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**Language and Identity in John Millington Synge's
Riders to the Sea (1904) and Zora Neale Hurston's
John Redding Goes to Sea (1921)**

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We would like to dedicate this work with gratitude to

Our families: Lardjane and Ghebraoui

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Abstract

*Our present research paper proposes a comparative study between John Millington Synge's play **Riders to the Sea** (1904) and Zora Neale Hurston's short story **John Redding Goes to Sea** (1921) in order to show how both writers used their native language in their literary works as a means to resist their oppressors and to impose their identity. Our paper explores the theme of language and identity in the two works. To treat this issue, we have relied on Ashcroft's Griffith's and Tiffin's concepts of Abrogation, Subversion and Appropriation that are developed in their book **The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literature** (2002). Our discussion is divided into three chapters; the first one provides a historical context of both works in order to understand the affinities between the two works. In the second chapter, we have tried to study Abrogation and Subversion in both works to detect the way Synge and Hurston celebrate and defend their language and identity. Finally, the third chapter deals with the Strategies of Appropriation in the two works. After having examined the two literary works in the light of Ashcroft's concepts, we have concluded that Synge and Hurston used their native language to dismantle and subvert the culture of their oppressors.*

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I) General Introduction

During the nineteenth century, the dominant cultures British and American tried to devalorize and marginalize the Irish and Afro-American ancestral languages. As a result, many Irish and Afro-American writers came to revive their native cultures through creating two literary and cultural revolutions referred to as the Irish and the Harlem Renaissances.

The Irish Revival is a rebirth of interest in Irish language, literature and history. Equally to the Irish Revival, the Harlem Renaissance is a cultural movement in which there was a great emergence of literature, music and other artistic forms inspired by Afro-Americans.¹ Moreover, the Celtic Revival aimed at saving the Irish folklore, legends and traditions, similarly, the Harlem Renaissance looked for preserving the Afro-American's history, culture and identity.

Writers of the Harlem Renaissance emerged to describe that period, celebrate and rediscover the Black culture and folktales that were inherited from the Reconstruction Era and the years of slavery.² Among them, we find W.E.B DuBois, Countee Cullen, Langston Hughes, Frederic Douglas and Zora Neale Hurston. On the other hand, writers from the Irish Revival like W.B Yeats, Lady Gregory, Douglas Hyde, and John Millington Synge aimed to revive their Gaelic language and identity through creating the Abbey Theatre and producing literary works, which praise the Irish culture.

During the Irish Renaissance, John Millington Synge entered the world of literature with his powerful and dramatic literary works such as *The Shadow of the Glen* (1903), *Riders to the Sea* (1904), *The Playboy of the Western World* (1907) and *The Tinker's Wedding* (1909). Equally, Zora Neale Hurston during the Harlem Renaissance was considered as the major figure in creating the Black's folk. In this period, Hurston wrote a set of works like *John Redding Goes to Sea* (1921), *Drenched in Light* (1924), *Spunk* (1925) and *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937). John Millington Synge as a post-

colonial playwright presents the rural life of Ireland through his one-act play *Riders to the Sea* and Zora Neale Hurston as a post-bellum writer aimed for a rebirth of Black's culture through her short story *John Redding Goes to Sea*.

Review of the Literature

John Millington Synge and Zora Neale Hurston have been the subject matter of many critics, since they experienced two major revivals in the world of literature during the nineteenth century. Synge, on the one hand participated in the Irish Literary Revival and on the other hand, Hurston participated in the Harlem Renaissance. During that period, both Synge and Hurston produced two major works about the situation of their communities. Synge's *Riders to the Sea* explores the time that he spent in the Aran Islands living with the peasants and experiencing their sufferings and daily struggles with the sea. Comparably, Hurston's *John Redding Goes to Sea* explores the real life of the Afro-Americans in South America during the years of segregation and discrimination. Besides, the two works have been analyzed and criticized by many critics and writers.

Synge's *Riders to the Sea* had been studied several times by many critics and from different perspectives. Elif Özçesmeçi in her thesis, *The Representation of Rural Irish Characters in J.M. Synge's Riders to the Sea, The Tinker's Wedding, and The Playboy of the Western World* (2013) analyses the characters of *Riders to the Sea* and the representation of peasantry life in Ireland during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Moreover, she presents the play from the real situation of the islanders and from John Millington Synge's experience in the Islands. According to her, Synge wrote his play during the years when Ireland was healing from the dominance of the British Empire,³ and his language reflects the identity of the Islanders.⁴ She adds that his play aims to revive the Irish folklore and to assert Irishness.⁵

Ozçesmci focusses on Synge's interests in the peasant's culture and 'local colour' of rural Ireland.⁶She considers that Synge's play is the result of his experience in the Aran Islands, since the stories he heard and the funerals he attended in this Islands gave him more ideas to produce his work *Riders to the Sea*. In her thesis, Ozçesmci centers on the characters of the play who reflect the real Aran man and his close relation with nature mainly the sea.⁷

ArezkiKhelifa undertook another study concerning Synge's play *Riders to the Sea*. In his article entitled *Language and Identity: Indifference and Singularity as Identity Destroyers* (2011), Khelifapresents indifference and singularity in *Riders to the Sea* through the character of Maurya. He argues that the character 'Maurya' in Synge's play became carelessand felt that the outside world is meaningless because death had claimed everything from her.⁸Besides, Khelifa claims that the Islanders are characterized with a mixture of religious and pagan beliefs, which makes them very attached to religion.⁹He adds that *Riders to the Sea* is different from Synge's other plays because it does not follow the Aristotelian plot like the other tragedies.¹⁰

On the other hand, Zora Neale Hurston's *John Redding Goes to Sea* has been the target of many critics such as Ana Maria Fraile.In her research paper entitled *Zora Neale Hurston's Experimentation with the Narrative Voice in Her Short Stories*, Fraile claims that Hurston devoted a large space in her story to the standard narrative voice.¹¹She demonstrates that Hurston in her short story made a shift of language from vernacular to standard English. Clearly, In *John Redding Goes to Sea*, the character's speech was written with a Afro-American dialect while the narrative voice with the Standard English. She adds that Hurston's shift in language within that story was not done haphazardly, but it is done in the purpose of defending the role of Black English in Afro-American literature.¹²Fraile includes that *John Redding Goes to Sea* was Hurston's first work that led

her into the Harlem Renaissance. This short story according to her opened the doors of opportunity to Hurston.¹³

Robin Patricia Scott has undertaken another study on Zora Neale Hurston's *John Redding Goes to Sea*. In her work *Being Black and Female: An Analysis of Literature by Zora Neale Hurston and Jessie Redmon Fauset* (1986), Scott argues that many Black women among them Hurston used writing as a means to assert their identity.¹⁴ In Scott's view, Hurston was among the Black women writers who participated in reshaping Black women's roles in society during the Harlem Renaissance.¹⁵ In her thesis, she suggests a feminist study of Hurston's *John Redding Goes to Sea* where she focuses her interest on the themes of compromises and sacrifices. In fact, Scott argues that John's mother and wife should support and encourage his ambitions instead of preventing him from realizing his dreams. She adds that neither of the female characters in the short story made sacrifices for John although he sacrifices for them.¹⁶

Moreover, the Harlem and Irish Renaissances have been already studied and compared from many perspectives. Tracy Mishkin in her work *The Harlem and Irish Renaissances: Language, Identity, and Representation* (1998) compared Irish and Harlem Revivals in terms of racial identity. According to Mishkin, language played an important role in the cultural revival of both Afro-American and Irish people.¹⁷ She adds that literary works of Anglo-Irish writers such as Douglas Hyde, Lady Gregory and John Millington Synge inspired some Harlem Renaissance writers.¹⁸ She claims also that many Black and Irish Renaissance writers resist the American and British oppressions through their literature.¹⁹ In fact, the strong belief on the 'power of art' helped the Afro-Americans and Irish people to face the pressure of the dominant culture.²⁰

Additionally, Mishkin argues that both Renaissances attempted to construct an identity for their people.²¹ In her comparison, Mishkin states that in contrast to the Anglo-

Irish writers, who has translated their ancient language, Afro-Americans had no access to their past cultures and languages.²² Thus, Mishkin's study based on the basic features of the Irish and Harlem Renaissances.

Antony R. Hale carried out a comparison between John Millington Synge and Zora Neale Hurston. In his work entitled *Framing the Folks: Zora Neale Hurston, John Millington Synge, and the Politics of Aesthetic Ethnography* (1996), he suggests a comparative study between Synge's *The Playboy of the Western World* (1907) and Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937). He argues that the Irish and the Afro-American literature have always been the subject of comparison since they have many elements in common.²³ According to Hale, both Synge and Hurston were respectively activists in the Irish and Harlem Renaissances. In the view of Hale Antony, *The Playboy of the Western World* and *Their Eyes Were Watching God* are two fictional works, which aim to save and secure the Irish and Afro-American cultures from the oppressions of modernism. He adds that Synge returned to the Aran Islands and Hurston to the south to collect folktales in order to preserve their own native heritages.²⁴

Our concern then is to compare between Synge's play *Riders to the Sea* (1904) and Hurston's short story *John Redding Goes to Sea* (1921) in terms of language as one aspect of identity, because we believe that this topic is very interesting since Afro-Americans and Irish people have witnessed the same situation of domination and marginalization. As a result, writers of the Irish Revival influenced many African American writers. Additionally, the issue of language and identity played a key role in the Cultural Revival of both Afro-Americans and Irish people.

Issue and Working Hypothesis:

From the previous critical works, one can notice how *Riders to the Sea* and *John Redding Goes to Sea* have attracted the attention of many writers and critics. Literary

critics have already dealt with the Harlem and the Irish Renaissances. Writers such as Ana Maria Frail and Robin Patricia Scott have already approached the issue of voice in Hurston's work, and others like Elif Oçesmecı and Arezki Khelifa focussed on Synge's experience in the Aran Islands in writing *Riders to the Sea*. However, to our Knowledge, less study has compared or put *Riders to the Sea* and *John Redding Goes to Sea* together. Therefore, and in order to complete the previous studies, this paper intend to show a comparative study in the two literary works at the level of language in order to show the affinities between the means of resistance that Synge and Hurston adopted in their works.

