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Diplomová práce

NARRATIVE PERSPECTIVES AND LEVELS OF LITERARY
COMMUNICATION: READING IAN MCEWAN

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Olomouc, 2014

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Acknowledgments

My deepest gratitude goes to all my friends and colleagues who participated in this research study. Without them this paper would never have seen the light of day. I am especially grateful to my new Czech colleagues and friends who did not hesitate to participate despite of short notice and their very tight schedules. My special thanks goes to my dear Prim.Dr. Neda Ferizovic for her help with formulating the research questions related to the post-traumatic syndrome.

I would also like to express the appreciation to my mentor for his support and guidance during the entire process.

When I first embarked on this journey, I have to admit I was a bit sceptical on what this experience could bring. Doing a study on reading perspectives seemed quite a demanding task for someone with almost no experience in the field; whose sole motivation was simply the love for literature. I would not have made it through the gloomiest moments of this journey, without the never ending support and encouragement from Damir - my loving fiancé.

Finally, I would like to dedicate this thesis to one person in the world who has always been there for me; my best friend, my guardian, my role model, a true Woman Warrior – my mom.

I hereby declare that this thesis is entirely my own work and has not been taken from the work of others save to the extent that such work has been cited and acknowledged within the text of my work.

Olomouc, 2014

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Signature

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Abstract

The focus of this work is the analysis of readers' subjective perspectives. The texts used for the research and analysis were excerpts from Ian McEwan's fiction. The paper has two parts. The first part is focused on defining the key terminology and setting up the theoretical ground for the research study in the second part. The definitions and context from Jahn Manfred's *Narratology* were used as a main reference in the first part of this paper. The focus was put on narrative, narrative voice and the means of projecting it, narrator and narrator types, narrative situation and focalization – perspectives. Some of the key features of McEwan's fiction and writing techniques are briefly summarized.

In Part II focus is shifted on to the reader for the sake of identifying different perspectives assumed by different readers while reading the same text. This part of the paper includes a research study whose main goal was to answer the research question and either prove or disprove the existence of mutual subjective perspective within a particular sample group. The research drew upon sources such as personal memories and past experience, highlighting the importance these play in the reading process. The main research method used was a semi-structured interview in combination with the questionnaire. Two sample groups of 10 were interviewed on 3 texts. The key demographic variables used were nationality, age and the most important variable - war or no war experience. The results obtained support the main hypothesis that people that went through the traumatic experience of war share a mutual perspective in reading excerpts from Ian McEwan's fiction.

Key words: literary theory, narratology, criticism, subjective perspectives, text, reader response, psychology, loss of innocence, experience, wa

Abstrakt

Záměrem této práce je analýza subjektivního náhledu čtenářů. Pro účely tohoto průzkumu a analýzy byly použity výňatky z beletrie Iana McEwans. Práce má dvě části. Úvodní část je zaměřena na definování klíčové terminologie a nastavení teoretického základu pro výzkumnou studii v části druhé. Definice a souvislosti z Narratology Jahna Manfreda byly použity jako hlavní odkaz v první části této práce. Pozornost byla upřena na příběh, styl vyprávění a prostředky k jeho vykreslení, vypravěče, typy vyprávění, umístění vyprávění a fokalizaci – náhled. Ve stručnosti jsou popsány některé z klíčových prvků McEwansovi beletrie a psacích technik.

V části II se ohnisko zájmu přesouvá na čtenáře za účelem identifikace různých náhledů nabytých různými čtenáři během čtení stejného textu. Tato část práce zahrnuje menší výzkumnou studii, jejímž primárním cílem bylo zodpovědět otázku tohoto výzkumu a buď dokázat nebo vyvrátit existenci vzájemných subjektivních náhledů v rámci konkrétní vybrané skupiny. Výzkum čerpal ze zdrojů jako osobní vzpomínky a dřívější zkušenosti poukazující na význam, jaký tyto vzpomínky a zkušenosti mají v procesu čtení. Hlavní použitá metoda výzkumu byl z části předpřipravený rozhovor v kombinaci s dotazníkem. Procesem prošli dvě vybrané skupiny o 10ti lidech na třech textech. Klíčovými demografickými proměnnými byly národnost, věk a zejména zda měli nebo neměli dotyčnou zkušenost s válkou. Získané výsledky podporují hypotézu a naznačují existenci vzájemného náhledu v rámci konkrétní skupiny.

Klíčová slova: literární teorie, narratologie, kritika, subjektivní náhledy, text, odpověď čtenáře, psychologie, ztráta inovace, zkušenost, válka

1.1 Short note on the topic

It was a couple of years ago that I first felt alone in my understanding of a particular piece of writing. No matter how unique any text was, I never had difficulties finding someone else in the classroom that shares an opinion similar to mine, or even the same. However, on that particular day, there was no one who remotely agreed with my perspective of the story which made me wonder why? After a few moments of being stared at by fellow students, I realized that it might be because I am the only person in that classroom who is from a different country. Soon after I dismissed that as a reason since Bosnia and the Czech Republic are not so much different in terms of culture. Apart from the nationality, there was just one more thing that made me different – my past experience of witnessing the war as a child. For months after that class, I kept dwelling on the idea that if, that day in the classroom, there were people that went through the same experience as me, they would have definitely sided with me and shared my perspective. There was just one way to prove if I was right. My personal experience would bear importance only if it would be a group experience, which is why I decided to do this research.

The research focus is the analysis of readers' subjective perspectives that has for a goal to either prove or disprove the existence of a mutual subjective perspective within a particular sample group. The research question that was already hinted at is: Do people that went through war assume a certain perspective in reading the passages of McEwan's fiction different from those people that haven't been through war? The study will be conducted using three excerpts from Ian McEwan's novels. One could argue that a research of this type could be done by using the work of any writer. There are lots of arguments to sustain this claim, especially because the topic is being approached from the reader response criticism view, which even more diminishes the importance of the author and the fact who he becomes is almost irrelevant. Consequently, we could suggest that a choice of whose stories are to be analyzed is merely a choice of personal preference. Nevertheless, I have to

stress that even though I have no doubt that some other author's piece of writing could serve a similar or even the same purpose, I have carefully and deliberately chosen McEwan for several reasons. These will be discussed in more details further on in the paper, but by providing some key factors below, I will try to justify why I believe McEwan's fiction serves this research best.

1.2 Why Ian McEwan?

There is no doubt that Ian McEwan ranks among the greatest contemporary authors (Ellamm, 1-21). He has achieved both popular and critical success and has won a considerable number of book awards. Besides the obvious critical acclaim, McEwan is an author who attracts vast masses of readers. This power of attracting enormous attention with each publication of both readers and critics is unquestionably one of the secrets of his success.

McEwan's first published work was a collection of short stories *First Love, Last Rites* (1975) which was immediately recognized and brought him Somerset Maugham Award in 1976. In 1978, he publishes his second collection of short stories titled *In Between the Sheets*. These were followed by his first two novels, *The Cement Garden* (1978) and *The Comfort of Strangers* (1981). These two novels earned McEwan the nickname Ian "Macabre" which he personally never liked, however, his first works were mainly concerned with topics of violence, obsession, and sexual deviance so the nickname seemed appropriate to many. Sometimes it seems that McEwan chooses topics that other writers do not dare to tackle, however he disliked the nickname and once said: "It went on for long after it was relevant and the awful thing was that each writer thought he had discovered it" (qtd. in *The Wall Street Journal*, Nov 2007). He concedes that:

It was reasonably well-earned at the time. Those stories were very dark, and I'm not sure where they came from. They were a young man's extravagant pessimism, which can be delicious. The world is so fresh and solid, and you think it could use a bit of shaking up (qtd. in *The Wall Street Journal*).

