

Modes of Narrative Presentation in Leila Aboulela's *Minaret*

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Abstract

Leila Aboulela is a novelist who thinks in Arabic and writes in English. Her novel, *Minaret*, is an embodiment of the borderline between a home-made mentality and an outward broad ambition. Gaining her theme and characterization a considerable amount of credibility, her style remains the vital literary tool of expression. Aboulela has employed indirect methods of presentation so skillfully to portray the tragedy of her heroine, Najwa, who is torn between the luxuries of a prestigious family at home and the hazards of her days in London. The variations of these indirect methods are used on a wide scale in the book, a fact that availed it a special quality. Building upon a variety of concerned theorists in the field of speech and thought presentation, the paper celebrates a painstakingly analysis of Aboulela's book that hovers between Sudan and England.

Key Words: Bakhtain, Free indirect speech, double-voiced discourse, Split identity

الملخص العربي:

أساليب العرض السردية في رواية المئذنة لليلى أبو العلا

ليلى أبو العلا روائية عربية سودانية تفكر بالعربية وتكتب بالإنجليزية. وتعتبر روايتها "المئذنة" تجسيدا للحد الفاصل بين العقلية الناشئة في أحضان الوطن الأم والطموح الشارد خارج حدود الوطن. وفي ظل المصادقية التي أضفتها على فكرة الرواية وبناء الشخصيات يظل عنصر الأسلوب هو الأداة الأكثر أهمية في التعبير الروائي. وبالتالي فإن أبو العلا في روايتها قد وظفت أساليب التعبير غير المباشرة بتقنية رائعة لإلقاء الضوء على مأساة بطلتها نجوى التي تمزقت هويتها بين فخامة العيش مع عائلتها في الوطن الأم والمخاطر المحدقة بها في لندن، علاوة على أن تنوع طرق العرض الأسلوبي والمستخدم على نطاق واسع في الرواية قد أكسبها خاصية متفردة. والدراسة الحالية تنطلق من آراء العديد من العلماء المنظرين في مجال العرض الأسلوبي من أجل تحليل منطوقات الشخصية الرئيسية وإيضاح دلالاتها.

كلمات مفتاحية: باختين- الأسلوب الحر غير المباشر- السياق المزدوج - الهوية المنقسمة

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Leila Aboulela's *Minaret* (2005) is one of many occasions where indirect methods and techniques are positively employed. The novel is an account of Najwa's crisis at home and abroad. The book also traces her development in the sense of her faith. Even people she encounters, either in Sudan or in England, are retrospectively recalled into her fictional realm so skillfully. In other words, the events of the book are retold from Najwa's point of view using the first method of narration that very much appropriates the aim of the writer of revisiting her past and uniting it with her present. In such a retrospective way of narration, there emerges a degree of indirectness as the narrator, most of the time, is alone and no physical presence of other characters is felt. This is why Free Indirect Style (FIS) and free indirect thought (FIT) have been so effective tools used by Aboulela; a technique that also absorbed the reader in a state of special hearing and peculiar involvement. In her article, *Free Indirect Speech in Mrs. Dalloway* (1999), Gloria .G. Jones states that:

With FIT, fears, hopes, self-awareness, self-delusion are always reported from within the character's own consciousness. So, it is used in times of crisis and self-reflection, when there is no other character present.

FIS was first described by Chales Bally in 1912(qtd in Pascal 8) as "le style indirect libre" and he has summarized three basic ways of rendering thoughts or words of a character in a text as Direct Speech (DS), Indirect Speech (IDS), and Free Indirect Speech (FIS). He does not limit speech to vocalized thoughts, but uses the term to mean interior speech as well. Roy Pascal, moreover, explains that in the free indirect course "the narrator, though preserving the authorial mode throughout and evading the 'dramatic' form of speech and dialogue, yet places himself, when reporting the words or thoughts of a character, directly into the experiential field of the character, and adopts the latter's perspective in regard to both time and place"(9). Bakhatin describes a double-voiced discourse as having " a two direction- it is directed both toward the referential object of speech, as in ordinary discourse, and toward another's discourse, toward someone else's speech' (*Problems* 185). He also calls what we know as free indirect discourse "quasi-direct discourse" because its "syntactic markers" point to it as authorial speech, while its; emotional structure belongs to a character. Bakhatin marks "quasi-direct discourse" as "most convenient for transmitting the inner speech of characters" based on the following reasoning:

Such a form permits another's inner speech to merge, in an organic and structured way, with a context belonging to the other. But at the same time, it is precisely this form that permits us to preserve the expressive structure of the character's speech, its inability to exhaust itself in words, its flexibility, which would be absolutely impossible within the dry and logical form of indirect discourse. (*Discourse* 319)

Norman Page (1973) and McAurther (1998) stressed the major markers of each type of speech. For DS, the exact words of the speaker, supported by quotation markers and other markers like question marks, are in focus. Through FIS, we encounter the report in the words of the reporter with verbs 'backshifted' in tense and changes in pronouns and adverbials of time and place to align with the time of reporting. With FIS, we lack a reporting clause and verbs of saying to show the shift from narration to reporting. Also, there are backshifted verbs with other references, but at the same time, FIS may retain some features of DS such as direct quotations and vocatives. FIS will be the focus of this study being a "narrative technique that exposes shifts in consciousness, dramatizes the myriad impressions, and develops characters in ways that simple direct and indirect discourses cannot". (Jones 13).

