his famous poetical work, '' The Waste Land'', a complex poem that amalgamates the present and the past, brings forth the Christian and Eastern faith and philosophy, having a multiplicity of images, and embedded with various mythological characters. In this poem, Eliot (2019) borrowed the idea of the '' Cruel Month of April'' from Geoffrey Chaucer's historical literary poem, ''Canterbury Tales'' (Middle English: Tales of Canterbury) is a collection of 24 stories that runs over 17,000 lines written in Middle English between 1387 and 1400. In this poem, in collaborating with other pilgrims. They travel to the pilgrimage in April which has been quoted in different forms by Eliot (2019) in the ''Waste Land''. Here is the poem in which Geoffrey Chaucer describes the effects of the April in the following way (here in modern English):

> When April with his showers sweet with fruit
> The drought of March has pierced unto the root
> And bathed each vein with liquor that has power
> To generate therein and sire the flower;

>
> When Zephyr also has, with his sweet breath,
> Quickened again, in every holt and heath,
> The tender shoots and buds, and the young sun
> Into the Ram, one-half his courses have run,
> And many little birds make melody
> That sleeps through all the night with an open eye
> (So, Nature pricks them on to ramp and rage)-
> Then do folk long to go on pilgrimage,
> And palmers to go seeking out strange strands,
> To distant shrines well known in sundry lands.
> And especially from every shire's end
> Of England they to Canterbury wend,
> The holy blessed martyr was there to seek
> Who helped them when they lay so ill and weak?

Similarly, Eliot (2019) has copied the idea of Oedipus complex who was prophesied to be the king, will kill his father and marry his mother unknowingly and as a result, occurred misfortunes in the kingdom (Taplin, 2003). In the same way, the poet has associated this historical, religious image with his *Waste Land,* where there are lots of misfortunes, sufferings, and diseases, due to lack of spiritual values in his land.

The postmodern writer, William Golding's famous novel, "Lord of the Flies" is a translation for Beelzebub; a demon mentioned in the New Testament as chief of the demons (Galbraith, 2012). Thus, it represents the epitome of evil. Simon enters into dialogue with the "pig's head on a stick," as he calls it, trying to diminish it. The head tells him that it is "the Beast," which reflects a sentiment Simon had previously when he tried to tell the boys, as they attempted to decipher the nature of the beast, that "maybe it's only us." The head goes on to tell Simon, "I'm part of you. Close, close, close!" This reveals Golding's primary theme of the novel, namely, that the reason societies fall apart is because of "mankind's essential illness," the moral depravity or evil that is within each person.

1.1.3. Postmodern literary devices

Allusion: allusion refers to various literary references used as shared between two literary pieces of work. The author uses allusion consciously or subconsciously to be recognized by the readers and enable them to understand the meaning within the alluding text and the original context. Hence, both alluded text and alluding text incorporate interactively and dynamically in meaning construction. The connection between the two texts can be bridged due to the reader's involvement and active participation in the process of encoding and decoding**.** However, embedded texts result in hurdles for the readers, limit allusions, and involve distortions and dismantlement. In the above poem, Chaucer describes April month as a biological, cosmological, and meteorological phenomenon in which the pilgrims travel to the tomb of Saint Thomas to worship and offer theirs prays for helping them remove their diseases. The effects of spring create high emotions and spirits that suit the topic. So, these references have been employed with strong obligations by Eliot (2019) in his ''Waste Land''. Thomas Becket (archbishop) has also portrayed as a historical figure that had a conflict with King Henry and died as a martyr in 1173. So, several authors and poets have used original references, themes, and settings in different linguistic styles and forms in their texts and constructed their existing textual compositions based on previous historical, cultural, and ideological intertextual references, quotations, allusions, pastiche, parody, etc., as shared between two works. Although, Chaucer's poem, *Canterbury Tales* embedded with multiple Intertextuality – might be called the first European work of English literature and has hardly been surpassed up to the present day.