Our research paper suggests a study of language and identity in both J.M Synge *Riders to the Sea* (1904) and Zora Neal Hurston's *John Redding Goes to Sea* (1921). In this study we are going to tackle the issue of language as one aspect of identity in both Irish and Afro-American communities. Our choice of these two works is not done haphazardly, because we believe that it is interesting to compare and study the two works since the Harlem Renaissance resembles the Irish Renaissance. Moreover, the Irish Literary Revival and the Harlem Renaissance have many points in common which influenced and inspired Zora Neale Hurston and other Afro-American writers. Both Irish and Afro-American dialects are not acknowledged by the British and American authorities. In addition, Synge and Hurston share the same goal of reviving and restoring the Irish and the Afro-American dialects respectively through abrogating and subverting Standard English. Thus, *Riders to the Sea* and *John Redding Goes to Sea* allow us to discover the deep meaning of Synge's as well as Hurston's situation in defending the Irish and the Harlem Revivals.

Relying on Ashcroft's theory, we intend to explore some concepts of different postcolonial theoreticians such as 'Abrogation', 'Subversion' and 'Appropriation' as they are presented

in Bill Ashcroft's, Gareth Griffith's and Helen Tiffin's *The Empire Writes Back : Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literatures* (2002).

Methodological Outline:

At the methodological level, we are going to divide our research paper into five sections. In the Introduction section, we will introduce John Millington Synge and Zora Neale Hurston and their literary works produced during the Revival periods followed by a Review of Literature written on *Riders to the Sea* (1904) and *John Redding Goes to Sea* (1921), then followed by the Issue and Working Hypothesis.

Concerning the Method and Materials section, we will provide a summary of Bill Ashcroft's, Gareth Griffith's and Helen Tiffin's concepts of 'Appropriation' and 'Abrogation' and 'Subversion' as presented in their book, *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literatures* (2002), followed by the summary of the two literary works. As far as the Result section is concerned, it will display the findings of the present paper, which in turn we will tackle in the Discussion section.

Finally, the Discussion section will be divided into three chapters: the first chapter will provide a historical context of the two literary works in relation to the Irish and Harlem Literary Renaissances. Then, we will try to analyze the two literary works relying on Ashcroft's concepts of 'Abrogation' and 'Subversion' and we are going to discuss the way Synge and Hurston abrogated and subverted the English language to defend their identities. The last chapter will be devoted to the strategies of appropriations such as syntactic fusion, code-switching and vernacular transcription, interlanguage and glossing.

Endnotes:

¹ChrisBodenner, “*Harlem Renaissance*”: Issue and Controversies in American History.Infobase Publishing, 19 July 2006. Web. 6 Feb. 2013.
<http://icah.infobaselearning.com/icahfullarticle.aspx?ID=107275>,P 02.

²Leonard Diepeveen, “*Folktales in the Harlem Renaissance*”, Duke University Press, in American Literature, Vol. 58, No. 1 (Mar., 1986), p 64, accessed in June, 15, 2017,
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/2925944>

³Elif Özçesmcı, *The Representation of Rural Irish Characters in J.M.Synge’s Riders to the Sea, The Tinker’s Wedding, and The Play Boy of the Western World*,2013, Ankara, p5.

⁴Ibid., p 28.

⁵Ibid., p178.

⁶Ibid., p29.

⁷Ibid., p66.

⁸Arezki Khelifa, “*Language and Identity: Indifference and Singularity as Identity Destroyers*”, 2011, University Tizi-Ouzou, p13.

⁹Ibid., p07.

¹⁰Ibid., p11.

¹¹Ana Maria Fraile, *Zora Neale Hurston’s Experimentation with the narrative voice in her Short Stories*, University of Salamanca, p30.

¹²Ibid

¹³Ibid

¹⁴Robin Patricia Scott, *Being Black and Female: An Analysis of Literature by Zora Neale and Jessie Redmon Fauset*, 1986, p05.

¹⁵Ibid

¹⁶Ibid., p12.

¹⁷Tracy, Mishkin, *The Harlem and the Irish Renaissances: Language, Identity and Representation*, University Press of Florida, 1998, p47.

¹⁸Ibid., pp47-8.

¹⁹Ibid., p87.

²⁰Ibid., p90.

²¹Ibid. p85.

²²Ibid., p48.

²³Antony.R Hale, “*Framing the Folks: Zora Neale Hurston, John Millington Synge and the Politics of Aesthetic Ethnography*”, 1996, p01.

²⁴Ibid

II) Method and Materials:

1) Method:

In the light of postcolonial theory, we will try to apply the concepts of 'Abrogation' and 'Appropriation' provided in Bill Ashcroft's, Gareth Griffith's and Helen Tiffin's theory as they appear in their book *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literatures* (2002). We have chosen this theory because, in our opinion, it fits our study since it centers on post-colonial authors' mode of writing to contradict the 'centre' and at the same time to defend their language and identity. The theory explores three main concepts, 'Abrogation', 'Appropriation' and 'Subversion'. These concepts are used by post-colonial writers as tools of both rejecting and adopting the colonizer's language.

Since language has a great importance as a medium of communication, post-colonial writers have tried to handle the use of language through adopting the language of the 'Centre' and trying to change it into forms that suit their own culture and traditions. As a result, they created two concepts that are 'Abrogation' and 'Appropriation'. The former means that writers negate or oppose the practice of 'English' especially the way it dominates their language. In other words, 'Abrogation' is to disagree with the basic elements of the English language especially the right use of meaning of utterances.¹ 'Abrogation' is also defined as "the refusal of the categories of the imperial culture, its aesthetic, its illusory standard of normative or 'correct' usage, and its assumption of a traditional and fixed meaning 'inscribed' in the word."² In other words, post-colonial writers reject the metropolitan norms and deny the use of the English language because they need to create a distinct English. Thus, post-colonial writers contradict all what is related to the 'Centre'; clearly, they do not want to use the 'standard' language and to reveal their human experiences but they prefer to use a vernacular English to oppose the view of the 'Centre'. Therefore, in order to find an alternative to authenticity claimed by the 'Centre', post-colonial writers abrogate and subvert the Standard English.³

In addition to 'Abrogation', 'Appropriation' means to take the metropolitan language and try to reformulate it and use it in a new context in order to demonstrate that it is different from the colonizer's one. In other words, this transformation made to create 'English' under the effect of the mother tongue. Therefore, 'Appropriation' is the process by which new utterances and words of different societies are used to reinvent and reform language.⁴ According to Ashcroft et al, 'Appropriation' means the intersection between 'standard English' and the 'vernacular tongue'.⁵ In other words, post-colonial writers do not use the standard English, yet every nation can develop its own English variety, different from the colonizer's language as it is well illustrated in the Jamaican citizens in their use of 'vernacular' and 'cod switching'. The theory stipulates that:

[T]he appropriation which has had the most profound significance in post-colonial discourse is that of writing itself. It is through an appropriation of the power invested in writing that this discourse can take hold of the marginality imposed on it and make hybridity and syncreticity the source of literary and cultural redefinition.⁶

The power of appropriation in post-colonial writings correct the image given to the colonized. In other words, the aim of post-colonial writers from using appropriation is the assertion of their independence from the 'Centre'. As a result, post-colonial writers use language variance to distinguish themselves from the metropolitan norms and give an opposite view.⁷

On the other hand, post-colonial authors make great use of subversion in their language. We have to note that it is mainly concerned with Caribbean theorists. Cliff Lashley is the leading figure who has elaborated the concept of 'Subversion'. According to Ashcroft et al, Lashley and other critics prefer subversion of the entire cultural assumptions rather than a subversion of language alone. In other words, Lashley asserts that subversion is related to both language and cultural assumptions on which the texts of the English canon are based.⁸ Clearly, subversion does not only tackle language, but also

cultural assumptions. Lashley believes and insists that the Jamaican subversion is significant since it distorts the English language and cultural beliefs of the canon and the imposed discourse.⁹ Thus, subversion's attempts are made to dismantle and subvert the Standard English.

Therefore, it seems that Bill Ashcroft's, Gareth Griffith's and Helen Tiffin's theory is appropriate to compare and study the two literary works. This theory may be applied since it deals with the concepts of 'Appropriation', 'Abrogation' and 'Subversion' and how writers counter the hegemonic power through appropriating and abrogating the colonizer's language.

2) Materials

a. Summary of J. M. Synge's *Riders to the Sea* (1904):

John Millington Synge's play *Riders to the Sea* (1904) is recognized as a representative classic of the Irish Literary Renaissance. It is noted for the simplicity of its tragic plot and the distinctive language of its characters. Synge's play recounts the story of an Irish rural family. Its events take place in the poorest part of the southern Island of Ireland. The story tells Maurya's sufferings who had already lost six men of her family in the sea. In the play, her youngest son Bartley wants to ride the sea, yet Maurya tries to prevent him from sailing because of her strong fear of losing him. However, Bartley did not listen to his mother and he left home heading to the sea. As a result, Maurya becomes angry and she does not bless her son before leaving. Within the play, the sea plays an important role in the daily life of Maurya's family since the Irish peasants depend on the sea for their livelihood. While Nora and Cathleen were looking for a way to tell their mother about Micheal's death at sea, a group of peasants enters the house carrying the dead body of Bartley. Finally, the play ends with the tragic death of Bartley and Maurya told

her daughters that she will finally sleep at night because she no longer has any one to worry about him.

b. Summary of Z. N. Hurston's *John Redding Goes to Sea* (1921):

Zora Neale Hurston's *John Redding Goes to Sea* (1921) is considered as her first entry to the world of literature during the Harlem Literary Renaissance. Hurston's short story was remarked for its difficult language because it was written in slang. The plot is considered as unnatural for its excessive sentimentality and specific characterizations. Hurston's *John Redding Goes to Sea* narrates the story of a small African American family. The events take place in the southern rural state of America during the 1920's. The story turns around the life of the protagonist John Redding and his dreams to ride the sea and discover the unknown places in the world. From his childhood, John was seen as an abnormal boy because of his unlimited imaginations of traveling. When he grows up, he never gave up, he was still looking for a way to go to sea, but his mother was against this idea of leaving home because she was afraid that he would not come back. As a result, the mother, Matty Redding, persuaded John to get married and settle down to prevent him from leaving. One day, John came home, announced to his wife and mother that he has got a chance to ride the sea by joining the navy, and unfortunately, the two women stand against his will, and became upset with him. In addition to this, the mother refused to give blessings to her only son. After that, a white man came and requested help to secure a bridge before the storm arrived, and John accepted to go. The story ends with the tragic death of the protagonist, while working he fell from the bridge and drowned, but his body was left to float taking its way to the ocean.