Taking into account the terminological controversy about the construction of FIS, the list of some of the proposals is relevant : *Represented Speech* (Jespersen 1924), *Free Indirect Discourse* (Mc Hale 1978), *Represented Speech and Represented Thought* (Banfield 1973), *Free Indirect Thought* (Ikeo2007), *Uttered and Unuttered Speech* (Galperin1981), *Represented Uttered and Unuttered Speech* (Kuznet.Sova, Smykalova1972) , *Forms of Speech in Literature* (Norman Page 1973),(Michael Toolan 1988), and *The Phenomenon of Free Indirect Speech ..*(Alina Liskev 2009).

Liskeve (2009) has considered Bakhtin's concept of FIS. Maikhail Bakhtin's "typology of discourse" consists of three main categories: the direct speech of the author, represented speech, doubly-oriented speech. The last of them is the one that corresponds with FIS in its modern sense. In addition, Bakhatin (1981a 43) divides 'doubly-oriented' speech into four categories: stylization which involves a borrowed discourse used by the author for his own purpose provided that it occurs in the same line of the original, Parody, whereas the style of the author, or his discourse, is borrowed and imitated, 'Skaz', which refers to a mode or technique that mirrors oral narration and hidden polemic, which is a kind of double-oriented discourse that refers to another speech act that is not articulated in the text at all.

In the same context, Graham Hough, similarly, identifies five voice styles in narrative fiction: the topical or thematic voice, the narrative voice, coloured narrative, and the free indirect style and direct character speech. (Hough 202)

Consequently, Alina Leskiv (2009) has classified the types of FIS into two major categories and eight sub-categories as follows: uttered FIS that includes: Topical speech (TS), hidden speech, (HS), quoted speech. (QS), speech in speech. (SS) and Inner FIS that involves: Internal reflection (IR), Internal monologue (IM), Internal dialogue (ID), and Stream of consciousness (SOC). It is out of this last division that the current study will proceed.

Leila Aboulela's novel, *Minaret*, passes through many levels of consciousness. The events, being narrated from a first person angle of vision, represent the vehicle of stream of consciousness or "polytonality" (Bakhtin 1981a). FIS in *Minaret*, functions as an index of literariness that means it serves as a register-marker for the register of literature. In addition, it is viewed as the "vehicle of dreams, hallucination and other mental states, moving in the direction of stream of consciousness but not identical with it". (Ullman 101-102). Also, when speech happens to appear in *Minaret*, "it appears as the "echo" of words in a character's consciousness, words as they are heard or perceived by a character". (Banfield 31-32). Still, according to Banfield, there is a visual counterpart to free indirect stream of consciousness, in the form of descriptive details or impressions which are attributable to the limited visual perspective of a particular character. Thus, FIS becomes a means to capture impressions in the mind, not mere words.

Najwa, the protagonist and narrator of *Minaret* is a girl torn between her origins in Sudan and her compulsory exile in London. The circumstances that led her to her exile are torrential owing to a coup in Sudan that robbed her father his prestigious status and led to his execution. Having realized herself alone with her brother Omar, Najwa decided to face up to the grimness that became of her reality. What increased her sense of alienation were the views of Anwar, her colleague whom she loves, being a member of the communist party that opposed the regime of her father. Unable to face the post-father conditions, she decided to transfer to London. In London, she was not as lucky as she was in her homeland. Instead of the retinue of servants at home, she found herself one of those servants at Mrs Lamya's home. Her twin brother Omar was sentenced to prison on drugs allegations. Only at this stage (the first part of the novel) of her life that Najwa started to recall her past and

reconsider the consequences of that followed the tumbling of her family. She realized a major fact about herself; that she knows nothing about her being a Muslim.

Her acceptance of Islam coincided with her work at Mrs. Lamya's house. She has not completed her studies. She is now wearing Hijab. This is why she is drawn to Tamer, her employer's brother who contradicts the Westernized style of his sister. Najwa's past is still chasing her in the form of Anwar's coming to London as a refugee, a hint that equalized their status. Anwar flared the old passion of Najwa and rekindled her homesick as he represents the only connection to home now. They felt a sort of unmonitored liberty in London that resulted in sexual intercourse in full contradiction to their principles. Having felt the panic of her sin, Najwa frequented the mosque more regularly and it was the mosque instructor that had a major impact of redirecting the course of her life. The compensation she accepted from her employer as a price of putting an end to her relation with Tamer was Hajj (pilgrimage). The novel ends with an internal reflection on the side of Najwa yearning for the days of the family at home.

Aboulela's narrative technique in *Minaret* is that of an immigrating figure. It shows "the hardships that accompany wrenching relocations, whether brought about by desire for better opportunities or political exile" (Fischer 83). Her heroine Najwa is actually "caught between places, her identity fractured, yet her vision is essentially secular, her protagonist seeks a new sense of self through London's secular space – its workplaces, its leisure spaces, its streets. In this narrative, a reclaiming of sexuality on her own terms is part of the female protagonist's assimilation into a secular Western life" (Fischer 84). Aboulela herself has declared in 2005 that she had to be British and had to be assimilated into the new culture owing to the new status of her children there and has denied her intention to recall her past again in contradiction to what she declared on the mouth of her heroine: "I circle back, regress, a scattered record, a stutter". Her fear of the probability of being left alone presses her: "I have to be British or else they will leave me behind" (Sethi 2005).

Such being the case with Najwa, Leskiv's approach of FIS seems so applicable in a case of a deeply defeated protagonist reconsidering and narrating her life retrospectively in an attempt to make amends to her pride, dignity and religious status.

Topical Speech

In terms of Leskiv's definition, Topical Speech (TS) means "the expression of a speaker, altered in a peculiar way and included into the speech of a narrator. Through TS only the general content of what has to be said can be conveyed. The character's words are not realized in open speech" (54).