Even though McEwan somehow managed to get rid of the epithet of a writer of shock fiction, he has been widely described as the author whose whole story depends on a single

moment that changes everything. McEwan's defense was that this way of judging fiction is a truism, and that this could be said to be true for any novel (qtd. in *The Wall Street Journal*).

The answer to the question what makes Ian McEwan's fiction different and why his texts will be used for the following study is maybe the hardest question to answer. Many think that the gothic predilection and topics are what make McEwan's novels and stories different from others. I would agree with this adding that McEwan's narration and specific narrative techniques he employs to tell the story are as important as topics as they have this special power to trigger a very strong emotional reaction with a reader, be it shock, horror, fear, disgust, pride or love. This makes McEwan's fiction appealing and special and that is the main reason why the excerpts from his fiction will be used in my study. Also, different thus important is the way McEwan tells the story. His narrators and narrative perspectives that his narrators assume have been overlooked for decades by critics in the analysis of his fiction. It is well known that McEwan more than once wrote about writing itself. His masterpiece *Atonement* is maybe the best proof how much concerned with literature and the way of telling stories the author himself is.

However, the most important reason why I believe McEwan's fiction could serve my research best, can be summed up in one word – *trauma*. Most of McEwan's stories are about some sort of trauma. McEwan uses trauma as a trigger of the events, that one thing that moves the action. James Wood (2013) sums it quite well:

In *The Child in Time*, a child goes missing at a supermarket, and Stephen and Julie's domestic existence is shattered; in *Enduring Love*, Clarissa and Joe witness the death of John Logan as he falls from a balloon, are changed forever, and spend the rest of the novel trying to absorb the consequences of the spectacle; In *The Innocent*, set in Berlin in the mid-1950s, Leonard Marnham, a telephone communications specialist, is having an affair with Maria Eckdorf, a German. But they murder Maria's ex-husband and dismember his body and find that their relationship can't survive that traumatic experience. The central protagonists of *Atonement* have their lives ruined by the traumatic wrongful arrest of Robbie on charges of rape, while the just married couple in *On Chesil Beach* do not survive the trauma of their honeymoon night. (It is further intimated that Florence has been traumatised by sexual abuse at the hands of her father.) Trauma, in McEwan's work, inaugurates a loss of innocence (Wood 15).

This theme of loss of innocence is present in almost all McEwan's novels and stories, but it is especially prominent and easy to identify in his earlier works *Child in Time* (1998), *The Cement Garden* (1978), *On Chesil Beach* (2007), but in his later and known novels such as in *Enduring Love* (1997) and *Atonement* (2001). I find the topic of *innocence* and the *loss of innocence* crucial for my research. As I will state further in the methodology, my study participants are of a certain age, which makes them 7-11 years old when they went through *the trauma*, and lost the innocence they had as children. As pointed out in the abstract, this is the backbone of my research question.

1.3 How McEwan writes?

If we were to describe his narration in more details we could say that the different perspectives used in telling the story that is being presented on several levels of textual communication, are undoubtedly one of the secret ingredients in preparing this meal of feelings that some reader and critics have a hard time digesting. In layman terms, we could say that McEwan's narration is a complicated one. Especially when we talk about his metanarration¹, present for instance, in his latest novel *Sweet Tooth* where for instance the main protagonist Serena is engaged in constant reading and McEwan, apart from Serena's thoughts, presents us parts of these readings as well, so apart from Serena's story a reader also reads what Serena is reading (Marshall 7).

Narrative techniques such as these (matrix narrative with embedded hypo-narratives), combined with multiple perspectives, presented in a unique prose style, immaculate use of grammar and language, and unusual characterization are some of the main reasons why McEwan is a widely acclaimed contemporary author. Daniel Zalewski (2009) in his article for *The New Yorker* titled "The Background Hum: Ian McEwan's art of unease" says: All novelists are scholars of human behavior, but Ian McEwan pursues the matter with more scientific rigor than the job strictly requires (*The New Yorker*, Feb 2009). The answer to the question how this incredible fictional world is created calls for a lot of

¹A **metanarrative** refers, in critical theory, and particularly in postmodernism, to a supposedly comprehensive explanation, a narrative *about* narratives of historical meaning, experience or knowledge, which offers a society legitimation through the anticipated completion of a (as yet unrealised) master idea (Childers and Hentzi).

theoretical literary knowledge. McEwan, like any great writer, is obviously very talented, however writing is still a skill and writing techniques should not be overlooked.

2.1 Terminology and context

We cannot talk about the power of narrative and its use as an instrument in studying human behavior if we do not know what the narrative is. I will start with defying certain terms and concepts crucial for our future analysis.

The first thing to be defined is the narrative itself. Jahn Manfred in his *Narratology: A Guide to the Theory of Narrative* (2005) defines narrative as means of telling the story. The story is thus defined as a sequence of events caused and experienced by the characters. Every story has to have a story teller or the narrator (Manfred). It is no secret that our lives revolve around storytelling however, in real-life situations we rarely face the problem of distinguishing who the narrator is, because usually we are talking to a person face to face or his/her identity has been given to us before the story itself started.

Finding out who the textual narrator, when reading a novel, is not as simple as it may seem. Identifying the narrative voice in a text demands much more than just seeing and hearing as in real life conversation. Every form of communication is achieved by encoding and decoding messages, so the hearing of a narrative voice also implies decoding. At the very beginning of reading process, a reader is immediately prone to decode the lines of a text and determine who the narrator is. Is it a man or a woman, a teenage boy or an old man, a scientist or a shoemaker and etc. Reading is a process of both hearing the words in your head, as well as imagining the action happening before your eyes. In such a process the narrative voice plays a crucial role in our understanding of a particular work of fiction as well as creating this imaginary fictional world (Manfred). It is the narrative voice that is drawing the reader into the fictional world. This voice is very important as it is the voice to which each reader is expected to identify.

2.2 Narrative Voice and Discourse

Theory says that “all novels **project a narrative voice**, some more distinct, some less, some to a greater, some to a lesser degree“ (Manfred). Because of the fact that a text can project a narrative voice the text should be referred as narrative **discourse** (Manfred). Here we should point out that from the linguistic point of view, “a text does not make sense itself, but rather by the interaction of text-presented knowledge with people's stored knowledge of the world” (De Beaugrande and Dressler). Therefore, texts depend on context which includes the hidden conditions which govern situations of language use (Kintsch). Let us go back to the narrative voice in this defined narrative discourse. A reader distinguishes this voice by asking one simple question: *Who is speaking?* Let us consider the following excerpt from McEwan's *Enduring Love*, to distinguish some of the textual elements that Manfred (2005) lists as a means of projecting the narrative voice. The excerpt below is the opening paragraph/chapter of the book:

The beginning is simple to mark. We were in sunlight under a turkey oak, partly protected from a strong, gusty wind. I was kneeling on the grass with a corkscrew in my hand, and Clarissa was passing me the bottle -- a 1987 Daumas Gassac. This was the moment, this was the pin prick on the time map: I was stretching out my hand, and as the cool neck and the black foil touched my palm, we heard a man's shout. We turned to look across the field and saw the danger. Next thing, I was running towards it. The transformation was absolute: I don't recall dropping the corkscrew, or getting to my feet, or making a decision, or hearing the caution Clarissa called after me. What idiocy, to be racing into this story and its labyrinths, sprinting away from our happiness among the fresh spring grasses by the oak. There was the shout again, and a child's cry, enfeebled by the wind that roared in the tall trees along the hedgerows. I ran faster. And there, suddenly, from different points around the field, four other men were converging on the scene, running like me (McEwan, *Enduring Love* 10).