Pastiche: a dominant work of art that imitates the style of another artist or artist. Its objective is not to ridicule the original style in the way that a parody does; instead, a pastiche respects the original style and

often pays some homage to it. Pastiche is a literary piece that imitates a famous literary work by another writer. Unlike parody, its purpose is not to mock, but to honor the literary piece it imitates. Pastiche has become a dominant figure of parody in the twentieth century as a postmodern culture of copy and simulacrum. Hutcheon (1986) defines ''Pastiche'' and ''Parody'' as different modes than genres in her work, *A Theory of Parody*. She explains that ''pastiches'' demonstrates similarity and correspondence rather than a difference in a discourse which is not an imitation of a single text but of the unending possibilities of texts. The best example of pastiche is a tragicomedy, *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*, written by Tom Stoppard, who are two minor characters in ''Hamlet'' by Shakespeare. The title has been taken from *Hamlet's* Act 5, Scene 3 when an ambassador warns that '' *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead''.* So, the characters are standing behind the curtains, reflecting their skepticism about the events. Jameson (1991), in his work, *Postmodernism, or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*, has made an influential analysis of the present postmodern condition in which he follows the concept of ''simulacrum'' by Jean Baudrillard as a necessary association with the history in the form of pastiche.

Baldick (1996) in his dictionary, **'**The Concise Oxford Dictionary'' describes parody as the imitation of a serious work of art in a mocking way to ridicule the author's stylistic habits in a more exaggerated form. Parody is related to ''burlesque'' to ridicule serious works of art resulting in ludicrous effects. Parody can be explained as the repetition of texts in different ways with ironic overtones. In postmodern literature, parody has become an important medium of self-reflexivity and can be described as a representation of a literary text. Postmodern writers may use parody as a trick or a weapon to serve a social purpose. The authors yoke both pastiche and parody intentionally and deliberately to evoke literary effect in the readers. The term parody, in earlier times, was considered a narrative poem with epic meter, moderate length, and a contrast between the two texts in mocking and ridiculing form .

1.1.4. Intertextuality Theory

Kristeva, a French linguist, and a public intellectual, coined the term '' Intertextuality'' in 1986 and employed it in a broad meaning in the current context. She argued that Intertextuality is an open notion that refers to the combination of a plurality of texts within a text. According to her, a text is the amalgamation of tissues of texts in which utterances, references, quotations, and images are taken from other texts (Allen, 2000). Intertextuality as a theory can be employed in media such as preparing posters, and making advertisements using previous ideas. Kristeva (1986) says that text is a mosaic of quotations and it possesses transformation and absorption of another discourse.

The theory of ''Intertextuality'' was first coined by Julia Kristeva in 1960 by drawing upon Saussure and Mikhail Bakhtin's theories of literature and language (Allen, 2000). Kristeva's literary achievements took place during the transitional period in contemporary literary and cultural theory as a shift from structuralism to post-structuralism in which the scientific rigor of objectivity, rationalistic grounds, empirical practices, methodological stability, and fixed logical structural meaning to post-structural uncertain, subjective, indeterminacy, desire, play and open notion of textual meaning. Poststructuralist critics and theorists of the 1960s argued that literature is unstable, and most coherently a product of subjective drives which has disrupted the notions of stability of meaning and scientific interpretation (Allen, 2000). The French theorist, and poststructuralist, Roland Barthes, used the term ''Intertextuality'' to challenge the established assumptions related to the traditional role of author and textual relationships in the production of meaning (Zengin, 2016). Bathes argued that literary meaning may not be fully stable and fixed but is made dynamic by the readers and forces the readers to new textual relations without access to the authorial intentions. The reader constructs a plurality and multiplicity of meanings from the text with the help of his prior experiences. Roland Barthes liberated the readers from the traditional and authorial power, which is now dead, to a liberal, productive, and creative autonomy to uncover the covered multiple-layer of meanings in literary texts. Roland Barthes gave them freedom from the traditional

constraints that are characteristically poststructuralist. Poststructuralist critics define the term ''Intertextuality'' to dismantle the notions of meaning while structuralist critics focus on location and close literary meaning.