Thus far, as UM Waleed, the religious instructor is concerned, Najwa's account of what she heard is rendered in a way that seems in proportions with Leskev's definition:

She speaks about Eid and how the angels are handing out gifts to us. Then she tells us to try and keep up all the high standards of Ramadan, not to slack off like we usually do. The extra prayers, the extra charity, the daily reading of the Qur'an, not back-biting, not gossiping, not envying, not lying – we should make the intention of keeping them up throughout the year". (*Minaret* 185)

Throughout this narrative account of what UM Waleed is supposed to have said, Najwa is paraphrasing the words of her instructor and transcribing her didactic speech into a flow of narrative sentences that carry the content of the original version without giving the exact words of her addresser. After the opening narrative sentence, TS sets in carrying the message of "keeping up the standards of Ramadan" which is originally UM Waleed's, not Najwa's. Then, there follows the proscription "not to slack off" that seems belonging to the instructor while the rest of it "as we usually do" seems more reclining to Najwa. Still, Najwa, the narrator recalls the topics emphasized by the instructor being "prayers, charity, daily reading of the Qur'an" and frames them into the same sentence through the opposing pattern of the affirmative–negative formula. Furthermore, Najwa in this "monitored thought" (Murphy 41) is mimicking the original utterances of Um Waleed, establishing, by so doing, the distance between the inner motivations of the character of Um Waleed and the behavioural norms of herself of a narrative voice. What strengthens this belief is the use of dash which is used as a separating tool that differentiates two levels of transmission: the level of TS that paraphrases Um Waleed's speech and Najwa's realization of her status as a narrator in the mosque.

Another example in which TC is employed is the one in which Najwa reflects her speech with Anwar in the following manner:

مجلة كلية الآداب بالوادي الجديد- مجلة علمية محكمة- العدد العشرون (الجزء الأول)

I need this from him. It feels right, nourishing. Then he asks me if Omar has ever tried to escape, like prisoners do in films. He flickers between soulful depth and immaturity. This flickering is attractive, it absorbs my attention. (*Minaret* 197)

Following the subjective first person narration opening by the protagonist Najwa, there follows an objective mental account "It feels right, nourishing". Then, the narration transforms to the consciousness of Anwar when Najwa, out of her absorption into his mind's inner workings, reports that "he asks me if Omar". The fact is that the sentence "then he asks me if Omar ever tried to escape "is clearly Najwaa's which converted Anwar's original speech into this reported portion. The conditional "if" causes the transmission through a mixture of original DS and some reporting tools. The degree of indirectness widens when Najwa takes the authorial supremacy to decide that he "flickers between soulful depth and immaturity" in which the narrator is commenting and evaluating rather than reporting. Then, she steps outward Anwar's consciousness to affirm that "flickering is so attractive" to her. Through TS, Anwar's words are changed into a sort of reported speech, as we might imagine the original would go as follows: "has Omar escaped like prisoners do in films?" he asks. And then flickers in soulful depth and immaturity." That contains the context of what Anwar said without explicitly saying so.

Aboulela adopts another version of TC which is the abridged speech when she makes her heroine Najwa's reflections take the following course:

Ali intrigued me. I had got the impression from Anwar that the English were all secular and liberal. Ali was nothing like that, yet he was completely English and had never set foot outside Britain. When I got to know Wafaa better, she told me about his conversion, how he used to be a devout Christian and felt that the church was not strict enough for him. The more lifts I accepted from them, the more I got to understand him, listening to him complain to Wafaa about the traffic or joke with one of the children. It was not only his accent that I found odd. (*Minaret* 241)

TS takes this abridged form being retold by the narrator in a way that underlines only the core of what is said. Through the opening sentence: "Ali intrigued me", so many probabilities remain open to the reader to imagine which shape has

"intriguing" might have taken. Then, in the following sentence, Najwa reports bluntly that Anwar's views of the British are crystallized and condensed in just their being "secular" and "liberal". A third view which is involved through the same quote is that of Wafaa which is presented in an FIS: "she told me about his conversion, how he used to be a devout Christian, and felt that the church was not strict enough for him", in which Wafaa's original words are not used, but rather, abridged to give a concise transcription of their content. Given this reformulated version of the speeches of other character, the protagonist narrator shows a privilege of piercing into the minds of her fellow characters, which are retrospectively viewed.

Hidden Speech (HS)

Alina Leskiv states that HS "explicates a certain language impulse that makes the interference of a personage into the narrator's speech, although the absorption in a personage's speech is not as full as in TS. Only some cases of absorption are retracted. HS conveys the general content of the expression as well as TS, whereas the concealing of real speech is obligatory only in HS". (54)

In the light of Leskiv's illustration, HS is found to be of Aboulela's tools of rendering the thoughts and impressions of her narrating character owing to her omnipresent quality. The first of the occasions that exemplifies this is the one in which Najwa tells of her speech with Anwar:

He told me what happened to his leg. They had put it in a pail of ice for a whole day to hurt him, just to hurt him. They had asked him to spy on the activities of the Communist Party, offered him money and a car and, when he refused, took him away and put his leg in a pail of ice. (*Minaret* 162)

Najwa, the narrator occupies a mid position between the reader and Anwar, and reports indirectly what she was told by him. After an opening sentence, which is pure indirect speech, FIS sets in. Najwa is practising a sort of absorption in Anwar's original speech in the sense that his original words are not clearly mentioned, but mostly concealed. What is actually rendered is the general context of the expression. FIS markers are clear in the form of "backshifted verbs" (had put, had asked, offered, refused), and the transformations of pronoun (he). In addition, in her stream of FIS, there appears the phrase "to hurt him" which seems ambiguous: is it the narrator's or Anwar's although it sounds more original with an authorial refinement. Still, in her FIS course of the third sentence, a sense of immediacy is felt owing to the flowing of four successive sentences with no stop

in between. The immediacy felt here is a remnant of the original dialogue between Najwa and Anwar. And the non-stop course of the successive sentences is owing to the urgency of the narrator's thought being a protagonist and a narrator at one and the same time.