The first several paragraphs of *Enduring Love* are filled with tension. The reader's head is filled with questions from the moment he opens the book. For instance, the opening line 'The beginning is simple to mark', makes us wonder: *The beginning of what?*

2.3 Textual elements as means of projecting narrative voice (Manfred)

The first of the textual elements used to project the narrative voice is the **content matter**. (Manfred). From the first sentence we can also conclude that since the beginning is simple to mark, the middle and the end will not be so easily determined. This sentence catches the reader's attention immediately, but McEwan is giving a reader a hard time since he proceeds to describe the weather and scenery, and withholding the vital information while building up the tension and reader's curiosity. From the opening paragraph, by the voice used, we can also determine the tone that the book will have, since naturally and culturally appropriate voices are generally used for sad and happy, comic and tragic subjects. However, sometimes the tone does not have to be set in the beginning and there can be some cultural discrepancies when it comes to establishing and determining the tone.

The next element used to project the narrative voice is **subjective expressions** – these usually tell us more about the narrator, his beliefs, convictions, interests, values, political and ideological orientation, and attitude towards people, events, and things (Manfred). In McEwan's text above, we can approximately determine the narrator's gender, age, his sexual orientation, and the fact that whatever is going to happen is going to be a life changing experience for the narrator. Also, we can feel a sense of regret in the narrator's discourse: "What idiocy, to be racing into this story and its labyrinths, sprinting away from our happiness among the fresh spring grasses by the oak" (*Enduring Love* 10).

Pragmatic signals "are expressions that signal the narrator's awareness of an audience and the degree of his orientation towards it. Verbal storytelling, like speaking in general, takes place in a communicative setting comprising a speaker and an audience (or, a bit more generally, in order to account for written communication as well, an **addresser** and

an **addressee**)“ (Manfred). However, when talking about the audience in the context of fiction writing, one thing has to be pointed out and that is that Joe, our narrator in *Enduring Love*, or any other narrator in fiction “cannot be aware of one particular group of audience and that is the audience of the readers” (Manfred). Just as it is wrong to confuse the author, in this case McEwan with Joe, the theory also warns us not to confuse ourselves (readers) with a fictional addressee. We, as readers do not exist for the fictional narrators, just the same as they do not exist for us in our reality.

Manfred (Fig 1) provides the following standard structure of fictional narrative:

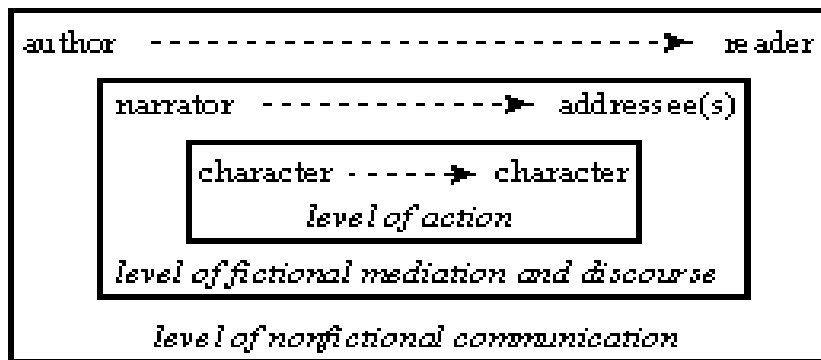


Figure 1 Manfred's structure of fictional narrative

According to the graphic above, communicative contact is possible between (1) author and reader on the level of nonfictional communication, (2) narrator and audience or addressee(s) on the level of fictional mediation, and (3) characters on the level of action. The first level is an 'extratextual level'; levels two and three are 'intratextual' (Manfred).

However, this diagram is far from being a sacred rule for the authors. Violations of different sort occur. For instance, some authors violate the rule by making their characters address the readers directly (metalepsis).

2.4 Narrator's types

So far, we have briefly explained the terms story, narrative voice and narrative discourse. We have defined a narrator's place in the standard structure of fictional narration. Now we can proceed by providing more details on narrator types. Narrative theory offers us several categories. The first distinction that is usually mentioned when discussing narrators' types is the distinction between a **homodiegetic** and **heterodiegetic** narrator (Genette). According to Genette (1980), the former is a narrator who is a character in the story. The latter is a narrator type who is not a character in the story, but regardless of that seems to know everything about the story (omniscient). An **autodiegetic** narrator is a special kind of homodiegetic narrator, namely the narrator is not only the character in the story, but the main protagonist of his story. The theory also makes a distinction between covert and overt narrators (Genette).

An **overt** narrator is the narrator who appears to have his own opinion, which he expresses by referring to himself in the first person. He is commenting upon characters and events while using the subjective expressions. His voice is thus distinctive and noticeable. A **covert** narrator, unlike the overt one, has no distinctive voice. He is more neutral, not intervening or imposing any kind of opinion. He is more of an observer. According to Genette (1980), covert narration can be most easily achieved by letting the action be seen through the eyes of an internal focalizer. Genette distinguishes between the narrator and the focalizer, explaining that the narrator “speaks” while focalizer “sees” (Genette).

2.5 Focalisation

We have already said that the term “focalization/focalizer” was introduced by Genette in 1980. Genette's main idea was to point to the difference between the narrative voice (*Who speaks?*) and perspective (*Who sees or perceives?*). At this point we should define the term **perspective** which, according to Genette is not the same “as point of view” as many would argue. The English word perspective, according to Merriam-Webster dictionary (2013) goes back to Middle English *perspectyf*, from Medieval Latin *perspectivum-perspectiva*

(noun), which means “science of optics (sight)” (Merriam-Webster). Even though the term point of view is often used in narratology as a synonym for perspective, according to the analogy suggested by Gennete (1980) above, the difference between the two terms is the same as between the narrator and focalizer. Most narratologists today find Gennete's approach to be narrow since the focalization is restricted to characters only, so they follow Bal's and Rimmon-Kenan's theory according to which focalizers can be external and internal. An **external focalizer** is actually a narrator who is outside the story, but we get to read his perspective on the same. An **internal focalizer** is in the story as a character whose perspective is in focus, but not necessarily throughout the whole story (Manfred).

Apart from internal and external focalization, Gennete also gives us the additional four main forms or patterns below:

Fixed focalization: A narrative is told by a single focalizer and all the events are presented through his point of view.

Variable focalization: The focalization shifts between a certain number of characters. Events and episodes are presented through the eyes of several internal focalizers.

Multiple focalization: The same episode is being presented repeatedly but seen through the eyes of the different internal focalizer.

Collective focalization: Focalization through either plural narrators ('we narrative') or a group of characters ('collective reflectors').

Brian Finney in his essay titled: “Briony's Stand Against Oblivion: The making of fiction in Ian McEwan's *Atonement*” (Finney 68-82) analyzes the internal focalization saying that McEwan employs the technique of variable internal focalization in the first part of the book. He points out that even though the narrative voice never actually changes (Briony), there is a change in the focal character (Cecilia, Robbie and so on). Further on Finney explains that McEwan decided to use this particular technique in order to avoid making Briony an omniscient narrator since in the story it was precisely the Briony's “all knowing nature” that triggered the fictionalized series of tragic events. By making Briony, an aging

writer, to use a variable focalization in attempt to sympathize with the other characters, McEwan is contributing to her atonement. (Finney)

To sum up: “focalization is a means of selecting and restricting narrative information, of seeing events and states of affairs from somebody's point of view, of foregrounding the focalizing agent, and of creating an empathetical or ironical view on the focalizer” (Genette).