According to Yardi & Perkel, (2007), Bakhtin's theory of ''Dialogism'', explains that all human communications are dialogic and heteroglossia that involves many languages and several points of view and perspectives. He further says that all utterances are the contribution to the ongoing dialogue and similarly, every word reflects what has gone before. So, the text is not created in a vacuum. However, there must have been done something before which may help in constructing the text. Kristeva says that any text is constructed of a mosaic of quotations and any text is the absorption and transformation of another text within it takes quotations and references from another text and gets a life of its own. It is obvious that no work of art is claimed to be entirely original but is influenced consciously or unconsciously by the previous ones. Therefore, postmodern texts are complex in structure, embedded with several historical, religious, cultural, and political myths, references, quotations, allusions, and images, aiming at ridiculing the existing work of art. As a result, EFL learners must have intertextual knowledge, critical analytical skills, and awareness to overcome these difficulties (Velykoroda & Moroz, 2021).

Intertextuality draws upon the concept, rhetoric, or ideology from other writings to be merged into the new text (Carter & Townsend, 2022). It may be the retelling of an old story or the rewriting of popular stories in a modern context, for instance, James Joyce retells *The Odyssey* in his very famous novel *Ulysses*. Modern theorists viewed that no text, whether literary or non-literary, possesses independent meaning. All texts are interrelated and meanings exist between a text and other related texts. Intertextuality is a difficult term to define as it raises many criticisms and intermingles with other theories (Allen, 2000). Oswald Ducrot, Henning Nolk, and Kjersti Flottum associate Intertextuality with other theories and say that it contains both the existing and the previous texts. One may see the root of Intertextuality in Aristotle's theory of imitation of art. Aristotle, in his *Poetics,* states that the poet is an imitator like an artist as he imitates speech and thoughts. Eliot (2019) made a great contribution by introducing the theory of ''Objective Correlative'' the idea of impersonal poetry and myth issues to Intertextuality. He connects the present images and themes in poetical events with direct reactions against romanticism as these poets do not follow traditions but are subject to their interests. Intertextual reading creates a close link between a piece of a literary text and the texts of a contemporary age and as well as a dialogue for communication. It is a restructuring and re-creation of multiple texts the readers internalize by the activation of socio-cultural, historical, and political techniques. An intertextual text means reading so many texts which are not written alone but are related to other texts in a series. Julia Kristeva explained the term ''Intertextuality'' as a literary term in post-modern literature and extended its meaning after Bakhtin (2004) presented the notion of dialogism. Julia Kristeva claims that Intertextuality is a mosaic of citations and a combination of multi-layers of texts, quotations, and references. This study aims to examine the intertextual theoretical assumptions, their contribution, and the difficulties faced by EFL learners in teaching pedagogy.

Intertextuality, in historical and cultural perspectives, is associated with imitation, pastiche, and other literary styles and practices. Modern media, music, painting, and film industries are based on previous classic literary texts such as Jane Austin and Shakespeare. Text is a tissue and woven structure (Barthes, 1977), and has a plurality of signs, and intertextual relationships that can promote the vision of meaning. Intertextual reading promotes reading actively and as a result, readers demonstrate different expectations, viewpoints, interests, and prior experiences. Furthermore, intertextual theory and practice provide the readers with traditional, historical, cultural, and religious notions of knowledge.

The theoretical history of Intertextuality dates back to the 1960s, which has been redefined with a new theoretical paradigm within the postmodern literary context. Traditional written texts were concerned with prime texts with open references. However, postmodern references are connected with implicit

references to the previous texts that started in the second half of the twentieth century in the form of citations, transformations, and imitations. The readers can interpret these connotations and give meanings to these references. Therefore, Intertextuality reading is a creative, dynamic, and mentally productive state of the readers which may enrich their creativity and encourage them to question and criticize others (Ozbek, 2005 cited in ISIKSALAN, 2018). Furthermore, Intertextuality establishes relations with other disciplines outside literature like architecture design, films, advertisements, paintings, and music which can enable the readers to analyze and interpret building designs, and paintings like pieces of literature (Allen, 2000). Roland Barthes says that the readers may not be able to comprehend the meaning of a text until and unless he establishes connections with the texts because the texts include a plurality of meanings that go beyond the readers' comprehension. Thus, the readers exercise freedom when analyzing texts. In intertextual reading, the readers construct and reconstruct the texts by exploring similarities, and contradictions, understanding points, making inferences, making comparisons, summarizing, answering questions, using memory supports to analyze, and synthesizing themes, images, and characters with new thoughts and meanings (Garrison & Hynds, 1991).