In a similar case in which the author's discourse contains components of the personage's speech, the narrator remembers the Ethiopian maid they once had in Sudan:

I remember an Ethiopian maid who told me that her friends called her Donna Summer because she resembled the singer. She laughed when I too started to call her Donna. Donna put eggs yolk in her hair, egg white on her face, rubbed her legs with BP petroleum jelly. She wore a short pink corduroy skirt on her day out. She was a refugee in Sudan. She would talk about Ethiopia, about the cool mountains and the rains and the good schools they had there. She said she would go with her boyfriend to the states and, once she got there, escape from him at the airport, run. (*Minaret* 84).

Two aspects of FIS are used here: FIS and FIT. Aboulela relies more heavily, in *Minaret*, on free indirect thought which sometimes has the sense of a soliloquy. Najwa is being made to remember most of the time. In her retrospective mental process of recalling past incidents and memories, she resorts to an indirect or free indirect method of transmission to connect her past to the present. In her account of the Ethiopian maid they had in Sudan, she reveals some personal aspects of the maid. In the process, she resorts to verbs of case "remember, resemble, put". This shows a case of an accompanying narrator. At the same time, she resorts to verbs of saying: "told, call, talk, said". This amalgamation of FIS and IS and narrative report strengthens Najwa's role as a protagonist narrator. Moreover, the sort of concealing the original speech of the maid and giving the context of it instead could be labeled under Bhakti's "skaz" (qtd in Cabrea 39) where Najwa produced a sort of oral everyday narration".

Quoted Speech

Quoted Speech (QS) is viewed by Leskiv as a style that "can be presented in two modifications: as a literal speech of personages included into the narrator's discourse or as a literal speech of famous people". She adds that the "device consists of the interference of character's words into the narrator's discourse". It

can be one single word, or alternatively a whole sentence scattered through the narration in the form of sentences surrounded by words of a narrator. (55)

The first passage that illustrates the case is the one in which Najwa contemplates and recalls Anwar's views of the Muslim status abroad:

Muslim countries had rejected the grandeur of Kings and wanted revolutions instead. After his fall, the daughter of the Emperor Haile Selassie was imprisoned for years in a small room. "Well, I know for sure whose side I'm on", Anwar would say, "the side of the people". He would be happy if Britain became a republic and I would be sad. (*Minaret* 178)

Through this quote, Anwar's speech is quoted as an "interference into the narrator's discourse" as in "I know for sure whose side I'm on" which is a direct speech (DS) case inserted into the flow of the narration. Then, this sort of insertion takes the form of "scattered" and modified sentence as employed in the sentence "He would be happy if Britain became a republic..." The idea here is Anwar's while the speech is Najwa's. In other words, the first two cases could be considered as the "literal" speech of Anwar while the second is a transcription of the man's words adopted by the narrator.

Another passage that sheds light on Najwa, the centre of narration and the pivot of incidents, is the one that celebrates Wafaa, who is physically absent but spiritually omnipresent. Her influence on Najwa represents the turning point in the latter's life and coincidences with her desire to repent her sin and make a new conversion into a more religious phase. Two speeches are quoted in the following occasion:

Out of the blue, Wafaa phoned me. But it was not really out of the blue. She had been phoning once every two or three months, saying the usual things, come with me to the mosque, come to Ladies' Eid Party, so have you started to pray like you promised you would?. This time her voice seemed to come from another planet. "So, Najwa, have you started to pray?". I nearly laughed out loud. I was further away than she thought; I was out of it now. She had no idea. If my heart had been soft. I would have burst into tears and asked her how to repent. But my heart was

مجلة كلية الآداب بالوادي الجديد- مجلة علمية محكمة- العدد العشرون (الجزء الأول)

not soft. I saw Wafaa through Anwar's eyes; a backward fundamentalist, someone to look down on. (179)

In like manner, Wafaa's speech and words as well as Anwar's viewpoint of her are quoted literally as they are in some parts while shadowed with modifications in some other parts. The narrative voice of Najwa recalls Wafaa's words in a free indirect manner: "saying the usual things, come with me to the mosque, come to Ladies' Eid Party, so have you started to pray like you promised". According to Bakhtin, this "double voice discourse"

Serves two speakers at the same time and expresses simultaneously two different intentions: the direct intention of the character who is speaking, and the refracted intention of the author. (*Discourse* 324)

Thus, the voice of the narrator merges with that of Wafaa who is supposed to guide Najwa towards a better shape of a Muslim. The reason why Najwa reported Wafaa's words into an FIS is to stress her depression and frustration following her sin with Anwar. Thus, coming back to her senses and having Wafaa asking the same questions again, she notifies that "this time her voice seemed to come from another planet", a narrative sentence that separates a verbalized and an un verbalized phases of consciousness: the case of recalling a past incident on the one hand and the present moment in which Wafaa's voice reaches her ears on the other. Accordingly, Wafaa's speech is quoted as a DS: "So Najwa, have you started to pray?" a question which is not directly answered, but after encountering some sensations of her own, Najwa said: "I nearly laughed out loud". Najwa justifies her shaky attitude towards Wafaa's instructions in quoting Anwar's words and views of the former as "backward fundamentalist, someone to look down on" which are fused into the narrative stream. Even, Najwa's answer to Wafaa's question takes the FIT form "my voice was cold when I answered her questions, yes, no, sorry I'm busy, got to go" that underlines her tentative standpoint: whether to go or not. Furthermore, the rest of the passage involved a case of 'interior monologue' that contains Najwa's inner workings of the mind: "yes, I wanted to pray.....". Here, the Bakhtinian "character zones" (*Discourse* 316); that is the field of action for a character's voice – break constantly and encroach upon many other voices. Aboulela, in her novel, presents the reader with continuous transgressions not only in the world of words but also in the world of un verbalized

thoughts and consciousness. Speeches that belong to different characters mingle with thoughts within the mind of others.