2.6 Narrative situation

This term **narrative situation** is used by both Genette and Stanzel to explain certain characteristics of narrative. Manfred in his „Narratology“ focuses more on Stanzel’s approach defining different types of narratives. These definitions could have been provided earlier in this paper, however since we are gradually building the basis for analysis of subjective perspectives; this could be the right time to go a bit deeper into definitions of different types of narratives/narrators.

A first person narrative: a narrative told by a character who is a part of a story he/she is narrating (narrating I + experiencing I) (Manfred). This is one of the most commonly used narrative styles. Ian McEwan often uses the first person narration, although he seems not to be too keen on it. In the interview for *The Guardian* in August 2012, when asked about his latest novel and its narrator, he said:

I’ve got a prejudice against first-person narratives. There are too many of them. They're too easy; it's just ventriloquism and authors can hide their terrible style behind characterization. Any number of cliches are permitted (qtd. in *The Guardian*, Aug 2012).

Apart from the first person narration, Manfred points out that there is also an **authorial narrative** (when a narrator is absent from the story, he is an outsider who nevertheless seems to know everything, even characters’ thoughts. There is also a **figural narrative** (more often referred to as covert authorial narration) when the story is presented through the eyes of a character but in the third person (Manfred). This form of narration is usually

associated with postmodernism and modernism (stream of consciousness technique). McEwan's *Saturday* (2005) is a good example of the stream of consciousness technique, written within the literary framework of 24 hours.

The above distinctions and definitions are part of narrative theory for decades, however the postmodernism, the age we live in brought upon many changes even in the literary theory, thus the borders between narrative types nowadays are not so easily determined. The narrative types sometimes overlap, sometimes go from a third to a more subjective first person narration, as in McEwan's *Atonement* or the other way around, as in McEwan's *Enduring Love* where in the Chapter 9 (*Enduring Love* 157) the narration changes from the first person narration (Joe Rose) to the third person narrative. In the first eight chapters of the *Enduring Love*, the story was told by Joe and we have had a chance to witness the events from Joe's perspective, connect and sympathize with him and almost take every word of his for granted, but in the Chapter 9, McEwan switches to the 3rd person narration as if making us move backwards and see the bigger picture. This 3rd person narrator becomes our source of unbiased information as he is objective but yet omniscient. However, we have to be careful when analyzing McEwan's fiction since the change from the first person narration to the third person narration does not necessarily mean the movement from subjectivity to objectivity. It might be true for the *Enduring Love*, but for instance in *Atonement*, we are given the insight into thoughts of several characters, as if by an omniscient reliable third person narrator, but in the end it turns out that Briony was the one who provided this insight, it was just her imagination and empathy that was speaking to us; it was she who was the narrator all along (Finney 73).

There are a many more subcategories and distinctions in narrative theory when it comes to narration types, such as *we-narrative*, *simultaneous narration*, *camera eye narration* and many others, but the three types mentioned earlier are the most popular ones.

Considering the fact that Ian McEwan, as a central figure of this paper is an author who lives and writes in the age of postmodernism, we have to acknowledge the new trends in not only narrative theory but in writing in general. As Brian Richardson, from the Ohio University says: "the postmodernism gave us the creation, fragmentation, and

reconstitution of narrative voices, together with many innovative strategies to tell a story” (Preface, xi). However, for the analysis of McEwan’s narrators we are going to start with a bit older approach, presented by Wayne C. Booth in his *Rhetoric of Fiction* (Booth 152-166). We have already mentioned that some types of narrative tend to be more subjective than other. Let us tackle the topic of subjectivity and unreliability in narration.

2.7 Unreliable vs. Reliable narrator

The origin of this term is the above mentioned Booth’s *Rhetoric of Fiction* first published in 1961. Unreliable narrator is usually defined as one that deliberately deceives the reader, withholds certain information on purpose, provides false information or signals a reader, on one way or another, that his credibility as a narrator is to be questioned (the narrator is mentally challenged, psychologically damaged, delusional or possess some other physical disability that influences his reliability) (Booth 3-22). Sometimes, the unreliability is only hinted at and it is up to the reader to decide if the narrator is to be trusted or not. But how should the reader decide if the narrator is reliable? Is he to rely on his intuition and let it govern his judgment or is there some kind of a checklist that he needs to go through in order to decide. Ansgar Nünning, for instance suggest the combination of frame theory and of reader’s cognitive strategies to determine the narrator’s reliability/unreliability:

[...] to determine a narrator’s unreliability one need not rely merely on intuitive judgments. It is neither the reader’s intuitions nor the implied author’s norms and values that provide the clue to a narrator’s unreliability, but a broad range of definable signals. These include both textual data and the reader’s preexisting conceptual knowledge of the world. In sum, whether a narrator is called unreliable or not does not depend on the distance between the norms and values of the narrator and those of the implied author but between the distance that separates the narrator’s view of the world from the reader’s world-model and standards of normality (qtd. in Booth 8-9).

Even though both Nünning and Booth rely on a reader-centered approach which makes the distinction between reliability and unreliability a matter of individual/personal choice, still Booth rather focuses on the narrative audience more than on the actual reader and says that:

An unreliable narrator is one who tells lies, conceals information, misjudges with respect to the narrative audience – that is, one whose statements are untrue not by the standards of the real world or of the authorial audience but by the standards of his own narrative audience. [...] (Booth 158-159).

In other words, “all fictional narrators are false in that they are imitations but some are imitations who tell the truth, some of people who lie“ (Booth 160). Nunning especially criticized Booth for disregarding the reader in this entire process and suggested the above mentioned alternative combining approach (Mailloux 211). In the research study that is to follow, we are going to side with Nunning and approach the text analysis from the reader’s point of view.