Endnotes:

¹Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffin, Helen Tiffin, *The Empire writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literature*, (London: Taylor and Francis, 2002), p37.

²Ibid

³Ibid.,40.

⁴Ibid., p39.

⁵Ibid., p38.

⁶Ibid., p77.

⁷Ibid., p45.

⁸Ibid., p 47.

⁹Ibid., p64.

¹⁰Ibid., p95.

III) Results:

This part is concerned with the stating of the major findings that we have reached after our study of John Millington Synge's play *Riders to the Sea* (1904) and Zora Neale Hurston's short story *John Redding Goes to Sea* (1921). From the study of the two literary works relying on Ashcroft's concepts, 'Abrogation', 'Subversion' and 'Appropriation', provided in *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literature*, we are going to study and compare the two works in terms of language and identity.

Our research paper analyzes the common points between the two works that are produced in different Renaissances, but at the same time they share nearly the same situation of oppression and segregation. We have tried to provide a clear comparative study between *Riders to the Sea* and *John Redding Goes to Sea* concerning language and identity. Both Synge and Hurston appropriated some features from the dominating culture and language in order to impose, re-form and restore their owns.

In the first chapter, the historical context was provided in order to reveal the conditions that lead the writers to produce such works. Indeed, Synge presented the characteristics of rural Ireland during the 1900's while Hurston portrayed South America in the 1920's. In this chapter, we have found that the two works belong to different Renaissances that share the same situation of reviving and restoring the Irish and the African American's cultures. Additionally, we have shown the influence and the similarities between the two contexts.

The second chapter of our discussion is devoted to study the language of the two literary works in relation to 'Abrogation' and 'Subversion'. In this chapter, we have dealt with language abrogation and subversion in the play and the short story, so, we have deduced that both Synge and Hurston abrogate and subvert the Standard English by using

nonstandard English. Clearly, Hurston used Afro-American dialect in her short story *John Redding Goes to Sea* and Synge used the Irish dialect in his play *Riders to the Sea*.

In the third chapter, we have centered our focus on strategies of appropriation adopted by Synge and Hurston in their literary works. This chapter explored the various strategies adopted by Synge and Hurston to appropriate the dominant culture and language. In this chapter, we have concluded that Synge's language was written in Irish context and we have noticed a presence of some Irish features in the play and code-switching between standard and nonstandard English. Then, we have shown that it was the same case in Hurston's short story since it was written with African American dialect mixed with Standard English.

To sum up, Synge as a post-colonial playwright and Hurston as a post-bellum writer abrogated, subverted and appropriated Standard English in their works in order to impose the Irish and the Afro-American dialect. Moreover, their works stand as a sign of a voiced resistance since they included their native languages to defend their identities.

IV) Discussion:

In the present section, we will deal first with the historical context of both John Millington Synge's play *Riders to the Sea* (1904) and Zora Neale Hurston's short story *John Redding Goes to Sea* (1921). Then, we will tackle the issues of language abrogation and subversion in these literary works. Finally, we will explore the strategies of appropriation that are provided in Synge and Hurston's works.

Chapter One: Historical Context of *Riders to the Sea* and *John Redding Goes to Sea*.

J.M Synge and Z.N Hurston are among the revivalist authors during the Irish and the Harlem Renaissances. Synge wrote *Riders to the Sea* during the Irish Revival, which is a tragedy of a mother who loses her sons to the sea. Correspondingly, Hurston wrote *John Redding Goes to Sea* during the Harlem Renaissance, which is a story of an Afro-American boy. Therefore, in this chapter we are going to deal with the historical context of both the play and the short story since in our opinion, the two works are produced during two important periods in the world of literature. Thus, the historical context is necessary because it is important to mention these periods from the history of Afro-Americans as well as the history of Irish people.

a) Historical Context of *Riders to the Sea* (1904)

During the eighteenth century, poor and older people were the only ones who speak Irish language, whereas the upper classes and the landowner speak English. This period marked the decline of the Irish language in Ireland, as a result, Douglas Hyde started to look for De-Anglicizing Ireland in 1892.¹ Indeed, the Irish language at that century and the beginning of the nineteenth century was considered as an important element that shows

the Irish undermined situation and the lack of Irish language in literature at that period justifies the use of English in the revival of Irish culture.²

In the nineteenth century, many Anglo-Irish writers among them John Millington Synge were interested in ancient Ireland, therefore; they rediscovered and admired the Irish medieval myths and legends.³ Synge in his literary career was strongly influenced by Ireland and Irish culture,⁴ many critics agreed that his sojourn in the Aran Islands in 1898, 1899, 1900, 1901, and 1902 was the major factor that made Synge as an important playwright. His visit to the Islands helped him to find materials for his plays, which means that Synge's characters, plots and even location and language are all influenced by the Islander's culture.⁵ His observation of customs, language and folklore of the Aran Islanders was well shown in his plays such as *The Playboy of the Western World*, *The Well of the Saints* and other works, yet *Riders to the Sea* was the only play that was set in the Aran landscape. Moreover, language and culture are Synge's two important elements from his experiences in the Islands.⁶ Clearly, Synge was strongly influenced and attracted by the language and the culture of the Aran Islanders.

The growth of nationalism in the early nineteenth century was an important factor that encouraged the emergence of interest in Irish language, literature, history and folklore. The possibility of reading Ireland's ancient literature at that time was difficult, and it was after the discovery of translations of ancient Gaelic manuscripts such as *The Annals of the Four Masters*, that people can read Ireland's ancient literature. J.M. Synge as one of the leaders of the Cultural Movement (1865-1939) explored the folklore of Ireland, in his book *The Aran Islands* (1906) he introduced much of the way of the life, worldview, narrative genres and poetic dialogue of the Aran Islands.⁷

Synge took part on the Irish Literary Renaissance, a period when the Irish literature looked to encourage Nationalism and pride in Ireland. According to Corneius Weyganant, the literary works such as Synge's *Riders to the Sea* and others were so important to

English literature and their value exist in the Irish strong feeling of nationalism and their strong desire to restore the old Irish culture.⁸ He argues that Irish Literature was created under the encouragement of the Gaelic League since its foundation in 1839. He adds that Synge and other Irish writers have their encouragement from various organizations that have been struggling to stimulate an Anglo-Irish literature.⁹

In early 1900's, the Irish literature and theatre were in a patriotic mood and it was at that period that Synge wrote his play *Riders to the Sea*.¹⁰ During the Irish Literary Revival Anglo-Irish writers were looking for the Irish spirit and the Gaelic tone in their works. According to Yumiko Kataoka, *Riders to the Sea* has an interesting history in the sense that it was written about real events of an Irish rural family and it was produced when the Irish Nationalist Movement was gaining strength.¹¹

b) Historical Context of *John Redding Goes to Sea* (1921):

During the seventeenth century, many Africans were brought unwillingly from different parts of the African Continent to America to serve as slaves. At that time, America was a British colony living under the rule of the British Empire. In 1776, America became an independent country and a self-determined nation. However, Americans continued to treat Africans as slaves. After the Emancipation Proclamation of Abraham Lincoln in 1863, slaves gained their freedom yet, Afro-American dialects still considered inferior.

With the arrival of the 20's, many laws and discrimination acts such as the Jim Crow laws were put to harm the Blacks and to undermine their culture, language and identity. Blacks did not accept this situation, so they started to fight and struggle to get their respect and their rights among the White Americans. However, Americans justified those acts of barbarism, discriminations and racism, by considering that Blacks are inferior, uneducated, barbarians and slaves who were brought to their land as workers.

Furthermore, this period was characterised by the birth of the Negro Movement and the growth of Afro-American's pride concerning their culture, language and identity. At that time, many debates and issues raised about the question of discrimination and segregation. In order to defend the Black's rights and secure their place among the white Americans, Blacks started to move from the rural South to the urban North mainly to Harlem looking for better conditions of life. As a result, Blacks became more open to urban life and to the world of literature and art, and this marks the beginning of the Harlem Renaissance. The Harlem Renaissance then was a quest to correct the image of Afro-Americans constructed by Americans.¹² in other words; the Harlem Renaissance is a rebirth of the Black literary values, art and music.

Additionally, during the flourishing times of the Harlem Renaissance many Afro-American writers center their focus on writings that glorify Blacks' history, culture and identity, for instance, Alain Lock's *The New Negros* was considered as the starting point of rising a worldview about Blacks and Negros in general. From the beginning of 1920's, the Harlem Renaissance was named first the Negro Renaissance since it concerns all Afro-Americans not the 'Harlemites' only. However, after the 1930's the Negro Renaissance became the Harlem Renaissance, but it did not gain popularity until the 1960's.¹³ Julius Mitchell defines the Harlem Renaissance as a movement of Black artists which began in 1920 but collapsed later.¹⁴ Moreover, even though the Harlem Renaissance was a failure as some critics and writers assert, it helped much Afro-Americans in regaining their respect and status and it encouraged them to produce their own art, music and literature.