Reading a literary text is an important part of language culture both in FL and ESL contexts (Truman, McLean Davies & Buzacott, 2022; Yaccob, Yunus & Hashim, 2022). Most professional teachers insist on associating personal experiences during reading a literary work to make it appropriate for all and also learning outcomes may affect learning critical thinking abilities (Holt-Reynolds, 1992; Calafato, 2021) and becomes fruitful in facilitating learning situations meaningful to an individual level. As a result, the students feel easy in making meaning construction and gain ownership of reading a literary text . The learners may employ literary experiences when they are exposed to any piece of literary work because it is an intellectual and creative paradigm that can provide them the opportunities to analyze and interpret the contents of the text. An intertextual approach may develop the learners' academic and intellectual performances in the teaching environment and also its awareness supports learners in academic accomplishment (Larsen, 2018). In Intertextuality, literary texts are like tissues that are interwoven under the layers of another text (Lodge, 1992) if the authors are aware of it or not. However, the references in Intertextuality may be implied or literal which may create hurdles for the readers to understand the contents.

1.1.5. Background of post-modernism

Postmodern literature is considered to be a reaction to the limitations of modern literary stylistics and ideological assumptions and the radical modifications that took place in literature after the Second World War catastrophe. Literary writers of the postmodern era have been strongly affected by the postmodern movement embedded with new ideas and philosophy which says that reality is relative to specific situations and it seems impossible to locate any specific meaning to any event, concept, or idea.

Post-modern debates have emerged out of new literary, social, and political theories that cover multi-disciplinary areas of study like architecture, sociology, philosophy, communication, film industry, art, and literature. The history of post-modernism is traced back to Anglo-American Literary debates in the 1930s and 1940s and Latin-American Literary Criticism. However, the post-modern real analysis began in the 1970s. Post-modernism can be best understood without the concept of ''modernism'' which started in the middle of the 18th century as a dominant ''European Enlightenment philosophy. Its grand narrative was based on the issues of human enhancement. Han et al., (2009) have precisely described the main features of modernism and associated modernity with the society that emerged in the West and was dominated by the Enlightenment philosophy in Europe. From the structural-functional point of view, a society that is highly monitored by the capitalist market economic system is constructed of labor hierarchical social order, urbanization, industrialization, science and technology, utilitarianism, and ethical individualism. In modernism, human intellect is regarded as a super intellectual ability and power for scientific discoveries and revolutionary human development in the field of technology and natural sciences. Modern literature

gained popularity in the aesthetic movement from 1910 to 1930. The main feature of stylistic techniques in post-modern literature is '' Intertextuality'' means the acknowledgment of literary works done previously interrelated with another literary work.

1.1.5.1. Main features of post-modernism

Post-modernism has emerged with different modern narratives and discourses with the following basic characteristics.
- Post-modern literature is dominantly considered vague and ambiguous and rejects the ultimate reality established by science.
- Post-modern thinkers have refuted the idea of objectivity in social studies as a grand narrative of the autonomous rational mind.
- Post-modern intellectuals focus on individuality as a subjective perception based on which they construct subjective reality.
- In post-modernism, truth is regarded as an issue of perspective, which is not stable, or universal but can change according to the situation.
- Due to multiculturalism and huge globalization, have strongly influenced education, literature, fashion, architecture, music, food, etc.
- In this multi-media and multi-cultural era, the information system has made life more difficult and different due to which public thoughts have become hyper-real.
- Post-modern world has influenced literature by introducing new trends like using black humor, irony, and parody on serious situations with fragmentation and playfulness.

1.1.5.2. The main scholars of the post-modern era

The great scholars of the post-modern era are Jacques Derrida, Lyotard, Baudrillard, Foucault, Jameson, and Reisman who have strongly contributed to literary criticism.

Jacques Derrida: A French philosopher of Algerian origin introduced a deconstructive approach to analyzing the discourse of Foucault.

Baudrillard: A French philosopher and scholar who worked on identity constructed by the application of signifiers he/she uses in social interaction. He further states that consumer items determine one's social position as reality. He has also evaluated the utility of knowledge in a post-modern world.

Foucault: A French philosopher who explained the ultimate truth in relative perspective, through social discourse.