PART II

Subjective Perspectives: Reading Ian McEwan

Reader Response Criticism

3.1 Historical overview of literary theory

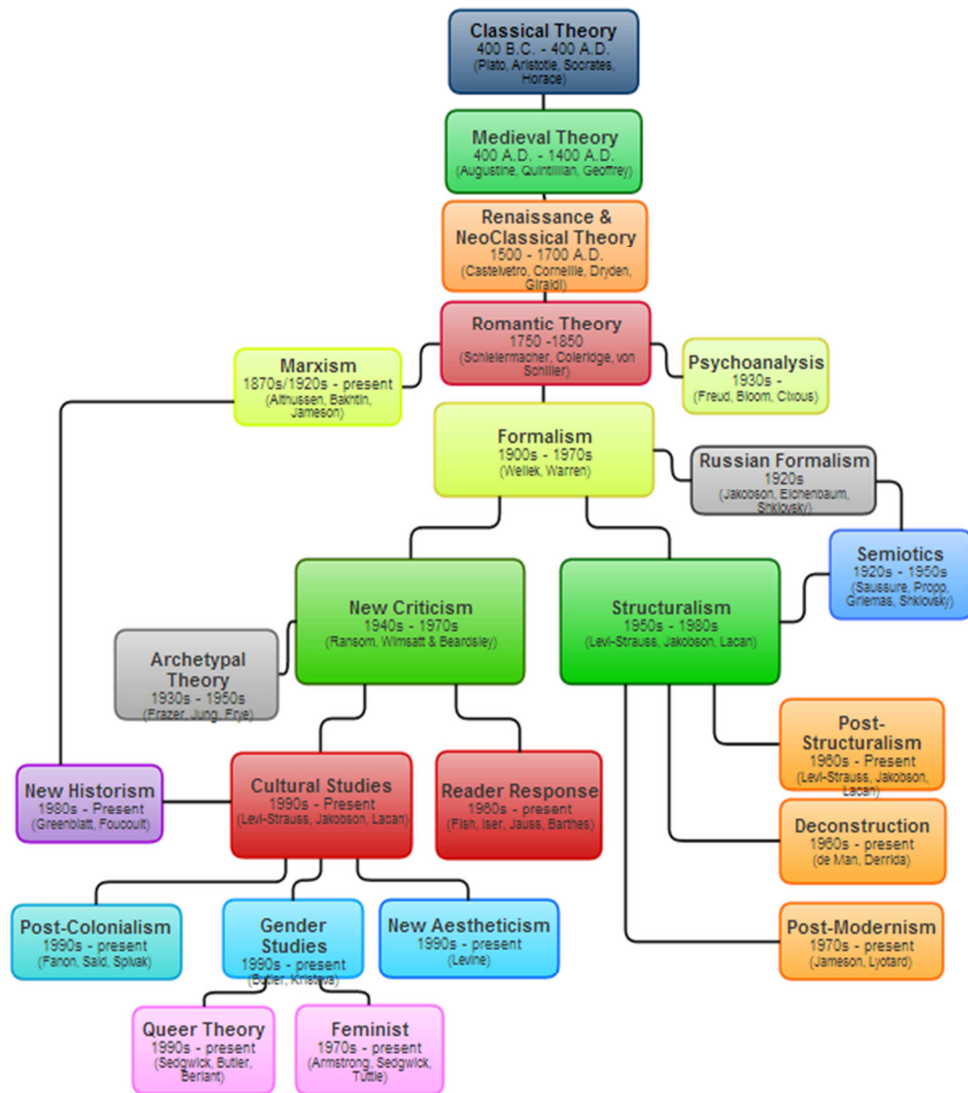


Figure 2 Historical overview of literary theory

In the second part of this paper, we are going to move away from the narrative text theory and focus on the reader and his subjective perspective. However, we have to start with the literary theory again, only this time we are going to focus on the reader directed theory rather than on theory of narration. I have deliberately missed to include the historical

overview of literary theory in the Part I as I believe this scheme would serve more purpose in the Part II. The overview of theory of literary criticism is crucial for understanding the importance of reader criticism (Fig 2).

Reader response approach in literary theory shed a different light on analysis of the literary text. No theory before was focusing on the reader and his interpreting activities. The leading supporters of this approach, such as Norman Holland, David Bleich and Stanley Fish advocated that the text and its understanding is very much dependent on the reader and factors that determine his subjectivity such as the age, sex, frame of mind, personality traits, past experience etc. All these and many other factors create a subjective perspective from which a reader approaches a text. One of the basic postulates of this theory is that a text is a nothing but a stimuli that triggers a reaction with the reader. Louise Rosenblatt says:

The premise of this book is that a text, once it leaves its author's hands, is simply paper and ink until a reader evokes from it a literary work. . . . The poem, then, must be thought of as an event in time. It is not an object or an ideal entity. It happens during a coming-together ... of a reader and a text. The reader brings to the text his past experience and present personality. (qtd. in Johnson)

Rosenblatt's view point is that text and the reader are equal partners in the process of reading. Both sides equally contribute to the final end. However, David Bleich has proposed a bit different theory since according to him the reader is more important than the text itself.

The fact is that a work of art or literature must be rendered so by a perceiver ... reading is a wholly subjective process and the nature of what is perceived is determined by the rules of the personality of the perceiver. (qtd. in Johnson)

Bleich argues that every reader is reading a text “within a bubble of his own subjective reality” that was shaped by his past experience (qtd. in Johnson). Ever since the 70s Bleich

tried to redirect attention from the text to the reader. This first became evident in his “Reading and Feeling” (1975), then later in “Subjective Criticism” (1978). The main difference between Bleich and other supporters of a reader response criticism, is that Bleich’s reader, unlike Stanley Fish’s or Steven Booth, is not an ideal informed reader (Bleich). He claims that every reader is essentially different. On that note he postulates a theory of “subjective paradigm” that says that “mutuality and collectivity made no sense without a prior awareness of individual subjectivity” (Bleich 264).

The third major figure of reader response criticism, Norman Holland (1976), proposed a **transactive theory** according to which the text is **transacted** by the reader who seeks to identify with the text and make himself part of it.

[...] A reader responds to a literary work by assimilating it to his own psychological processes, that is, to his search for successful solutions within his identity theme to the multiple demands, both inner and outer, on his ego" (128). "Identity theme" is synonymous with an individual's awareness of autonomous existence, the significance and relation of that existence to an immediate community, and an awareness of existence in time and space: "All of us, as we read, use the literary work to symbolize and finally to replicate ourselves. . . . We interact with the work, making it part of our own psychic economy and making ourselves part of the literary work as we interpret it" (Holland).

The last, but equally important approach is the one advocated by Stanley Fish. Fish went as far as claiming that the reader is the most important link in this chain called the reading process by saying that texts have meaning because the meaning is being assigned by the reader who gives the text its context:

A sentence is never not in a context. We are never not in a situation. A statute is never not read in the light of some purpose. A set of interpretive assumptions is always in force. A sentence that seems to need no interpretation is already the product of one (qtd. in Wellek).

Each of the above theorists has its own angle from which he approaches the analysis of reader's importance and his relation to the text however, all of them agree that "that the interpretive potential of texts relies to a substantial degree on the nature of the reader and what the reader brings to the reading experience" (qtd. in Johnson 154).

Bearing this in mind, we can justify the need for further research of the way readers interpret text and their role in creating the meaning of a literary text. A lot of studies have been written on this topic. For instance, David Bleich tried to change the approach to teaching of literature in the classroom by claiming that the results of his research in 1960s confirm that each person recreates the text differently. Stanley Fish in his *Surprised by Sin* (1967) which is considered to be the first study of reading on *Paradise Lost*, tried to dig deeper into readers' tactics and the way a particular group of readers, for instance those in the legal profession or interpretive profession read the same text pointing to the different ways of approaching the text.

3.2 Literature and Psychology

Of great importance for this paper, I find the research of Norman Holland from 1968 who suggested that each reader "interjects a fantasy in the text, then modifies it by defense mechanism into an interpretation"(Holland). Holland had difficulties proving his theory as the variations between real readers' response were too great and too similar in order to sort them into particular groups.

It was precisely Norman Holland and Bernard J. Paris who were the first to explore literature using (psychoanalytic) psychology, trying to answer the questions such as why different people read differently, what is the role of memory, personal identity and past experience in the reading of literature. Psychology in literature is used to analyze the literature problems that arise in the process of reading of literature. Psychological criticism, as it is called, emerged at the end of the 19th century and it has ground in three psychologies: psychoanalytic (Freudian), archetypal (Jungian) and cognitive psychology.

The most important place of psychology in today's scene of criticism is precisely in reader-response criticism. (Holland 29). Freud was especially praised for his theory of "interpretation of dreams". Freud explains how "interpretive knowledge is as scientifically authoritative as any other knowledge" (qtd. in Bleich), thus legitimizing the study of subjective response.