Through the Harlem Renaissance, Afro-American writers restored their cultural heritage and tried to distinguish their writings from the ones of their oppressors. Among those writers, Zora Neale Hurston who is considered as a prominent Black writer in Harlem. She started to write about the issues and matters of that period, and she wants to

prove that Blacks have the capacity to produce literary works without relying on the whites. Furthermore, during the Harlem Renaissance Afro-Americans searched to be proud of their culture, race, origins and especially their color and they aimed to break the barriers for new vision and new mode of writing. Sharon L. Jones states that Hurston proved that her writings are universal since she used themes that break the racial boundaries.¹⁵

John Redding Goes to Sea was one of Hurston's works that introduces her Black community's folklore, language and traditions. This short story was written during the 1920's in parallel with the beginning of the Harlem Renaissance. Hurston develops a sense of realism and 'local color' in her story because she used her native dialect. *John Redding* appeared in the Stylus Journal of Harvard University for the first time while Hurston was a student there. This short story helped to facilitate Hurston's career as her first experience into fiction and short stories.

In conclusion, the Irish and Harlem Literary Renaissances declare the beginning of the restoration of the Irish and the Afro-American cultures that seem to disappear. Both Irish and Afro-Americans have a powerful and a violent past that determined their sufferings and miseries under oppressive systems. During these Renaissances, both Irish and Afro-Americans were looking for pacific ways to spread their ideas and the principles of their culture to assume their identity and race.¹⁷ Moreover, the efforts and ideas of the Irish Literary Revival inspired some Harlem Renaissance writers in reviving and reconstructing their own culture,¹⁸ since Afro-Americans experienced the same situation of domination with the Irish people. This situation influenced many Black American writers among them Zora Neale Hurston. Even though both Renaissances share many points they may differ in some, for instance, the Irish literary Revivalist writers revived their Gaelic language through translating their old texts, but Afro-Americans have no access to their ancient culture and language.¹⁹

Endnotes:

¹Gerdine Van Essen, *Attitudes of Anglo-Irish Writers to the Irish Language*, University of Utrecht, 2006, p08.

²Ibid., p28.

³Ibid., p15.

⁴J. F. Lydon, *John Millington Synge: The Man and His Background*, University of Manitoba in the Interdisciplinary Critical Journal, Vol. 5, No. 1, MOSAIC: LITERATURE AND IDEAS (1971), p21, accessed in September, 20, 2017, <http://www.jstore.org/stable/24776360>.

⁵Ibid., p24.

⁶JOY KENNEDY, “Sympathy between man and nature” *Landscape and Loss IN Synge’s “Riders to the Sea”*, Oxford University Press in the Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment, Vol. 11, No. 1 (Winter 2004), p18, accessed in May, 18, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/44086223>.

⁷Yumiko Kataoka, “*Riders to the Sea*”: *Irish Voices, British Echoes*, IASIL-JAPAN, in Journal of Irish Studies, Vol. 18 (2003), p65, accessed in June, 15, 2017, <http://www.jstore.org/stable/20533511>.

⁸Cornelius Weygnant, “*The Irish Literary Revival*”, The Johns Hopkins University Press, in the Sewanne Review, Vol. 12, No. 4 (Oct, 1904) p421 , accessed in June, 15, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27530648>.

⁹Ibid

¹⁰ Yumiko Kataoka, “*Riders to the Sea: Irish Voices, British Echoes*”, p

¹¹Ibid

¹²Frances Richardson Keller, *The Harlem Literary Renaissance*, University of Northern Iowa in The North American Review, Vol. 253, No. 3 (May- Jun., 1968), p29, accessed in September, 20, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25116789>.

¹³Ernest Julius Mitchell II, “*Black Renaissance*”: *A Brief History of the Concept*, Universitätsverlag WINTER GmbH in New Texts, New Approaches, New Challenges (2010), American Studies, Vol. 55, No. 4, African American Literatures, p642, accessed in September, 20, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41158720>.

¹⁴Ibid

¹⁵Jones, Sharon L. *Critical Companion to Zora Neale Hurston: A Literary Reference to Her Life and Work*. New York: Facts On File, 2009, P x.

¹⁶Tracy Mishkin, *The Harlem and the Irish Renaissance: Language, Identity, and Representation*, University Press of Florida, 1998, p24, 27.

¹⁷Ibid., p37.

¹⁸Ibid., p48.

¹⁹Ibid

Chapter Two: Abrogation and Subversion

What follows is a discussion of the issue of 'Abrogation' and 'Subversion' in John Millington Synge's *Riders to the Sea* (1904) and Zora Neale Hurston's *John Redding Goes to Sea* (1921). We will focus in this chapter on the ways the two writers abrogate and subvert English in their literary works.

a) Language Abrogation and Subversion in *Riders to the Sea*:

During the 18th century, the British Empire imposed English language on Irish people and dictated some Penal Laws, which restrict the use of Gaelic language. As a result, the Irish language witnessed a sharp decline during the 19th century.¹ However, at the end of that century many Irish writers among them J. M. Synge, came to revive the Gaelic language. These authors started to produce a set of literary works in order to oppose the dominant language by abrogating and subverting the Standard English.

John Millington Synge rejects and abrogates the Standard English in his play *Riders to the Sea* (1904). In the play, Synge tells us a story of an Irish rural family through using Irish dialect instead of using a Standard English. He uses a new Irish English which is called "Hiberno-English" or "Anglo-Irish" and this language was a hybrid dialect.² After reading the story of *Riders to the Sea*, we may notice that Synge aims to preserve the wealth of tales, myths and poems of his culture. Thus, Synge's work can be considered as a way to preserve the use of Irish language and giving an appropriate voice to the Irish identity.

In his play, Synge depicts the Irish traditions, beliefs and culture. He represents the Irish identity by using a non-Standard English as it is shown in this example from *Riders to the Sea* "I won't stop him says he" but let you not be afraid. Herself does be saying prayers half through the night, and the Almighty God won't leave her destitute" says he,

“with no son living”’.³ This example is a good illustration of Synge’s dialect that relies strongly on imitating Irish syntax. When reading the play, we notice the use of an Anglo-Irish dialect rather than a use of a Standard English. The passage serves also as a good example of subverting the grammatical rules and the syntax of Standard English. Besides, the abrogation of Standard English in Synge’s play, we may remark many cases of subversion, he subverted the language of the colonizer by mixing a standard English with a syntax of the Irish dialect as it is shown in this sentence: “Maurya: It’s a hard thing they’ll be saying below if the body is washed up and there’s no man in it to make the coffin”.⁴ In this example, Synge dismantled the standard English in order to show his resistance against the imposed language. He wrote English with Irish syntax and grammatical rules since the play keeps the real sense of Irish language.

According to Ashcroft, Griffith and Tiffin’s *The Empire Writes Back* (2002), “the syncretic and hybridized nature of post-colonial experience refutes the privileged position of a standard code in the language and any monocentric view of human experience”.⁵ This means that post-colonial writers such as Synge abrogate and subvert the norms of Standard English and they even refuse any ‘monocentric’ power over them. This hybridized nature of post-colonial experience is present in Synge’s *Riders to the Sea*, as it is shown in this quotation:

MAURYA :(continues without hearing anything) There was Sheamus and his father, and his own father again, were lost in a dark night, and not a stick or sign was seen of them when the sun went up. There was Patch after was drowned out of a curagh that turned over.⁶

From this speech, we notice that Synge’s characters do not speak a pure Irish, but a hybrid of English and Irish; for instance, the word ‘Curagh’ is adopted directly from Irish language which means a small boat.

According to Nursen Gomeceli and Allan James in their work entitled *Hiberno-English and Beyond in J. M. Synge’s “The Playboy of the Western World”: A Literary*

Linguistic Analysis of its Dramatic Significance (2015), the Hiberno-English that Synge used in his plays is a linguistic hybridity between Irish and English.⁷ This linguistic hybridity was a result of Synge's attraction to the intersection between Irish and English languages.⁸ As it is illustrated in Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin's *Post-Colonial Studies Reader*:

Language in post-colonial societies ,characterized as it is by complexity, hybridity and constant change, inevitably rejects the assumptions of a linguistic structure or code which can be described by the colonial distinction of 'standard' and 'variant'.⁹

Relying on this quotation, Synge in his play chooses to write with an Irish dialect rather than Standard English in order to show his rejection and his refusal of using the privileged position of the colonizer's language.

As a writer from Anglo-Irish ascendancy background, Synge explores the Anglo-Irish dialect in *Riders to the Seathrough* using an English that represents the Irish identity.¹⁰ This form of language was a language that Synge himself heard from the people of Ireland. The dialect that Synge used has been translated in a manner that defines himself linguistically as an Irish rather than an English.¹¹ In other words, Synge in order to represent his real identity he translated the Gaelic speech of rural population. In *Riders to the Sea*, Synge used the peasants' dialect of the Aran Islands and it is well shown with the speech of his characters mainly Maurya and Bartley. Bartley says: "Let you go down each day, and see the sheep aren't jumping in on the rye, and if the jobber comes you can sell the pig with the black feet if there is a good price going."¹² This speech presents a real image of an Irish peasant family. It shows the simple life of the islanders and their daily tasks.