In like manner, a similar monitored free indirect thought is used when Wafaa 'materialized' for Najwa:

Wafaa materializes. The woman who had shrouded my mother. The woman who had phoned every now and then to speak to me across a gulf, my indifference making her voice faint, her pleas feeble. I called to accept the invitation she had issued two years ago and she was not surprised. 'We'll pick you up at seven o'clock' she said. As I was waiting for her I suggested to remember what she looked like. (*Minaret* 240)

Only one single sentence represents the QS in this passage "we'll pick you up at seven" which is rendered in its DS version, followed by the verb of saying. The significance of inserting the DS into a "monitored thought" (Murphy 41) is to play on different narrative variation and to show the ability of the author and her narration to jump over time to reach a more persistent moment at the present. In other words, the opening sentence "Wafaa materializes" signifies the long time and distance between the narrator and her friend. Then, with each of the following sentences, we come closer to the present. Najwa's monitored thought is characterized by near-synonyms, "the womanthe woman". The narrator, in addition, does not stop at the end of the third sentence, but continued the flowing of her narrative using a comma that is followed by a sentence that highlights her previous response towards her friend's pleas: "my indifference....., her pleas" which increases the urgency for cutting short the course of her stubbornness and coming closer to the present moment of change. The closing sentence partially touches upon the present and partially upon the past: physically Najwa is "waiting" for Wafaa, but mentally she is still away trying to capture her image.

Speech in Speech (SS)

In Leskiv's terms, it "represents the speech of one character included into the speech of another one. In this case one can retrace the combination of inner and uttered FID , as long as the real speech appears together with the interior flow of thought".(55)

This type of speech (SS) is excessively used by Leila Aboulela owing to the nature of her narration being an experience retold in retrospection. Sometimes Najwa, the narrator, inserts the speeches of other characters as they originally occur, keeping the speech markers of converted commas and verbs of saying while some other times she fuses those speeches into the fabric of her narration. In either case, nothing hinders the flowing stream of her ideas and nothing pauses the pouring of her impressions. The addressees find it a fun to surrender their feelings to Najwa's touring powers into the minds of other characters, creating, by so doing, an experience out of which they are granted the advantage of an easy follow-up without the necessity of being indulged into harder channels of knowledge.

One of the examples that celebrate this kind of speech is one in which Najwa renders some of Anwar's views of herself:

The way he said my name. The way he said, 'you have an effect on me'. Sometimes he hurt me, said I was stupid, sometimes he made me laugh. (*Minaret* 35)

In view of Leskiv's definition of SS, one notices that through Najwa's FIS Anwar's original words are contained in two forms: DS: "you have an effect on me", and IDS: "said I was stupid". Even more, the quote starts and closes with the FIS of the narrator. FIS is used here to "represent spoken words" (Verdonk 99). In other words, in compliance with Bakhtin's "typology of discourse", the passage belongs to the category dubbed as "doubly-oriented speech" (1981), whereas two different viewpoints are intertwined in an opposing spirit. And the "stylization" here involves a borrowed discourse used for the author's own purpose as it occurs in line of the same intention in the original" (1984) as could be seen when Najwa recalls her cousin Samir's speech about living in Wales :

I tried to imagine where she was going. She was not going to London. She was going to Wales. I said, 'My cousin Samir is there too, at Atlantic College. You know, he said they have to do mountain climbing and outdoors stuff like that. It's part of the syllabus. He can tell you all about it. He's here now for the Christmas holidays'. (*Minaret* 41)

In response to Randa's piece of information that she is going to Wales, Najwa opens this passage with three successive short narrative sentences that reflect a case of FIT. This is soon converted into an uttered speech as she resorts to IDS free from proper markers with the exception of verb of saying. Her DS carries a

sense of immediacy rather than of indirectness owing to keeping the tense in the present and inserting speech fillers: "you know". Moreover, she resorts to SS when she reports that Samir "said", but repeatedly she does not change the tense "they have toit's part of...." but inserts them all into her narration so smoothly. Then, she slips to DS when she tells Randa that he "can tell you....." and ends with the authorial note that "he is in Christmas holidays".

SS takes a new form of being inserted not only in the same passage, but also in the same sentence and same thought .On one of Najwa's visits to her brother Omar in the prison, she noticed a slight change that came over him:

He laughs a little and starts to tell me the prison library has improved and he spends more time reading books. He likes books about pop music and the biographies of film stars. I tell him he should read the Q'uran. It is the wrong thing to say. He shrugs and says, 'These religious things – they are not for everyone'. He takes his glasses off to clean them on the edge of his shirt. One of the guards turns to look at him and then away. (*Minaret* 94)

In conformity with Bakhtin's "doubly-voiced speech", in this passage there is a reference to someone else's words. The whole passage falls within the boundaries of Bakhtin's "quasi-direct discourse" because its "syntactic marker" (*Discourse* 298) point to it as authorial speech while its "emotional structure" belongs to a character. The opening sentence combines both markers: "He laughs....." which is an "emotional structure" related to Omar's feelings and impressions and a "syntactic structure" when the narrator reports: "starts to tell me....." that carries an uttered rather than unuttered speech. The second sentence is a bit ambiguous as the reader is perplexed whether it transcribed a verbalized speech or un verbalized thought of Omar. The sentence: "It is the" seems more authorial while "He shrugs and says....." is pure FIS as it occurs in an independent expression and contains expressive elements "shrugs" and construction "He says" and even incomplete sentence "these religious things- They are not for everyone"(Pascal 77). Then the passage takes an authorial tone with the two closing sentences.