On that note, both Bleich and Holland agree that: "personality is the most fundamental fact of life; individual style controls reading; reading proceeds through stages, first staying close to the text, then working through associations; the next stage being intellectualizing which tends to disguise or conflict with the genuine response which can be detected through interviews"(Bleich).

According to the late 20th century psychology of perception, a reader creates the meaning by constructing the idea of what he perceives. "In many ways, reader-response criticism is, in the world of literary criticism, the most practical embodiment of the basic psychoanalytic insight that all knowledge is personal knowledge" (Holland 58).

In his theory of personal identity and the role it plays in reading, Norman Holland was governed by the psychoanalyst Heinz Linchtenstein. Holland points out that one person's identity would not exist without another person's identity with which it needs to be put in relation, since if we want to interpret someone else's identity we have to do it through our own. "Identity is thus decentered, imperfectly known, and systematically elusive, not simply "in" the person being interpreted, but "between interpreter and interpretee"(Holland 28). He tries to explain why and how different people interpret the same things differently. When we watch a movie or read a text, each person is governed by its own identity while postulating a hypothesis and finally drawing a conclusion. Experience plays a very important role in this process. According to Holland we account for the sameness by the sameness of the hypotheses each reader brings to the text, therefore:

Identity is not, therefore, something separate, autonomous, or finite. Rather, to think of identity at all, I have to think of it "always already" governing a

repertoire of feedback loops. My *I* includes the various schemata my human body and my culture have supplied me for testing, and so perceiving, my world. My *I* is inseparably coupled to these loops, which come from my culture, but they are also part and parcel of my personal history (Holland 26-32).

From the point of view of cognitive science, Ulric Neisser writes: "Every person's possibility for perceiving and acting are entirely unique, because no one else occupies exactly the same position in the world or has had exactly the same history" (qtd. in Holland).

If this is true, then how do we explain for the same responses from different people? Holland points out that even though identities are unique, the loops that govern them are not. The loops are shared cultural background and experience for instance. Each of the loops plays an important role in deciding on the hypothesis, some loops depending on the hierarchical position play a bigger role than others. For instance, memory and experience play a key role in every person's identity and in the end the key role in assuming a perspective.

Going back to earlier mentioned cognitive psychology, we have to acknowledge, apart from Holland and Fish, one very important figure whose achievements on the field of linguistics had brought into question some old psychological theories and put the behaviorism aside. According to Noam Chomsky: "Psychology is the discovery of lawful relationships between observable stimuli and observable responses" (qtd. in Holland). This modern cognitive psychology moved away from focusing on the „stimuli“ only, claiming that: „perception, comprehension, and interpretation all involve the use of existing knowledge, in the complex as well as simple units, to obtain and understand sensory input. The individual actively directs and processes inputs.

Bearing all this mind, I can slowly move to setting the methodological ground for my research study. Unlike Holland, I will not use the study results to group readers in particular groups, I will rather start with dividing the readers into groups (two) and then

analyze the variations. The variations that I will focus on are subjective perspectives, but since the subjective perspective each reader assumes while reading is too broad of a field to analyze I will group the readers according to their past experience, my main grid being a specific past experience of *trauma*: war or no war past experience. I am hoping to prove that readers that went through war will assume a different perspective in reading the text than those who have not been through this specific traumatic experience. Since Holland points out that the experience plays a very important role in the process of forming a hypothesis and drawing a conclusion and the loops of memory and shared cultural background play a key role in *the identity theme*, my study will try to prove that people with shared past experience will share the perspective in reading a text.

One group of reader-response critics (continental) believe that what is in common in different readers' readings results from the text itself however, I will side with Holland and his theory that we account for the sameness by the sameness of the hypotheses each reader brings to the text. Nevertheless, even Holland in his studies always has readers read the same text, thus the importance of text cannot be diminished. Both focus sample groups are going to read the same text. The very detailed analysis of the narrative and narratology has been provided in the Part I of this paper, explaining in some details "the tool" that we are going to use to dig below the surface of this still prevailing mystery called readers' subjective perspectives.

Maybe now it would be also a good time to go back to the question why Ian McEwan's texts are going to be used in this research. As pointed out already, it possible that the same analysis could have been done using some other authors' texts as the author's significance in reader-response theory is minimal; however, we cannot say the same for the text. The reader will perceive and recreate what he reads, thus in order to trigger the right response and bring out the different perspectives one needs to have an appropriate literary text. That literary text, both with his content and style, needs to evoke particular feelings that are in close connection to past reader's experience (war) or lack of experience (no war experience) in order for the reader to assign the meaning to the text and assume a perspective.

Chapter 4: Methodology

The goal of this research is to answer the research question and either prove or disprove the existence of mutual subjective perspective within a particular sample group.

Research question: Do people that went through war assume a certain perspective in reading the passages of McEwan's fiction different from those people that haven't been through war?

This research will be a combination of both quantitative and qualitative research. Since its main focus is the analysis of subjective perspectives in reading I find it justified to employ qualitative methods whose results will be words and feelings, rather than quantitative that will generate only numbers as data for analysis. The main research method used will be a semi-structured interview in combination with the questionnaire.

As in any other qualitative research, the sample is going to be purposive and in defining the sample I will use the maximum variation sample. The key demographic variables that are going to be used are sampling according to nationality, age and the most important variable is going to be war or no war experience. There will be two sample focus groups of 10 subjects. By choosing subjects with same nationality, ethnicity, sex and age, I will try to minimize the cultural and ethical difference in perception within one focus group.

4.1 Study participants:

The total number of study participants is twenty. These were selected by a method of non-probability sampling as the subjects were chosen from my circle of friends and colleagues. Non-probability sampling proved to be very efficient for small qualitative researches of this kind.

Criteria: sampling was conducted according to the appropriate criteria, such as nationality, age, gender, ethnicity and past experience.

Group one (10 subjects):

Nationality: Bosnian

Age: late 20s, early 30s (average age of respondents 29.6)

Sex: Male (5) and Female (5)

Traumatic experience (WAR): Yes

Group two (10 subjects):

Nationality: Czech

Sex: Male (5) and Female (5)

Age: late 20s, early 30s (average age of respondents 29.8)

Traumatic experience (WAR): No

Methods: semi-structured interview and questionnaire

Tools: an interview guide (questionnaire)

Excerpts/texts used: excerpts from Ian McEwan's novels *Atonement*, *Cement Garden* and *The Innocent*

4.2 Research methods: Why not only a questionnaire, why in a form of an interview?

I have chosen the interview for several reasons, one of the most important being that through an interview we can learn about people's inner experience and we can understand their perspective better since we can always ask questions like: "But why do you think that is important?" or "What do you mean by..." etc. Besides, an interviewer is in a position to observe the behavior and body language which sometimes proves as important as the information we gather from the interview itself.

Language: The interviews were conducted in two languages. While interviewing the Bosnian sample group, the Bosnian language was used. For the second sample group, the English language was used. To eliminate the possibility of misunderstanding due to the language barrier, only proficient users of English language were chosen for the second sample group.

The interviews with the Bosnian sample group were conducted in Sarajevo, Bosnia, during the spring 2014. Most of the respondents were interviewed in their homes, with the exception of 4 who were interviewed in restaurants.

The interviews with the Czech sample group were conducted in Brno, Czech Republic during the spring 2014. The respondents were interviewed on different locations (mostly restaurants).

Each respondent signed a consent form/disclaimer, a copy of which can be found in the Appendix of this paper. I decided not to use their names and surnames so for the analysis of the data collected; only initials will be used. The collected data from each interview was summarized and added to each respondent's file.