Furthermore, Synge abrogates and subverts the English language in an ironic way in order to show the difference between Irish and English languages.¹³ According to Ashcroft et al, in their book *Post-Colonial Studies: The Key Concepts*, post-colonial writers used

English language rather than their native one just because the colonizer's language was useful for expression and by it they reach a large audience.¹⁴ In addition, Synge has a deep interest in the Irish literary traditions and it is that profound love of the Gaelic language that encourages him to develop a pure Irish dialect of the peasantry in this play. Therefore, Synge looks for a way to revive the Irish language.¹⁵

According to Gilmartin Elizabeth, "Synge created a language that exemplified a language of the future that had not forgotten its past",¹⁶ that is to say he translated Irish language into an English that contains some Irish elements in order to create a new form of language that we can remark in his play *Riders to the Sea*. This new form of language consists of both past and future elements. In his play, Synge reflects the history, culture and traditions of Irish people by focusing on the language of the folk or rural peasants. Thus, by developing Hiberno-English, he challenges the English hegemony and creates a theatre that will be performed in English with an Irish syntax because he knows that a pure Irish play will not attract a large audience. Yet, his real aim is to represent the pure Irish culture and identity. As Ashcroft et al. argue "In all cases, however the notions of power inherent in the model of center and margin are appropriated and so dismantled",¹⁷ which means that post-colonial writers among them Synge abrogate the language of the colonizer, but they appropriate some notions of power and dismantle it. Irish people subvert the English language so they use it in an incorrect way and this is well shown within the play, "Nora: will she see it was crying I was?", "Cathleen: keep your back to the door the way the light'll not be on you".¹⁸ From this dialogue, we notice a mixture between English and Irish languages.

According to Declan Kiberd, Irish people have learned English from each other not from the English people.¹⁹ So this explains the reason why Irish people cannot use English

correctly. In his book *Inventing Ireland* (1996), Kiberd states that Synge inherits the beauty of his dialect from the ancient Gaelic culture.²⁰

b) Language Abrogation and Subversion in *John Redding Goes to Sea*:

Like the Irish people who witnessed oppression from the British colonizer, Black Americans witnessed a harsh situation of discrimination and segregation during the twenties. At that period, their dialect was considered inferior and their identity still not recognized. As a result, in a search for defending their language, many Afro-American writers among them Zora Neale Hurston defend their dialect by abrogating and subverting the dominant English.

Z. N. Hurston abrogates and subverts the Standard English in her short story *John Redding Goes to Sea*, which is her first short story and first experience in entering the world of literature and Afro-American writings. Through writing this short story, she wants to show her existence as well as her Black community's pride, language and identity. Afro-American critics and writers are still fighting and struggling for the existence of their "Black consciousness" in their literary works.²¹

Similar to Synge, Hurston started to abrogate the Standard English by refusing the culture and beliefs of Afro-American's oppressors. In her writings of 1921-1946, she looked for a way to represent her native dialect and create a recognized Black literature and language. Before 1921, Standard English was the dominating language in literature and the Black dialect or the language spoken by Afro-Americans was not accepted to appear in literature and Black Literary works.²² In other words, the Black dialect, like the Irish one, was considered inauthentic and inappropriate in literature, however, Blacks were given a chance to use their dialect in their works, but it should be mixed with Standard English.²³ Therefore, Hurston's aim in writing her short story was to defend her native dialect and include it in an academic work and make it known all over the world.

Moreover, the abrogation of Standard English is well shown in Hurston's short story *John Redding Goes to Sea* in which she insists on rejecting the use of Standard English and at the same time, she encourages the use of her dialect. This dialect or a non-Standard English appears clearly in the speech of Hurston's characters.

Yuh see, said Mimms, when dat terrible win' come up we wuz out 'bout de middle of de river. Some of us wuz on de bridge, some on de derrick. De win' blowed so hand we could skeercely Stan' and Mist' Hill tol' us tuh set down fuh a spell. He's 'fraid some of us mought go overboard. Den all of a sudden de lights went out guess de wires wuz blowed down...²⁴

From this passage, we notice that Hurston's character 'Mimms' communicates using an Afro-American dialect. Through using this dialect, Hurston abrogates the Standard English and subverts it by destroying the structure of words such as 'skeercely' for scarcely and 'Mist' for Mister. Thus, equally to Synge, Hurston uses a great practice of Subversion in *John Redding Goes to Sea* in order to dismantle the dominant language. The language of Mr. Redding is another example of Hurston's use of Black dialect that is shown at the very beginning of the story when Alf discusses with his wife the situation of their child.

Aw, woman, stop dat talk 'about conjure. Tain't so nohow. Ah doan want Jawntuh git dat foolishness in him. Cose you allus tries tuh know mo'than me, but Ah ain't so ign'rant. Ah knows a heap mahself. Many and manys the people been drove outa their senses by conjuration, or rid tuhdeat' by witches.²⁵

From this speech, we can observe that the dialect of Mr. Redding is different from Standard English. Hurston in her short story writes in English but with Afro-American dialect, which is peppered with native phrases and terms. John's language also seems to be distorted like his parent's language, as it is shown in his conversation with his father "Mah ships, pa", "Ah throwed 'em in to go way off an' them ole weeds won't let 'em go on!".²⁶ According to Anna Maria Fraile through the protagonist John, Hurston tries to dismantle the English language by changing its structure, syntax and grammatical rules.²⁷ From the examples given above, we remark that in order to show her revocation of the dominant Standard English, Hurston uses Black's dialect in her short story. She destroys the syntax

and the grammar of the Standard English, as Ashcroft et al, state “post-colonial writing abrogates the privileged centrality of ‘English’ by using language to signify difference while employing a sameness which allows it to be understood.”²⁸ Accordingly, Hurston abrogates the Standard English by using an Afro-American dialect.

Furthermore, Hurston subverts the phonology and syntax of the Standard English to show the authenticity of her language. She tries to subvert the English language by dismantling its phonology and morphology, for instance, the use of the personal pronoun ‘I’ and the possessive pronoun ‘my’ in her short story does not follow the standard norms, because the pronoun ‘I’ and ‘my’ are pronounced differently in comparison to the English language. For example, when John says, “Mah ships, pa”, “Ah throwed ‘em in to go way off an’ them ole weeds won’t let ‘em.”²⁹ We note that Hurston changes the pronunciation of the two pronouns ‘I’ and ‘my’; ‘I’ becomes an ‘Ah’ that is a combination of the vowel ‘a’ and the consonant ‘h’ and the possessive pronoun ‘my’ transforms to ‘mah’. Michelle Deveraux and Rebecca Wheeler in their article *Code-Switching and Language Ideologies: Exploring Identity, Power, and Society in Dialectically Divers Literature* (2012) suggest an analysis of Hurston’s language. They state that Hurston in her works denotes a difference between the south and the north in their ways of spelling and pronouncing ‘I’ and ‘my’. After analysing Hurston’s works, the writers indicate that northerners pronounced the two pronouns by sliding their tongue to produce an ‘Ahii’ for ‘I’ and ‘Mahii’ for ‘my’. Contrary to southerners, they uttered the two pronouns without moving their tongue to get an ‘Ah’ and ‘Mah’.³⁰ These different pronunciations were the result of the interactions between Black northerners and White Americans and the separation of southerners from the white Americans. Thus, the Whites influenced Blacks in the north and their language was reshaped, whereas Black southerners still attached to their real Afro-American dialect because they were forbidden to communicate with the whites. Clearly, Hurston suggests

the different pronunciations and spellings between the south and the north in order to show the diversity and the richness of Afro-American dialect.

Moreover, Hurston's subversion of the English language is well illustrated in the use of the 'd' instead of 'th' in the relative pronouns such as 'that',³¹ as it is shown in this example, "Seedat tallest pine tree ovahdere how it looks like a skull wid a crown on".³² The 'th' in 'that' is written and pronounced 'd'.

Another example of subversion in the short story is the use of the singular personal pronoun 'I' and its verb; we can notice that there is something wrong about the conjugation of the verb. When speaking, the characters add 's' to the verb, for example, John's father says: "Ah hopes"³³. In reality we put 's' at the end of the verb conjugated only with the pronouns (she/ he/ it).

From the examples given above, we deduce that Hurston wants to dismantle and destroy the English language in order to oppose the dominant language and to impose her native one. Similarly to Hurston, the Rastafarians subverted the Standard English by dismantling its structure to show the difference between their language and the language of the 'Centre'. Quoted in Ashcroft et al., Cliff Lashley argues that:

The Rastafarians attempt to 'deconstruct' what they see as the power structures of English grammar, structures in themselves metonymic of the hegemonic controls exercised by the British on Black peoples throughout Caribbean and African history While the language remains as it is, however, there is no hope of genuine 'freedom' ...³⁴

Here, Lashley suggests that the Rastafarian's aim was to 'deconstruct' the English language and change its structure. Additionally, each nation has its way of abrogating and subverting the English language, so people subvert the language according to place for instance, in the Jamaican Creole, the personal pronouns 'I' and 'we' are replaced by 'me' to show the subversion,³⁵ whereas Afro-Americans did not replace the pronoun 'I' but they change its form to become 'Ah'.

Similar to J.M Synge who uses Standard English in an Irish context for the sake of subversion, Hurston destroys the Standard language and its syntax. She mixes the Black dialect with the Standard English in the same way Synge subverts English by mixing two different languages to get a 'mixed language', 'hybrid language' or the 'prose poetry mix'.³⁶

According to Ashcroft et al., "The notions of power inherent in the model of centre and margin are appropriated and so dismantled."³⁷ In other words, post-colonial writers want to abrogate the language of the 'Centre' in their writings and at the same time they appropriate its language and culture, but all this is done only to subvert the language. Thus, Zora Neale Hurston as a post-bellum writer abrogates the dominant language in her work and at the same time, she appropriates English and then dismantles it.

Actually, Hurston abrogates and subverts the English language in an ironic and satiric way just to appear inappropriate from Standard English. Blacks were marginalized, oppressed, and especially enslaved. Thus through her works, Hurston did the most possible things to help herself and her community to get rid of that hopeless situation and set her soul free from the domination of the white Americans.