Lyotard: James Francois Lyotard was a French philosopher who worked on interdisciplinary areas of discourse and highlighted the social conditions influenced by technology. He supported plurality and differences and criticized the ultimate discourse that modernists search for knowledge.

1.1.5.3. Problems and issues in post-modernism

Post-modern thoughts are the need of contemporary times. However, scholars have become vaguer to decide whether the era we have entered is a post-modern world or an expansion of the modern age. Therefore, post-modernist thoughts are not beyond criticism which is discussed in the following ways.
1. Majority of readers argue that post-modernism is hard to understand due to complex language structure, forms, difficult literary terms, and jargon. Also, the texts are so difficult and ambiguous that the readers may not be able to understand post-modern literature.
2. post-modernism rejects the traditional format or simplicity because it does not contain any flavor of things.

3. In most cases, post-modernism has multifaceted features without resolving problems which are considered a theory not a fact in the real sense.

4. Post-modern thoughts reflect pessimism while modernism can show optimism. Similarly, post-modernism is taken to be an anti-enlightenment philosophy while modernism is regarded as pro-enlightenment thought.

1.2. Purpose of study

Several researchers have claimed that ''intertextuality'' helps readers to reconsider, redefine their thoughts, and reframe the texts, reconstruct their thinking abilities and perceptions about texts (Allen, 2011). Intertextuality may enable the students to link their past experiences with the present textual references and images resulting in their critical thinking enhancement (Kathy, 1993). To comprehend a text better, it seems to be necessary for EFL learners to construct links between the text of their life experiences and the new text. Therefore, intertextuality establishes a meaningful transaction between the new texts and their previous experiences. So, focusing on the intertextual paradigm and its contribution to the EFL students and the various challenges facing them in the interpretation of literary texts in the Saudi context. The purpose of this research is to look into personal horizons and broad visions and to realize the difficulties and weaknesses of learners in dealing with literary texts. The study addressed the following questions:

1. What are teachers' perceptions of ''intertextuality?
2. How can '' intertextuality'' contribute to the EFL students understanding of a literary text?
3. What challenges do most EFL learners find in interpreting an intertextual literary work?

2. Materials and Method

The method of research was qualitative data analysis that investigates teachers' personal experiences and arguments on postmodern intertextual reading. A qualitative research design was used through intertextual reading to analyze and develop the students' creative reading skills. Postmodern reading intertextuality is the shaping of a text's meaning by another text, the interconnection between similar or related works of literature that can reflect and influence an audience's interpretation of the text (Kristeva, 1986). Similarly, intertextual figures include allusion, quotation, calque, plagiarism, translation, pastiche, and parody.

2.1. Participants

The study which focuses on the role of intertextual reading and its impact on the EFL learners' creative reading skills under the perceptions of EFL teachers, was conducted with five professional teachers from different colleges at Majmaah University in Saudi Arabia.

2.2. Data collection instrument

Chaucer's *Canterbury Tale* and Eliot's (2019) poetical works were used for discussion which lasted for fifteen minutes. The researcher conducted an interview individually by using a mobile audio-recording system. During an interview, the researcher focused on the contents of the speaker and wrote down the main ideas on the paper with full concentration. The researcher distributed the interview forms and the respondents' opinions and expressions were recorded and collected the insight qualitative data in a relaxed environment, by asking the following research questions.

1. What are teachers' perceptions about ''Intertextuality''?

2. How can '' Intertextuality'' contribute to the EFL students understanding of a literary text?

3. What challenges do most of the EFL learners find in interpreting an intertextual literary work?

2.3. Data Analysis

The data collected from the interviews were assigned with a content analysis procedure. The validity and reliability of the interview form were assessed by the expert opinions of two teachers. The researcher evaluated and analyzed the answers of the respondents based on intertextual thematic values, characterization, title paradigm, contextual setup, and the relationships, between the existing and the previous texts on similarity and difference perspectives.

In this qualitative research study, the data analysis procedure included coding and interpreting the data design. The respondents' written notes, negotiations, and arguments were analyzed to get insight meanings. Criteria were considered during data analysis based on the speaker's experimental group work, interpretation, and inferences. The respondents' emotions, eye contact, body language, smiling, and various postures were carefully observed and analyzed. How those expressions could help the researcher in analyzing the in-depth meaning? After recording, each audiotape was attributed to transcription, and immediately the respondents' experiences were analyzed and as a result, major themes were developed.