Data analysis / Coding:

Each story excerpt will be analyzed separately. First the answers from the first study group will be summarized and the average percentage of matching answers will be calculated for those answers that can be neurologically presented. Answers to the open questions will be presented in the form of themes. The same will be done for the second sample group. Each story will have a graphic representation of the perspectives assumed by readers, which will be then compared.

4.3 More about the main research variable: War in Bosnia

The war in Bosnia (1992-1995) was one of the most destructive wars of modern history. The war had been characterized by acts of unspeakable cruelty – rape, torture, mutilation and indiscriminate murder. A population of around four million people in 1992, two million were made refugees. In almost four years of conflict, more than 100,000 were killed (Hawton).

The genocide in Srebrenica in 1995 included the killing of more than 8,000 Bosnian Muslim or Bosniak men and boys, as well as the mass expulsion of another 25,000–30,000 Bosniak civilians, in and around the town of Srebrenica in Bosnia and Herzegovina, committed by units of the Army of the Republika Srpska (VRS) under the command of General Ratko Mladić. No such crime against humanity was committed since the Holocaust (Meron).

Sarajevo, the capital suffered the longest siege of any city in modern times, spanning the duration of the war. Ten thousand of its citizens were killed. 1500 children were killed between 1992 and 1995, over 600 were killed in Sarajevo by snipers and mortar shells (Meron).

It's important to have these facts mentioned in order to understand who are the respondents from the sample Group I. All 10 respondents were direct witnesses to this war. Most of the respondents were age of seven or eight when the war started. 8 out of 10 were in Sarajevo during the siege. The remaining 2 were in Herzegovina, southern part of the country. During the data collection (interviews) a majority of them shared the long-repressed memories of massacres, corpses and people dying in front of their 8 year's old eyes. All 10 respondents from the Group I are the kids that survived.

4.4 More about the excerpts used: Ian McEwan's novels

The first text used is the excerpt from Ian McEwan's novel *Atonement*. This novel has been mentioned earlier in the paper. The excerpt has been taken from the second part of the novel. In this part, the narrator gives us Robbie Turner's perspective of the events. The army is retreating to Dunkirk together with the surviving civilians and Turner is walking in a procession. He describes what he sees and appears to be a homodiegetic or even an autodiegetic narrator. However, if one reads the entire novel, Turner acts just an internal focalizer as Briony is actually the narrator of the entire novel. However, the respondents were not aware of this fact and they were interviewed only on the text in question, thus they considered Turner to be the narrator. This particular excerpt was chosen due to its resemblance to the events (refugee processions) that occurred during the Bosnian War.

The second excerpt is the excerpt from Ian McEwan's novel *The Cement Garden*. This novel was mentioned earlier in this paper as well. It was written in 1978 and we could say it belongs to the so-called "McAmbre era". The plot revolves around four children that first lose their father and then soon after their mother as well. The children are left on their own and they decide to conceal their mother's death in order to avoid being taken apart and put in foster care or an orphanage. They decide to cement their mother's body in their house basement. The novel further gives us the picture of a new household that starts to form around the older kids as they assume the roles of their lost parents. It culminates with the oldest ones, Julie and Jack committing an incest. The excerpt chosen is from the Part II, chapter 6. It describes the situation right after the mother's death when kids are facing a decision if they should report the death or conceal it. The narrator of the entire novel and this excerpt is Jack (the oldest brother). Jack is a homodiegetic narrator. This particular excerpt was chosen due its resemblance to the events that occurred during the Bosnian war (burying of the dead), but also because the main protagonist are children. One additional important reason for using this excerpt is that it deals with losing a member of the family. This experience is something with what most of the Bosnians can associate with. The theme of premature growing up way before time and assuming the roles of grownup people is also something typical of kids that have been through war. Finally, this is yet another

novel that explores the theme and significance of childhood which, according to McEwan is the crucial period for the development of the individual. On that note, we can say that an additional dimension to the analysis of the text is being introduced, since respondents whose perspectives are analyzed have/have not had a traumatic childhood. The theme of strength and courage and kids governed by instincts for survival is also the reason why this particular excerpt was used.

Third text used is the excerpt from Ian McEwan's novel *The Innocent*. The novel was written in 1990. It takes place in Berlin, during the years of the Cold War (1950s). The action revolves around Leonard Marnham, a post office engineer who is turns into a spy, but not a successful one. Leonard falls in love with Maria, and the two try to conceal the murder of Maria's ex-husband whom she kills in self-defense. Leonard dismembers the Otto's body, as there is no other way to escape the police suspicion, but to dispose of the body. Maria and Leonard's relationship falls apart after this incident. The excerpt used is precisely the one that depicts Leonard's dismemberment of Otto's body into pieces. The narrator gives us a very graphic description of the disambiguation scene. McEwan himself in an interview with Ian Katz at the Guardian's Open Weekend Festival in March 2012 admitted that he regrets writing this particular part, but at the time of writing this novel, for some reason it felt right.

Deciding on the excerpts was not an easy task. I have to admit that I had apologized to all respondents before I gave them this particular text to read. Even though a certain number of the respondents from Group I saw a dismembered human body, none of them managed to escape the feeling of disgust while reading the text. I believe that this text will help prove that no matter how different reader's inner knowledge of the world or past experience be, in reading texts like these, the majority of people will assume more or less the same perspective, which we can name "an utter disgust" perspective. Sharing these basic moral norms, instincts and reactions is what makes us human after all. I believe that the excerpt no. 3 serves as a proof that that respondents from Group I, regardless of the atrocities they witnessed, managed to retain the human perspective and not to lose their innocence to the fullest. Or maybe, the potential sameness of the responses stands in favor of the previously

mentioned continental school of reader criticism who believe that what is common in different readers' readings, results from the text itself.

5.1 Data coding: *Atonement*

Question no.1: How does the text make you feel?

Group 1 (Bosnians): Out of 10 respondents, 2 have confirmed options A (sad) and option C (upset) as an answer. 2 have picked out only option A (sadness), while 2 said they felt angry. 4 respondents said they felt disappointment (Fig 3).