To conclude, both Zora Neale Hurston and John Millington Synge have the same aims to revive their language and culture. They struggled to defend the African American and the Irish identities. Hurston wrote her short story using a Black dialect that is full of slang expressions and idioms just to show to the whites that Blacks have a useful language to rely on it in communication and even in literature. Comparably, Synge wrote his play using a mixture of Irish and English languages relying on the Irish customs. Therefore, Hurston and Synge focus on local culture and folk heritage in their writings. As a result, in order to reject the dominance of the English language over the Irish and the Afro-Americans, Synge and Hurston abrogate and subvert the Standard English. This 'Abrogation' and

‘Subversion’ is well illustrated in Synge’s play and Hurston’s short story where we notice that the two writers took Standard English which is a notion of power and then subvert it in a way that dismantles the ‘Center’s’ culture.

Endnotes:

¹Gilmartin Elizabeth, “*The Anglo-Irish Dialect: Mediating Linguistic Conflict.*” , Cambridge University Press, in *Victorian Literature and Culture*, Vol. 32, No. 1, (2004), p 01, accessed in June 20, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/205058649>.

²Ibid., p02.

³Micheàl Mac Liammoir, *J.M. Synge’s Plays, Poems and Prose*, Dent: London, 1941, p19.

⁴Ibid., p21.

⁵Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in post-colonial literatures*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), p82.

⁶Micheàl Mac Liammoir, *J.M. Synge’s Plays, Poems and Prose*, p27.

⁷Nursen Gomceli, Allan James, *Hiberno-English and beyond in J.M. Synge’s “The Playboy of the Western World: A Literary Linguistic Analysis of its Dramatic Significance*, Narr Frank Attempto Verlag GmbH Co. KG, in *ArbeitskreisAnglistik und Amerikanistik*, Vol. 40, No. ½ (2015), p 121, accessed September, 24, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24722042>.

⁸Ibid., p110.

⁹Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader*, (Taylor and Francis: Routledge, 2003), p300.

¹⁰Gilmartin Elizabeth, “*The Anglo-Irish Dialect: Mediating Linguistic Conflict.*”(2004), p10.

¹¹Ibid., p14.

¹²Micheàl Mac Liammoir, *J.M. Synge’s Plays, Poems and Prose*, p21.

¹³Declan Kibered, “J.M.Synge: ‘A faker of Peasants Speech’”, Oxford University Press, in the Review of English Studies, New Series, Vol. 30, No. 117, (Feb, 1979), p59, accessed in June, 26, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/5147763>.

¹⁴Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, *Key Concepts in Post-Colonial Studies*, (Taylor and Francis: Routledge, 2001), p16.

¹⁵R.K. DASGUPTA, “J.M.Synge on Literature”, SahityaAcademi, in Indian Literature, Vol. 16, No. ¾, (July-December 1973), p192, accessed in June, 20, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24157231>.

¹⁶Gilmartin Elizabeth, “*The Anglo-Irish Dialect: Mediating Linguistic Conflict.*”(2004), p12.

¹⁷Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back*, p82.

¹⁸Micheàl Mac Liammoir, *J.M. Synge’s Plays, Poems and Prose*, p25.

¹⁹Declan Kibered, “J.M.Synge: ‘A faker of Peasants Speech’”. P62.

²⁰Declan Kiberd, *Inventing Ireland: The Literature of the Modern Nation*, Vintage, 1996, p174.

²¹Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back*, p21.

²²Ana Maria Fraile, “Zora Neale Hurston’s Experimentation with the narrative voice in her *Short Stories*”, University of Salamanca, p29.

²³Ibid.

²⁴Zora Neale Hurston, *John Redding Goes to Sea*, in her *Zora Neale Hurston: The Complete Stories*, New York: Harper Collins, 1995, p06.

²⁵Ibid., p01.

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷Ana Maria Fraile, “Zora Neale Hurston’s Experimentation with the narrative voice in her *Short Stories*”, University of Salamanca, p30.

²⁸Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back*, p50.

²⁹Zora Neale Hurston, *John Redding Goes to Sea*, in her *Zora Neale Hurston: The Complete Stories*, p01.

³⁰Michelle Devereaux and Rebecca Wheeler, *Code-Switching and Language Ideologies: Exploring Identity, Power, and Society in Dialectically Divers Literature*, National Council of Teachers of English, in the *English Journal*, Vol., 102, No., 2 (November 2012),p 94, Accessed in July, 18, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23365404>.

³¹Zora Neale Hurston, *John Redding Goes to Sea*, in her *Zora Neale Hurston: The Complete Stories*, p01.

³²Michelle Devereaux and Rebecca Wheeler, *Code-Switching and Language Ideologies: Exploring Identity, Power, and Society in Dialectically Divers Literature*, p94.

³³Zora Neale Hurston, *John Redding Goes to Sea*, in her *Zora Neale Hurston: The Complete Stories*, p01.

³⁴Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back*, p47.

³⁵*Ibid.*, p51.

³⁶Plamen Gaptov, *The Three Holded Whistles From Kiltartan: Communal Language-Making in the Irish Literary Renaissance*, in *Management and Education*, Vol. VII (2) 2001, 87.

³⁷Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back*, p82.

Chapter Three: Strategies of Appropriation

In this chapter, we are going to discuss the strategies of appropriation in John Millington Synge's play *Riders to the Sea* (1904) and Zora Neale Hurston's short story *John Redding Goes to Sea* (1921). The two writers use language variance in their literary works in order to show difference and separation from the dominant norms. As a result, Synge and Hurston appropriated the Standard English in their literary works as Evallado Doroy says: "Appropriation is a process by which the language (the Centre's) is consciously brought under the influence of vernacular and its cultural nuances".¹ This means that appropriation is to take the language of the 'Centre' and use it in a new context which is suitable to the colonized nation. In addition to this, Ashcroft et al., state that "strategies of appropriation are numerous and vary widely in post-colonial literature, but they are the most powerful and ubiquitous way in which English is transformed by formerly colonized writers".² J. M. Synge and Zora Neale Hurston are among the writers who adopted the strategies of appropriation as a means to defend their identity. While comparing *Riders to the Sea* and *John Redding Goes to Sea*, we will study the various strategies of appropriating the Centre's language and culture.

1) Strategies of Appropriation in J. M. Synge's *Riders to the Sea*:

Synge appropriated the colonizer's language using many strategies of appropriation such as Syntactic Fusions, Code-Switching and Vernacular Transcription, and Interlanguage that are explained in *The Empire Writes Back*.

a. Syntactic Fusion:

Syntactic fusions is a strategy of appropriation that is mostly used by post-colonial writers.³ As a post-colonial playwright, J.M Synge appropriates standard English and infuse it with the syntax of the Irish language. He adopts a vernacular syntax to Standard English that makes the rhythm and texture of vernacular speech more accessible. By doing this,

Synge aims to revive and impose the Irish language, because it was considered useless. In *Riders to the Sea*, we can notice the influence of the Irish syntax over the English language that is shown through the play:

Maurya: If it wasn't found itself, that wind is raising the sea, and there was a star up against the moon, and it rising the night. If it was a hundred horses, or a thousand horses you had itself, what is the price of a thousand horses against a son where there is one son only? ⁴

She also says:

Maurya: It's hard set we'll be surely the day you're drowned with the rest, what way will I live and the girls with me, and I am old woman looking for the grave? ⁵

From these examples, we remark a different kind of English that is strongly influenced by the Irish syntax. This influence is well shown in the structure of sentences such as, "What way will I live and the girls with me" and it is also illustrated in the incorrect use of the present continuous such as "and it rising the night", in this sentence we notice the absence of the auxiliary 'be'.

Moreover, through reading and analyzing the play, we notice an incorrect use of verbs, adjectives, and prepositions. For instance, the omission of the verb appears in writing "...and he in a hurry" ⁶ instead of 'he is in a hurry'. Another example of syntactic fusion in Synge's play is the exclusion of conjunctions such as, "...I'll have no son left me in the world".⁷ In this case, instead of saying, 'I'll have no son left for me in the world', Synge omitted the conjunction 'for'. In addition to this, Synge used the personal pronoun 'we' just after the preposition 'on' as it is illustrated in this example, "... and we won't let on we've heard anything the time he's on the sea".⁸ Correspondingly, in his article *Rural and Urban Ireland: A Question of Language*, Raymond Hickey suggests that there are varieties of the Irish English features in *Riders to the Sea* such as the use of 'on + personal pronoun', and the use of 'and + continuous verb form' as a type of subordinate clause.⁹

Besides, within the play we may notice another form of syntactic fusion through the development of neologism. In Synge's play, many words seem to be new for the English vocabulary such as 'poteen' that means 'they could' and 'curagh', which means a small

boat. These words were taken directly from the Irish language. Therefore, Synge made a syntactic fusion in his play by mixing the syntax of English Irish with the lexical forms of English in order to impose the Irish language over the Standard English.

b. Code-Switching and Vernacular Transcription:

Code-Switching is another strategy used by J.M. Synge, which is a technique of switching between two or more codes.¹⁰ According to Ashcroft et al. post-colonial writers or the oppressed communities switch between two or more languages to obtain a single language which is vernacular.

Synge appropriates the English language and then mixes it with the Irish one. As a translator, he translates a pure Irish play to English, but keeping the Irish syntax. Within the play, we may notice a switch between two languages 'English' and 'Irish'. Thus, this switch produced a kind of vernacular language that is shown in the speech of Synge's characters as Ashcroft stipulates "Both english and English with their attendant social, cultural, and political allegiances will exist side by side as 'vernacular' and 'standard'".¹¹ Here, 'english' is the vernacular dialect of English and it is well explored in Synge's play. As a result, Synge as a poly dialectical playwright used the technique of code-switching by including a variance in language, as it is shown in Cathleen's speech: "Cathleen: Give me the ladder, and I'll put them up in the turf-loft, the way she won't know of them at all, and may be when the tide turns she'll be going down to see would he be floating from the east".¹² From this passage, we notice a rhythm of vernacular voice such as the use of stock phrases. Therefore, Synge varied between English and English Irish in his play.