3. Results

3.1. Teachers' opinions about ''postmodern intertextual reading

In this qualitative study, the data collected from the EFL professional teachers were analyzed with the descriptive analysis method. The opinions and perceptions of the teachers were centered on common thematic values and literary skill abilities. Logically coherent ideas and consistent opinions are suitable for interpretation (Gay, Mills, and Arisian, 2006, as cited in ISIKSALAN, 2018). The EFL respondents' views were found exciting that could reflect their insights in more expressive ways.

3.1.1. Respondent 1: Boosting Students' Critical Thinking

The first respondent stated that intertextual reading can contribute to boosting students' critical thinking abilities and also enriches their cultural understanding. He reiterated that a lack of intertextual knowledge in the reading process may retrogress students' comprehension. He further stated that reading an intertextual text is a cognitive process that can establish a relationship between the reader and the text together. He reiterated the significance of literary Intertextuality in the learning process. Due to the intertextual awareness, the students can easily compare and contrast various texts and link with other texts. He pointed out that EFL students must have cultural, political, religious, and social awareness in a multicultural context which may help them in textual analysis and interpretation. Students without intertextual background knowledge may face difficulties in understanding a literary text. He stated that through intertextual knowledge, students can argue and discuss serious issues logically from postmodern literary perspectives. They use this evidence, as they have collected from various fields, for further discussions and can express their opinions openly.

3.1.2. Respondent 2: Develop Writing Communication

The second respondent argued that intertextual knowledge is closely associated with a written communication which is an active and critical ability. He stated that there exists a connection between good writing and good thinking. The learners can judge and evaluate information through the knowledge they receive in the form of intertextuality. He said that critical thinking boosts the learners' abilities to think correctly about the world, history, and politics to establish a meaningful rapport between the learners and the text. If the learners think responsibly, reflectively, and reasonably, then they can manipulate their learning appropriately. He further explained that students can link the previous texts, references, themes, settings, characters, and narratives in literary works using their intertextual knowledge. However, a text is not just 'words' and 'phrases' but an amalgamation of so many texts, he said.

3.1.3. Respondent 3: A productive way of Thinking

The third respondent expressed his opinion by saying that intertextuality is a creative and productive process of learning. He argued that we read with the repertoire of texts in our heads. Everything from our recognition of the signs (the letters and digraphs) to the words, phrases, motifs, forms, and ultimately the meanings are derived from the texts that we have. And then what we are reading (the text in front of us) is incorporated into our repertoire which may help readers in constructing meaning fruitfully. He further elaborated his points that Intertextuality is an interaction between the two texts where a postmodern reader may establish vertical relation between text and text rather than a horizontal one (traditional) between the reader and the writer using critical and analytical abilities. He supported Intertextual reading which includes new materials to help students build a deeper understanding of a literary text such as primary historical documents like newspapers, magazines, advertisements, and diaries. These materials are taken from novels, poems, films, plays, or other works of art that relate thematically, culturally, or historically to the primary text. The students find them similar or different to their own experiences, images, characters, and ideas across these different works. Therefore, Intertextual reading helps students make connections across a broad spectrum of work.

3.1.4. Respondent 4:Intertextual Awareness

The fourth respondent argued that the teacher must make the readers aware of using intertextual materials for a better understanding of the text. He stated that the knowledge gained in the previously read texts can positively influence the meaning that a reader makes of a text at hand. He claimed that the learners must read different texts and compare their characters, themes, and setup so that they uncover the complex structure of the text and stimulate rich discussion in the classroom. He further argued that students should focus on asking questions to explore reality. He explained that learners draw upon their knowledge of other texts and bring them near to their personal experiences and to reflect on the issues they face during unfamiliar ideas. The learners, he said, may resolve difficult problems and complex meanings through comparative knowledge in terms of theme and plot. Intertextual awareness provides learners with a framework that enables them to plan their studies systematically for language and literary development.