Internal Reflections

Leskiv assumes that Internal Reflection (IR) is "the most wide – spread type of FIS, and that it contains the majority of determinative indices of FIS. IR may appear in various forms – words, word combinations, sentences, the whole

paragraphs which carry interior thought or interior reflection that converge with the narrator's discourse" (55) .

Accordingly, *Minaret* abounds in examples that represent the case. Some of Najwa's internal reflections are uttered while others are not. One of the quotes that illustrate this is the one in which she speculates her relationship with Randa, her friend:

'Oh Randa, I'm so upset'. All through secondary school, I had hoped we would be together in university. When her grades weren't good enough, I had hoped she would try again and join me next year. I had made dreams that we would be together, that she would meet Anwar; that she would learn what the Front was. (*Minaret* 26)

This is not an uttered reflection, but an internal operation of Najwa's ideas. With the exception of directed verbalized opening sentence, most of the paragraph occurs within her. Her reflection appears so committed to the grammatical rule of the FIS course: verbs back shifted, pronouns are also changed (had hoped, had made, would learn, she). This paragraph is used as much for the rendering of Najwa's thoughts as for the transcription of her sensations. In addition, the quote retains the chatty and informal nature of the original thought through the repetition of "I had hope....no matter...." The closing part is divided by commas to indicate the immediacy and the urgency of the thought upon Najwa's mind.

Another paragraph that shows a variation on the same cord of IR is the one she ponders the new state that became of her:

His answer is interrupted by a whine from Mai. She is on the see-saw and frustrated that she can't get it to move. I go and sit on the other side and we start to play, with Tamer watching us. For a brief moment I am not sure who I am, the Najwa who danced at the American Club disco in Khartoum or Najwa, the maid Lamyia hired by walking into the Central Mosque one afternoon . (*Minaret* 111)

The paragraph opens with the pure narrative on the side of the protagonist narrator who simply states what happens before her eyes on the level of witnessing, then she transfers to a deeper level starting with "for a brief moment....." whereas she indulges into an IR. The fact is that she feels at a loss and voices this up in her

utterance: "I am not sure who I am", and uncovers her puzzlement so glaringly when she fails to find an answer to her question. The interplay of more than one style (Narrative and FIS) could have been said to be a remarkable quality of the book. In other words, the three opening narrative sentences could be attributed to Najwa the narrator while the rest of the paragraph to Najwa the protagonist. That is to say that the opening is merely FIS used to represent "spoken words while the rest of the quote is a "verbalized thought".

An extension of Najwa's sense of loss is when she was tentative whether to go home with Anwar or not:

If I went home with him, would he introduce me to his flat mates as his fiancée? I couldn't ask him. But I could go; I could go with him and find out. I would see his room, set in it, and breathe in it. The awe of knowing not it could be easily done, that no one could slap me, was like standing on the brink, daring oneself to more further. I stood up and said, ' Ok, let's go'. (*Minaret* 166)

This is one of the most critical moments of the novel as it represents a violation of a deeply-rooted convention of the Islamic East. Anwar is to accompany Najwa home. The struggle inside her is represented by force of this IR that uncovers her shaky sensations so truthfully through the effective use of the conditional 'if'. The whole paragraph is an expression of a psychic phenomenon, it is immediate, free from introductory expressions"(Ziraldó 93) Besides, sentences are short and successive that reflect the out-of-breath state of Najwa and stresses the conflict inside her. In addition, the paragraph combines two levels of narration: the one "external to character's mind" (93) and the other which is "internal"(94). In other words, at a moment, Najwa finds no harm to go with Anwar home as long as she is not watched or stopped by anyone while away from home, her deeply-rooted Arab traditions cry loud inside her not to go. This interference between Najwa's role as a protagonist and as a narrator consolidates the quality of the character and enforces her stances in the pre-going stage, but robs her much of her credibility in the post-going phase as it has been resulted in the loss of her virginity. Her IR here seems a very well-organized one:

My face in the mirror looked as if nothing had happened. My hair was disheveled as if I had been asleep. I smoothed it down with water, cleared my throat. Would my voice sound normal?

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'yellow suits me', I thought and a memory came of another bathroom mirror, of me-admiring myself while baba packed and Mama fussed over him. (*Minaret* 173).

This quote, or rather the whole novel can be read against Bakhtin's theory of novel. He has employed his distinct style of writing through dialectical language in humorous, satirical, and episodic prose. *Minaret* is a text in which there are a host of people and heterogeneous ideas. In the novel, all the past and the present ideas of Najwa are manipulated. People can be divided into dialogic people and monologic people. But they are actively present. Therefore, the book can be read as a social history of a Sudanese immigrant and how is she affected, alienated, exploited, and cast out from her original society, and even in her exile, by the monologic forces.