Declan Kiberd in his article *Synge as a Scholar and Translator* (1979) argues, "This kind of ambiguity between the meaning of standard English and the sense of the Irish original is a primary virtue of the Anglo-Irish dialect."¹³ Synge in his play explored that dialect which is in medial position between the Standard English and the original

Irish.¹⁴ Thus, as a way of appropriating the English language, Synge uses the technique of code-switching and vernacular transcription. In his play *Riders to the Sea*, we can find a good example of that technique for instance, when Nora says about Bartley “And it’s destroyed he’ll be going till dark night, and he after eating nothing since the sun went up.”¹⁵ The word ‘destroyed’ in this example has two meanings, on one side, ‘destroyed’ in the idiomatic Gaelic sense means being destroyed with hunger or thirst, it also means great discomfort on the other side. However, the meaning of ‘destroyed’ in the Standard English suggests dissolution and death.¹⁶

c. Interlanguage:

Interlanguage is another strategy of appropriation used by John Millington Synge in his play *Riders to the Sea*. According to Ashcroft et al.,

‘[I]nterlanguage’ [is] a term coined by Nemser (1971) and Selinker (1972) to characterize the genuine and discrete linguistic system employed by learners of a second language. The concept of an interlanguage reveals that the utterances of a second-language learner are not deviant forms or mistakes, but rather are part of a separate but genuine linguistic system.¹⁷

In other words, interlanguage is an attempt to create an ‘interculture’ by a combination of the linguistic structures of the two languages.¹⁸ Correspondingly, Synge in his play explored a form of language that has the features of both Irish and English languages. Within the play, we notice a mixture of many linguistic structures between Irish and English languages. The play is crowded with examples of interlanguage as it is illustrated in this example, “Cathleen: Why wouldn’t you give him your blessing and he looking round in the door? Isn’t it sorrow enough is on everyone in this house without your sending him out with unlucky word behind him, and a hard word in his ear?”¹⁹ From this example, we notice that certain Irish English sentences such as ‘a hard word in his ear’ preserve the same structures of their equivalents in Irish language.

Radoslava Pekarova in her thesis *The Influence of the Irish Language on Irish English Grammar* (2009) suggests that Irish English is an interesting language in the

English speaking world, since it includes contact between two ‘genetically’ related languages Irish and English.²⁰In the case of *Riders to the Sea*,we may notice that Synge’s language was strongly influenced by the Irish language. When the Irish started to use English as a means of communication with the English, they learned English vocabulary but they kept the grammatical structures and patterns of their original language.²¹As a result, the Irish influence in Synge’s *Riders to the Sea* is reflected at every linguistic level from the sound patterns and the rhythms to the vocabulary, the idioms and the sentence structure. Within the play, we remark many examples of the preservation of the Irish forms in grammar such as the special use of reflexive pronouns. In Standard English, reflexive pronouns are used in the position of objects, but in Irish English, they are used as objects as it is illustrated in this example, “If it is itself” or subjects in “Herself does be saying prayers”.Therefore, this linguistic strategy ‘interlanguage’ is used by Synge in order to distinguish his language from the dominant English and to impose it.

To conclude, Synge has appropriated and reconstituted the English language in his play through using different linguistic strategies such as syntactic fusion, code- switching and interlanguage.

2) Strategies of Appropriation in Z. N. Hurston’s *John Redding Goes to Sea*:

Zora Neale Hurston appropriated aspects from American culture. Similarly to Synge, in *John Redding Goes to Sea* Hurston appropriates the Standard English using nearly the same strategies as a way of resisting the white men’s domination and oppression.

a. Syntactic Fusion:

Comparably to Synge, Hurston tries to join the syntax of Afro-American’s language to the lexical form of the English language in order to get a vernacular destroyed dialect. Through exploring Hurston’s short story, we notice the presence of many syntactical

fusions. Equally to Synge, Hurston uses a 'strange' and awkward language in her work, when reading the short story we notice the use of new words like 'Gawd' which refers to 'God' and 'bettah' means better. In addition to this, she uses unfamiliar phrases such as 'Cose you allus tries tuh know mo' than me, but Ah ain't so ign'rant.'²²

Moreover, Hurston uses other syntactic variations in the short story effectively to appropriate the English language. According to Anna Maria Frail "The influence of vernacular substratum emerges in the use of double negative 'no...nothing' and the intrusive 'r' in wanter."²³ In other words, Hurston in *John Redding Goes to Sea* dismantled the structure of the negative form and the use of the intrusive 'r' which is shown in the following examples, "Matty, a man doan need no travel dust tuh make 'imwanter bit de road"²⁴, "Stella ain't got no call tuh go crazy 'cause John is. She ain't no woman tuh be fllopin' roun' from place tuh place lak some uh dese reps follerin 'uh section gang".²⁵ Here Hurston shows the use of double negation which makes the reader confused while reading, because according to the grammatical rules of the English language, there is no rule about using double negation. Besides, the use of 'r' in 'wanter' according to Fraile is unneeded. As a result, Hurston aims to disturb and destroy the sense of Standard English by using these syntactic fusions.

Moreover, Hurston in *John Redding Goes to Sea* defends her race and identity using negation and other distinctive grammatical features that are linked to Afro-American's dialect. According to Lori Jirousek "Hurston offers an example of the African American influence on language; she cites the way they have altered the pronunciation and enriched the vocabulary of white southern American English."²⁶ Accordingly, the English language was influenced by Afro-Americans who reformed the English vocabulary and pronunciation.

Equally to Synge, Hurston changes the structure of the sentence and the form of verbs, nouns and adjectives. She creates and adopts new usages to the English grammar rules by contradicting these rules which say, 'we/you+ bare infinitive= present simple' and 'she/he/it+ verb+ s= present simple'. Clearly, Afro-Americans do not follow those rules, because for them verbs in the present tense carry 's' at the end with all personal pronouns, as it is shown in this examples: "Well, Alf., dat's all we po' wimmen kin do. We wants our husbands an' our sons"²⁷, "Well, Ah wants mah son tuh go; an' he wants tuh go too. He's a man now, Matty."²⁸

Therefore, Hurston uses syntactic fusion throughout her short story in order to dismantle and destroy the English language; she appropriates the Standard English and mixes it with the syntax of Afro-American's dialect in order to impose the Black identity and to resist the domination of the English language.

b. Code-Switching and Vernacular Transcription:

Similarly to Synge, Hurston uses code-switching and vernacular transcription in *John Redding Goes to Sea*, which is considered as a good example of using vernacular English after her novel *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937). Hurston uses this strategy to distinguish her dialect from the white's language. According to Braj B. Kachru in *Post-Colonial Studies Reader* "Code-mixing refers to the use of lexical items or phrases from one code in the stream of discourse of another."²⁹ Correspondingly, in her short story, Hurston splits from Black's dialect to a standardized English, as it is illustrated in this example, "Naw, John, it's bettah for you to stay heahan take over the school. Why don't you marry and settle down?"³⁰

Clearly, in the short story, we observe that the characters move from vernacular English to Standard English while speaking, which is shown in this sentence: "Ah talks in parables sometimes. Come on, les go on tuh supper."³¹ In fact, Hurston through using the

Afro-American dialect, she described the culture of the Black community during the 1920's³². In addition to this, Hurston changes the language of her characters according to time. When John was a little boy, he spoke vernacular English that is shown in this example, "Pa, Ah betcha Ah seen somthin' in th' wood- lot you ain't seen!"³³ but when he grows old, he transforms his language to a more standardized sophisticated English as it is shown in this passage:

Don't make me too conscious of my weakness, Stella. I know I should never have married with my inclinations, but it's done now, no use to talk about what is past. I love and want to keep you, but I can't stifle that longing for the open road, rolling seas, foe peoples and countries I have never seen. I'm suffering too, Stella, I'm paying for my rashness in marrying before I was ready. I'm not trying to shirk my duty- you'll be well taken care of in the meanwhile.³⁴

This shift from vernacular to a standardized English shows the power of English over Afro-Americans, since English was the language taught in schools and Afro-American language was not recognized in the USA.

In this context, Sharon I. Jones argues, "One of Hurston's lasting legacies is her ability to show how sophisticated African-American English is. Rather than presenting dialect in a condescending or patronizing manner, she shows its richness and complexity".³⁵ In other words, instead of proving that Afro-American dialect is not an acknowledgeable language, Hurston exposes its richness, sophistication and complexity. She adds that Black vernacular English is a complex language and it differs from the English taught in grammar books.³⁶ Moreover, Hurston uses a standardized English with the narrative voice, as it is illustrated in this sentence "The boy had on several occasions attempted to reconcile his mother to the notion, but found it a difficult task."³⁷ From this example, we notice that Hurston uses a Standardized English to show that although she is an African American writer, she practices English successively and fruitfully.

As result, Hurston presents a form of nonstandard English or a Black vernacular English. She fuses this Black dialect with the Standard English in her short story in order

to show cultural varieties between her community and the white one, and to show the importance of her native language and identity. Indeed, she appropriated the strategy of code-switching and vernacular transcription in order to valorize the Afro-American vernacular English. Equally to Synge who wanted to present Irish identity using an Irish dialect, Hurston's use of vernacular dialect reveals her desire to present a realistic portrayal of Afro-American culture.

c. Glossing:

While Synge adopted interlanguage in appropriating the English language, Hurston used Glossing as another strategy to appropriate the Standard English. In order to show her strength in appropriating and learning English as a second language after Afro-American dialect, she uses glossing as a means to give her dialect power and recognition by distinguishing it from the dominant English language. According to Ashcroft et al., glossing may be defined as a strategy of appropriation used by post-colonial writers especially when they make reference or make use of a word from their mother language and provide its equivalent in the target language.³⁸ In other words, glossing provides more explanations and details about something.