3.1.5. Respondent 5: Develop Argumentative skills

The fifth respondent explained that intertextuality is a difficult mental process because it requires knowledge to make relationships between the texts. During intertextual reading, readers need calling and recalling between the texts due to which the readers compare, predict and assess the texts. To understand the text, knowledge, experience, and information from the previous studies, the readers take advantage to collect knowledge, and evidence to boost their arguments. He argued that intertextuality empowers the readers with argumentative skills. He further said that learners, who go through a difficult process of reading to complete imperfect texts, will follow learning stages such as understanding and exploring a problem, discussing, questioning, reasoning, interpreting, and predicting probabilities, having an explanation in mind, and making inferences, will contribute them in learning process easily. He explained that it can also enrich the reading culture from multiple perspectives, shows the differences between narrative techniques and narrating styles of narrators, and gives information about reading style. He expressed his opinion by saying that in this postmodern era, intertextual literary reading seems to be too complicated for the EFL learners in the classroom such as associating alien multicultural thematic values, religious myths, and complex literary linguistic knowledge with their own. He viewed that it is also difficult for the readers to be unified on one single truth and meaning in this postmodern literary text and the students will fail to uncover the covered meaning with mutual consensuses. Therefore, learners must have intertextual awareness and knowledge of the previous writers to have a good argumentative rapport between the texts.

4. Discussion

A text is dynamic. The same reader may interpret the same text in different ways due to his experiences, background knowledge, cultural values, and point of view (Smagorinsky, 2001). Intertextuality is a wide-ranging synchronic argumentative intertextual relationship that employs author-centered diachronic details (Meek, 2014; Berger, 2021). Postmodern intertextual knowledge plays a key role in shaping thinking and meaning construction. The reader constructs meaning with the help of intertextual knowledge. The reader may focus on how to link tissues of texts together which can potentially generate new knowledge and meaning (Smagorinsky, 2001). The transcript of the respondent included the importance of intertextual background and conceptualized knowledge and how critical thinking abilities may contribute to meaning construction.

During data analysis, some strengths and weaknesses were found. But the respondents' engagement produced good transformations and rapport. The majority of the respondents reiterated that critical thinking skills, cognitive skills, cultural knowledge, and reading habits may contribute to a better understanding of the text (Smagorinsky, 2001). Many respondents explained that a lot of learnerss face challenges in reading literary texts. They say that these literary texts are embedded with complex figurative language, ambiguity, vagueness, and symbolism. To overcome these challenges, learners must get intertextual knowledge, high cognitive critical skills, cultural knowledge, and reading habits.

5. Conclusion

The findings of the study indicate that the intertextuality of reading a literary text is socially, culturally, and empirically determined. It needs cultural knowledge, critical thinking skills, personal experiences, and background knowledge for learners to comprehend a complex text such as its meaning, values, and semiotics. Cultural knowledge, critical thinking ability levels, awareness, experiences, and reading habits may create impediments for learners to understand the inside meanings of the text such as the implied meaning, and symbolic depth. The main purpose of this study is to understand intertextuality which can serve a significant role in overcoming postmodern literary works' intricacies. The teachers have confidence in postmodern intertextual works and can easily deal with diverse issues.

This study was conducted at Majmaah University and aimed at exploring teachers' perceptions of intertextual literary texts, their contributions, and the challenges facing EFL learners in understanding the texts. The research study was grounded on open intertextual literary textual relations based on postmodern narratives, which were analyzed. The researcher focused on certain postmodern intertextual literary figures such as pastiche, parody, references, quotations, and sarcastic transformation as open intertextual styles. It is necessary for further studies, to explore Intertextuality in multi-perspectives.

The respondents, who participated in this study, were teachers from Majmaah University who strongly believe that intertextual reading is necessary and important to the development of EFL learners' creative and critical reading skills. The teachers argued that students should read both works written by Eastern-Western and classic and modern writers. They further said that postmodern literature emphasizes that no text has meaning without the previous texts and nothing exists in the new text except what has already been said. They argued that a plurality of texts is constructed politically, socially, economically, and richly embedded with cultural discourses. Therefore, the readers must acquire knowledge about Intertextuality and fill up the gap between the present and past texts with their prior knowledge. They explored that if readers intend to understand the text, then they should focus on comparative reading, through which they can expand their reading culture. However, many students face challenges and implications in building a bond between intertextual elements such as references, postmodern images, and thematic assimilations at the beginning of the reading process.

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