Accordingly, Najwa is in dialogue with both her consciousness and her conscience. She speculates all the ideas and memories, evaluates them and sets the right. Living now on shaky grounds in London, her guilt of visiting Anwar weighs heavily upon her. Trying to regain self-composure, she looked at a mirror that reflected her double reflection: externally and internally. Having set her hair right and clearing her throat, she has settled the appearance of the case, but getting deeper to a more internal level of consciousness, her IR presses her hard. "Would my voice sound normal?", and then, memories started to interfere whereas that of her father came to surface recalling her admiration of the 'yellow' colour and her wish to be with her him. At the closing sentence, her IR pushes her back to present to find herself vomiting.

The IR here seemed in full "convergence" with the narrator's discourse. One major FID index here is the successive non-stop course of sentences and the rhetorical question that remains unanswered in addition to the recalling of a "direct note" within the FID that adds much to the monologic quality of the passage.

Interior Monologue

Interior Monologue, as viewed by Lesskiv, is a typical feature which involves the use of the second person pronoun 'you' to highlight that is actually the dialogue of the character with her/him. Through it the reader can observe how the character's point of view formed". (56)

The first passage that exemplifies IM is the one that celebrates the occasion of Najwa being suspicious of stealing the necklace of Lamya while working for her at home. A critical moment that is reconsidered deeply internal by Aboulella:

What if Mai hadn't appeared with the necklace? My stomach heaves. I can lose this job easily. Rely on Allah, I tell myself. He is looking after you in this job or in another job. Why Are you becoming attached to this family anyway? (*Minaret* 114)

What is presented in this passage is a proper case of IM which is characterized by the interrogative form at the opening and the closing sentences, a case that reflects the psychological upheavals being built over Najwa. Najwa, in her trap, is trying to find a way out through her reflection "Rely on Allah" in an attempt to seem in her full self-composure. Then, her use of the pronoun "you" in her closing sentence clarifies her continuous dialogue with herself which is a proper technique in her case. Moreover, her remark: "He is looking after you" highlights the dialogic nature of her IM and the closing question mark uncovers that nature.

On a later phase of her story, Leila Aboulella has her heroine learn more as a result of regretting more. She is made to confess that the following way:

The more I learnt, the more I regretted and at the same time, the more hope I had. When you understand Allah's mercy, when you experience it, you will be too ashamed to do the things he doesn't like. His mercy is in many things, first the womb, the Rahim; He gave it part of his name, Al Rahman – the All-Merciful. It is a place we have all experienced. It sheltered us, gave us warmth and food.....do you remember.....?. (*Minaret* 14)

Repeatedly, the quote is a proper piece of IM which illustrates two levels of consciousness: the narrator's and the protagonist's. The opening sentence belongs to Najwa, the narrator who is finalizing a long journey of experiences and putting it into short conclusive phrases. Moreover, there is a fusion between the narrative voice and the monitored thought that results in this case of IM. And in order to distinguish itself from the narrative voice, monitored thought or IM employs forms of marked discourse that may include: question , exclamations, modal verbs, self-

referential invocation of the second person pronoun "you", new-synonymous repetition, non-narrative character idiolect including colloquialism, cursing , and the grammar of the spoken word; parenthesis and dashes, ellipses and full colon, and Hallidayean textual and interpersonal thematic elements like "perhaps, well, of course". (Gunn 40).

Thus, a close scrutiny at the passage in question reveals many traces of these characteristics. To be precise, starting from "When you" up to the end, the reader is offered a "marked discourse" that signifies a peculiar case of self-reflection. The frequent use of the second person pronoun "you" stresses the whole case as an IM proper. Third, the use of "dashes, comma, ellipses", and the closing question mark strengthens and solidify the case as proper IM.

Moreover, the "marked discourse"(Pascal 41) is registered as Najwa's thoughts, highlights "the distance between the inner motivation of the characters and the behavioural norms of the narrative voice" (41). In other words, Najwa's certainty here represents a departure from the norms of the narrative voice that regularly registers settled sentiment only. In addition, the continuity between the two parts of the paragraph is maintained through the narrator's use of the indefinite "you". So, it is the judgment beginning in the second sentence that constitutes the onset of her thought. This narrative effect is to be explained in terms of the repetition of "He" as referring to Allah, the "Rahim" referring to "Al Rahman" which are all a "selection of her actual words" (41).

A third quote that properly illustrates the case in question is the one in which she reconsiders Anwar's status and the changes that came over him and how will she behave accordingly:

His opinions were so clear-cut , there was no room for my murky thoughts , the question that I asked myself : what am I doing here , what happened to Omar , will I ever go back to Sudan and what will it be like without my parents ? Would Anwar ever change his mind about my father?
(*Minaret* 150)

The opening is a pure narrative in which the narrator practices her authorial role piercing into the inner workings of other character. Then, she retreats into her own personal thought by the power of her internal thought. FIT here has the "feel of a

soliloquy" (Jones 78), and her use of "full colon"(Gunn 39) is a major characteristic that highlights her monitored thought. In addition, her frequent use of the question form deepens the sense of loneliness and alienation that she tries to convey. These questions, furthermore, assert a case of uncertainty that wraps Najwa's whole being in the absence of a partner to communicate with. She, as a narrator could dispel the distance that might have separated her two selves: the protagonist and the narrator. In addition, the "form of voice style indicates a disjuncture between the character's self-protective contemplation and the ideology of the narrator herself' (43). In other words, the ideology imposed by the narrator becomes sharper.