Besides, glossing is also defined as "the explanatory comment attached to a text. It can be a word, a sentence or a clause, qualifying the non-standard. It is one of the most common devices used by authors in cross-cultural texts."³⁹ In other words, glossing may be expressed in a text through providing explanations, clarifications or comments about the non-standard word. These clarifications could be a word or a sentence provided inside the text. Zora Neale Hurston's *John Redding Goes to Sea* is considered as a 'cross-cultural' text because Afro-American culture is the result of combining African and American cultures. Furthermore, in her short story, Hurston provides explanation about comparing John to a lump of dirt as it is shown in this example, "...I get feeling just like a lump of dirt

turned over by the plow –Just where it falls there’s where it lies –no thought or movement or nothing.”⁴⁰ From this example, we remark that Hurston comments about the state of the lump of dirt when John says: ‘where it falls there’s it lies’, here she glossed the state of John in relation to the lump of dirt. According to Anna Maria Fraile, Hurston employs a musical and unique Afro-American dialect, when John compared himself to the lump of dirt.⁴¹

Hurston appropriates Standard English by using the strategy of glossing. After analyzing *John Redding Goes to Sea*, we notice that Hurston offers more explanations throughout her short story; she comments a sentence by explaining it or giving more details about it. Hurston expresses the use of glossing in her short story as it is shown in the following example:

Spring- time in Florida is not a matter of peeping violets or bursting buds merely. It is a riot of color in nature –glistening green leaves, pink, blue, purple, yellow blossoms that fairly stagger the visitor from the north. The miles of hyacinths lie like an undulating carpet on the surface of the river and divide reluctantly when slow-moving alligators push their way log-like across. The nights are white nights for the moon shines with dazzling splendor, or in the absence of that goddess, the soft darkness creeps down laden with innumerable scents. The heavy fragrance of magnolias mingled with delicate sweetness of jasmine and wild roses.⁴²

In this passage, Hurston gives information about spring-time in Florida in order to make the story bright and attractive.

In her short story, Hurston tries to bring something new to the Afro-American literature by exploring glossing. Another example of glossing in Hurston’s short story lies in Mimms’ description of the storm, he said,

...den dat rain commenced –an’ Ah nevah seed such a down poor since de flood. We set dere and someone begins tuh pray. Lawd how we did pray rah be spared! Den somebody raised a song any we sung, you hear me, we sung from de bottom of our hearts till daybreak. When the first light come up de fog begin to lif, an’ we could see de water. Dat fog wuz so thick an’ heavy dat it wuz huggin’ dat river lakwidin’ sheet. And when it rose we saw dat de river had rose. Way up durin’ the rain. Mu Gawd, Alf! It wuz runnin’ high so hight it nearly teched de span of de bridge –an’ red as blood...⁴³

Here, Hurston gives a full description of the storm by interpreting it between two hyphens in order to provide the whole image of it and make the reader experience the harshness of the storm from reading the provided details.

Moreover, in Hurston's short story we remark the use of some words that have local uses like 'conjunction', 'witches', and 'spell'. These words are left unglossed in the text but its meanings are understood through the context "conveying the syntax of colloquial speech."⁴⁴ By leaving these words without gloss, the reader may relate them directly to Hurston's culture.

To sum up, Hurston in her short story explored a set of linguistic strategies such as syntactic fusion, code-switching and glossing. These strategies are used by Hurston in *John Redding Goes to Sea* as a way to distinguish the Afro-American dialect from the dominant English and as a way of struggling and searching for the recognition of her dialect and identity.

To conclude, Zora Neale Hurston and John Millington Synge have appropriated the English language using different strategies of appropriation. Synge and Hurston are two revivalist authors, who represent their native cultures and languages through their literary works. They depicted Black and Irish cultural expression by presenting Black and Irish dialects. Through using vernacular English, Synge and Hurston want to defend and to show it as "a valuable and relevant part of their cultures, and not inferior to the version of English."⁴⁵

Endnotes:

¹E. ValladoDoroy, “*Abrogation and Appropriation: Post-Colonial Literature*”, in *Philippine studies*, Vol. 41, No. 1 (first quarter 1993), p , accessed in June, 04, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42634948>.

²Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in post-colonial literatures*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), p76.

³Ibid., p67.

⁴Micheàl, Mac Liammoir, *J. M.Synge’s Plays, Poems and Prose*, Dent: London, 1941, p21.

⁵Ibid., p22.

⁶Ibid., p21.

⁷Ibid., p22.

⁸Ibid., p25.

⁹Raymond Hickey, *Rural and Urban Ireland: A Question of Language*, [https://www.uni-due.de/lan300/Rural_and_Urban_Ireland_\(Hickey\).pdf](https://www.uni-due.de/lan300/Rural_and_Urban_Ireland_(Hickey).pdf), p12.

¹⁰Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back*, p71.

¹¹Ibid., p74.

¹²Liammoir, *J. M.Synge’s Plays, Poems and Prose*, p20.

¹³Declan Kiberd, “*Synge as a Scholar and Translator*”in the *May Mooth Review*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (May 1979), p61 ,accessed in July, 18, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20556928>.

¹⁴Ibid

¹⁵Liammoir, *J. M.Synge’s Plays, Poems and Prose*, p23.

¹⁶Declan Kiberd, *Synge as a Scholar and Translator*, 1979, p61.

¹⁷Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back*, p 65.

¹⁸Ibid

¹⁹Liammoir, *J. M.Synge’s Plays, Poems and Prose*, p22.

²⁰Radoslava pekarova, *The Influence pf the Irish Language on Irish English Grammar*, Department of English and American Studies: Masaryk University, 2009, p05.

²¹Ibid., p22.

²²Zora Neale Hurston, *John Redding Goes to Sea*, in her *Zora Neale Hurston: The Complete Stories*, New York: Harper Collins, 1995, p1.

²³Ana Maria Fraile, *Zora Neale Hurston's Experimentation with the Narrative Voice in her Short Stories*, University of Salamanca, p30.

²⁴Zora Neale Hurston, *John Redding Goes to Sea*, in her *Zora Neale Hurston: The Complete Stories*, p2.

²⁵Ibid., p03.

²⁶Lori Jirousek, "That Commonality of Feeling": Hurston, Hybridity, and Ethnography, St Louis University in the African American Review, Vol. 38, No. 3 (Autumn, 2004), p423, accessed in July 20, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/15124431>.

²⁷Zora Neale Hurston, *John Redding Goes to Sea*, in her *Zora Neale Hurston: The Complete Stories*, p3.

²⁸Ibid., p2.

²⁹BrajB. Kachru, 'The Alchemy of English', *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader.*, eds.Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, Helen Tiffin(London and New York: Routledge, 2003), Taylor and Francis, 2003, p292.

³⁰Zora Neale Hurston, *John Redding Goes to Sea*, in her *Zora Neale Hurston: The Complete Stories*, p2.

³¹Ibid., p1.

³² Sharon L. Jones, *Critical Companion to Zora Neale Hurston: A Literary Reference to Her Life and Work*, New York: Facts On File, 2009, p212.

³³Zora Neale Hurston, *John Redding Goes to Sea*, in her *Zora Neale Hurston: The Complete Stories*, p1.

³⁴Ibid., p3.

³⁵Sharon L. Jones, *Critical Companion to Zora Neale Hurston: A Literary Reference to Her Life and Work*, p213.

³⁶Ibid., 212.

³⁷Zora Neale Hurston, *John Redding Goes to Sea*, in her *Zora Neale Hurston: The Complete Stories*, p2.

³⁸Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back*, p 60.

³⁹Muhammad Safeer Awaan, Mohammed Ali, *Strategies of Language Appropriation in Khaled Hosseini's 'A Thousand Splendid Suns'*, *Language in India*, Strength for Tosay and Bright Hope for Tomorrow , Vol. 12, 17 July 2012, ISSN1930-2940, p 484, accessed in October 20, 2017, <http://www.languageinIndia.com>.

⁴⁰Zora Neale Hurston, *John Redding Goes to Sea*, in her *Zora Neale Hurston: The Complete Stories*, p03.

⁴¹Ana Maria Fraile, *Zora Neale Hurston's Experimentation with the Narrative Voice in her Short Stories*, p30.

⁴²Zora Neale Hurston, *John Redding Goes to Sea*, in her *Zora Neale Hurston: The Complete Stories*, p03.

⁴³*Ibid.*, p02.

⁴⁴Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back*, p 63.

⁴⁵John Brannigan, *Race and Modern Irish Literature and Culture*, Edinburgh University Press, 2009, p212.

Conclusion

Language is an important element that constructs the Irish and Afro-American identities. The Irish people as well as Afro-Americans lived under the oppression of England and America respectively. Both of them were marginalized in the sense that their language and identities were not recognized. During the Irish and the Harlem Renaissances, John Millington Synge and Zora Neale Hurston succeeded in reviving their native language and defending their identities. Therefore, Synge's play *Riders to the Sea* and Hurston's short story *John Redding Goes to Sea* bring the message that their cultures are valuable and respectful.

After discussing the two literary works in the light of the concepts 'Abrogation', 'Appropriation' and 'Subversion' that we have selected in Ashcroft's et al., *The Empire Writes Back*, these concepts have allowed us to explore the issue of language and identity in the two works. In the course of our research paper, we come to the conclusion that the marginalization of the Irish and the segregation of the Afro-Americans are the main causes of their Revivals. Therefore, Synge and Hurston challenged this segregation and marginalization using 'Appropriation', 'Abrogation' and 'Subversion' in their literary works.

Moreover, both Synge and Hurston abrogate the Standard English by using their native dialects in the two works and they subvert it by dismantling its norms and structures. The last concluding point of our research is that Synge in *Riders to the Sea* and Hurston in *John Redding Goes to Sea* appropriated the Standard English to suit their needs using different strategies of appropriation such as syntactic fusion, code-switching, interlanguage and glossing.

The scope of our research does not permit us to deal with all the issues that gather both Synge's *Riders to the Sea* and Hurston's *John Redding Goes to Sea*. Thus, we invite

other students to discuss these two literary works from a feminist perspective in the sense that both Synge's play and Hurston's short story were characterised by the domination of the female characters.

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