Interior Dialogue

As a form of Free Indirect expression, ID, in Leskeiv's perspective, is a "subtype of IM. It has the form of reminiscences which are sounded in the character's mind , the conversations which he/she has or will have with the characters, reproduced in the consciousness" (56). This corresponds with Bakhatin's fundamental concept of "heteroglossia" or multispechedness" (Discourse 1981b). This idea falls within the boundaries of "dialogism" and "monologism". To him, "monologism" is the rejection of any outside consciousness. It does not respond to the others' response. It attempts to subordinate the voices of all characters to the authoritative discourse. In monologic literature, the author says the last thing and is the only force working in the text: "the one who knows, understands and sees is in the first instance". (Bakhatin 1984, 112).The author's task is either to accept or reject one idea. The concerned values are considered as absolute values. There are only two parties. The characters are there as either friends, who advocate the dominant values, or enemies, who reject them (112).

The first occasion that contains a proper case of ID takes place when Najwa, in her critical situation, expresses her regret for trying the necklace on, an act that put her in the circle of suspicion:

I start to pray; the words tumble in my head. Allah, please get me out of this mess. Stop this from happening. I know you are punishing me because I tried this necklace on in the morning, in front of the mirror. I put it round my neck and I will never do that again, ever..... I just tried the necklace on and put it back. I'm sure I put it back because I heard Mai calling me and I immediately unclasped it..... (*Minaret* 113)

In this passage, Najwa is in dialogue with her conscience. Her dialogue is as peculiar as she is addressing Allah, waiting for no reply, a fact that assumes it to

be a communion or rather an ID case. Through her ID, she expresses her own attitude towards her ideas, speculates many related facts, evaluates them and makes them the core of reminiscence. This monologic force helps her escape the pressure of her pressing situation and evade the cruel community of Dr Lamia's family and their accusation. Leila Aboulella depicts her heroine in struggle with the surrounding forces to gain her individuality and freedom. On her side, Najwa escapes repressive domestic circumstances in search for personal liberty. To be precise, the opening sentence is a prelude to her transcribed thought that follows. In her communion, she pledges to Allah to help her out of her crisis. She makes a confession that adds much to her bitterness, but upgrades her to the level of innocence. In her confusion, she makes a clear chest of what happened in an attempt not to lose the reader's sympathy. Moreover, in such an internal release, one is never a liar, but tries hard to reproduce a fact which is "rejected by other consciousness" (Bakhtin, 1981a, 88). The value she asserts is an absolute one which will be rejected by some members of Lamya's family. The fact is to be sought inside her consciousness, not outside it. This is the norm Aboulella seems to be behind.

A second example that is celebrating the proper characteristics of ID happens when Najwa is talking to her brother Omar about his future plans:

'Well, I asked him if he was going to come here or go to Sudan. He said he doesn't like traveling any more, especially such long distances. It tires him.

Omar puts his glasses back on. 'How's your work?'

I tell him about Tamer's seclusion at the mosque. It amuses him. He laughs and calls Tamer a fanatic. I feel disloyal but I am pleased that he is laughing, listening to me. But I can't sustain his interest for long. We withdraw, I to my thoughts, and Omar to, I don't know what. I don't know what goes on in his mind. (*Minaret* 194)

Najwa's voice as a protagonist here is louder than her voice as a narrator. Through the FI method of narration, she tries to transcribe her and her brother's impressions by force of her double role. The opening sentence is so misleading in the sense that at a time it reflects a sense of indirectness, it grasps us so close to two consciousnesses. Moreover, an alert reader can easily imagine a form of full dialogue that existed between them. She seemed so honest in transcribing his

utterances: "he doesn't travel....." And even his impressions: "It tires him". Then follows the narrative sentence: "Omar put" which is tailed by the directly-quoted thought: "How's" The distance between past and present is done away with when she states: "I tell him....." that carries a transcription of her original words which is followed by another transcription of Omar's feelings: "It amuses him" and "he is longing". In addition, her reminiscences extend to conclude that imaginary dialogue when she states that they "withdraw". She contemplates her withdrawal to her "thoughts", but is not sure where her brother's mind has gone, a fault that contradicts her role as a narrator.

In other words, Najwa's mission here is of triple nature. Sometimes she ironizes Omar's words and views; highlights them through IS, or show their importance through DS, or suggests that her brother's thoughts are particularly worthy of attention "through reporting them as fully as chronicling observer usually can, normally, in indirect thought" (Toolan 116-18). And although the quote is presumed to be in the past, it makes us witness "what is happening rather than what happened" (117)

Moreover, FIS is one of the techniques that show up in times of crises and struggle as we have in Najwa's moments of regret and in her attempt to purify herself out of sin:

Now I wanted a wash, a purge, a restoration of innocence. I yearned to see my parents again, be with them again like in my dreams. These men Anwar condemned as narrow-minded and bigoted, men like Ali were tender and protective with their wives. Anwar was clever, but he would never be tender and protective. Once I told him that kamal had come up behind me in the kitchen, pressed against me quickly pretending it was an accident. All he said was, 'you're sophisticated enough to deal with this, Najwa. Don't make a big-thing out of it, be flexible with him, the poor guy has lots of hang-ups.' (*Minaret* 242)

This passage is one of many occasions in which Leila Abouellela employs the technique of the FIT that necessitates the presence of the narrator all the time. Here, Najwa is the source of information and the organizer of her and others' thoughts

into a narrative fabric. Her voice expands to contain the voices and words of other characters that are not present on the scene. Through the integration of her voice with those of others, the reader is presented to a peculiar case of absorption into the workings of other characters' minds.

Conclusion

Thus conducted, Abouella's *Minaret* has been evidenced as a piece of stylistic achievement that employed stylistic variations for the purpose of her theme. The doubleness of her heroine reflected the cultural clash and difference that she had to overcome in the host country. She could successfully portray a case liminal self in strife to gain her identity well defined and her status properly set. The stylist variations added much credibility to the basic fabric of the protagonist and uncovered glaringly the state of a shaky psychology of an immigrant.

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