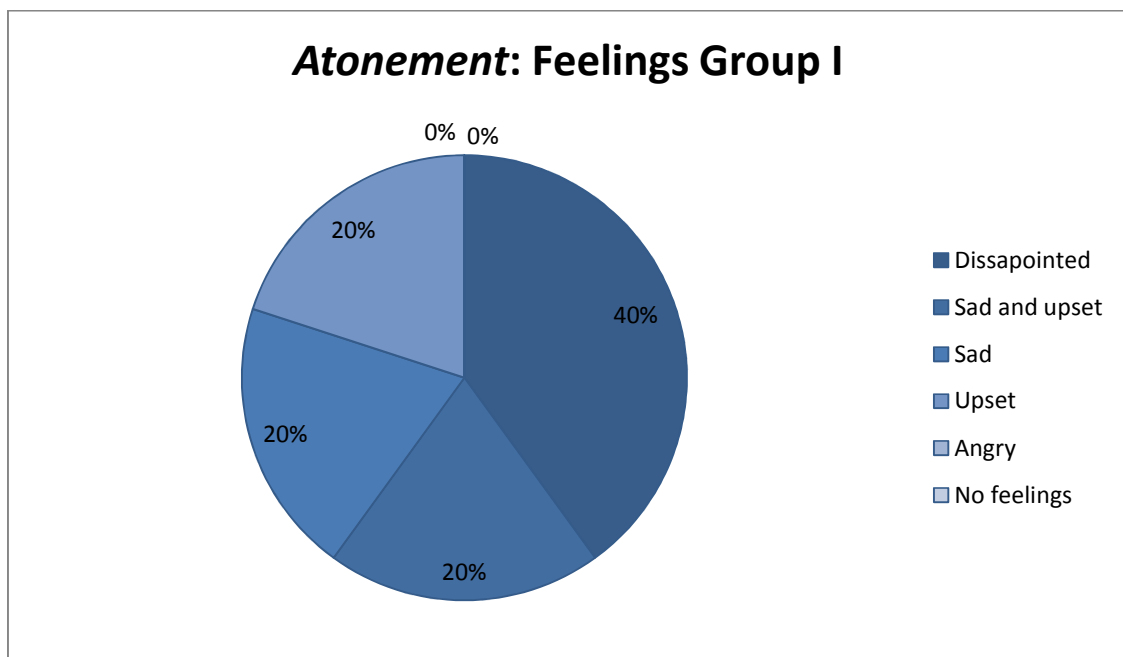


Figure 3 Atonement- Feelings Group I

Group 2 (Czechs): Out of 10 respondents, 6 have identified the feeling of sadness, 2 respondents said they felt upset (as things like this are beyond their influence), 1

respondent said he felt anger for the same reason, 1 respondent felt anxiety, while 1 said the text left him feeling indifferent.

Both sample groups identified more or less exact feelings, with the exception of 4 respondents from the Group I that identified the feeling of being disappointed. None of the respondents from Group II had this response (Fig 4).

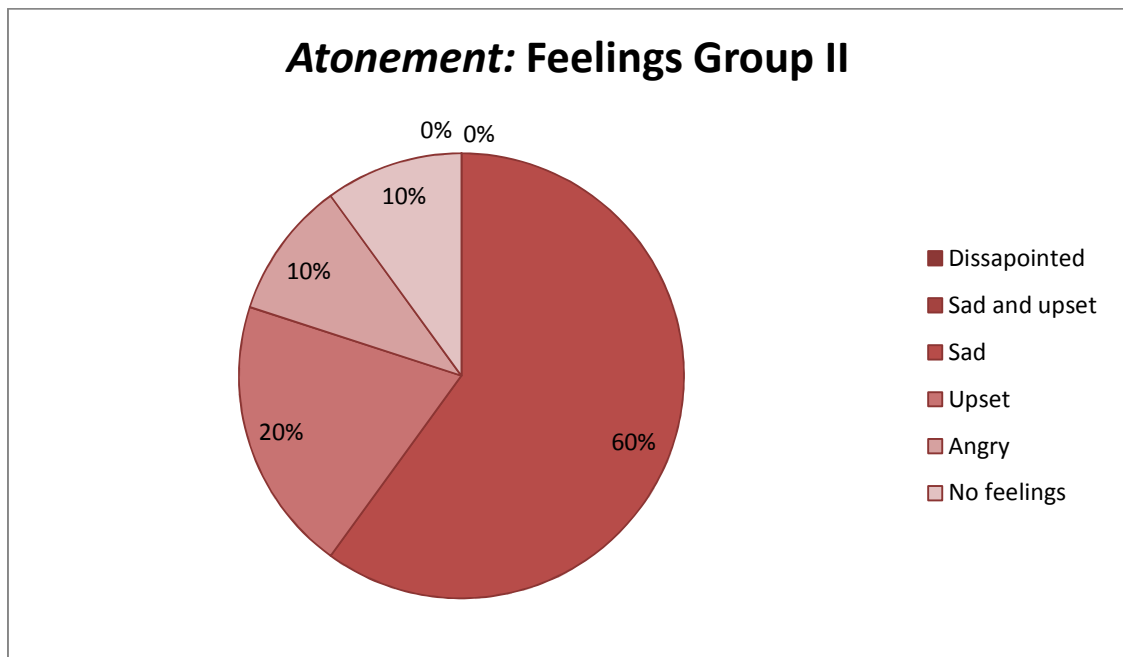


Figure 4 Atonement Feelings Group II

Question no. 2: Did the text cause any physical reaction with you (sweating, accelerated heartbeat, intense breathing, sickness, some other feeling of discomfort).

Group 1: 9 out of 10 respondents answered with „yes“. 2 of them identified the difficulties in breathing, 3 have confirmed the stomach sickness, 4 were unable to identify the physical reaction they experienced and referred to it as „some sort of inner shaking“. One of these 4, the respondent B.B. (pers.comm) said that for a moment she thought she would start to cry, but she managed to compose herself. 1 respondent said he did not have any physical reaction.

Group II: 7 out of 10 had no physical reaction to the text. 3 respondents had a physical reaction. M.S. said that the text with him caused some sort of stomach churning. Y.M. confirmed a slight loss of breath, while P.L. said that the text gave him the spooks (pers.comm.)

Question no.3: Did the text trigger some old memory (an image, sound, smell)?

Group I: 4 have associated the text with an image of Srebrenica genocide and the refugee procession after the genocide. Important to note that none of the respondents was a direct victim of the Srebrenica genocide nor were they directly engaged in the massacre of July 1995. The respondent J.M. said that as she was reading the text, she could clearly see the faces of refugees walking in the procession. The respondent K.M. who associated the text with this particular memory as well, added that people wearing carpet slippers (people rushed out of their homes without having time to even put the shoes on) is the image that she saw while reading (pers.comm.).

6 have associated the text with the personal experience, namely they themselves were part of a refugee procession.

Respondent M.B.(pers.comm.) said that the text brought back the memories from his early childhood when he, together with his sister and mother (his father being on the battlefield) was forced to leave his home in Stolac, Herzegovina in the summer of 1993 and walk hundreds of kilometers in a refugee procession, through the harsh Bosnian mountains to get to Sarajevo, the capital which they believed was the safest place to be. M.B. was 11 years old.

Respondent B.B. (pers.comm.) associated the text with a memory of her and her family trying to leave Sarajevo in 1993 through the famous Sarajevo's tunnel or the „Rescue tunnel“ as it was usually referred to by Bosnians. The construction of this tunnel started in May 1992 by Bosnian Army and the tunnel was the only way to get out of Sarajevo, which was completely surrounded and cut off by Serbian forces. On the other side of the tunnel was the Bosnian held territory controlled by the United Nations, a haven for most of the

refugees. Thanks to the tunnel and its being the main and only route for transporting the weaponry to the defenders, Sarajevo managed to survive the 4 year siege and defend its borders till the end. The respondent B.B. pointed out one particular image that came to her mind while reading the *Atonement* excerpt and that's the image of her walking through a tunnel together with her family. B.B. was 6 years old.

The respondent A.R. (pers.comm.) associated the text (the second part in particular) with the memory of seeing a man killed standing just a few feet from him. A.R. said that he remembers everything happening so quickly, the man was shoot into the head and he bleed out in 3 seconds. A.R. was 6 years old.

The respondent M.X. (pers.comm.) remembered her neighbor, an old grandpa, always wearing a suit and a tie, regardless of the hell that was happening around him. He, just like the man from the story, knew that he was not going to make it to see the war ends, she points out.

The respondent M.A. (pers.comm.) said that the text brought back the memories of refugees leaving their homes during the Bosnian war, mostly seen in mass media years after the war. She also pointed out that, while reading she remembered the sound of sirens that were used to signal an upcoming attack or danger.

The respondent A.K. (pers.comm.) said that the text brought back the memory of her father bringing back home the only belongings that were found after her grandpa was killed during the war. Upon return from the body identification, her father brought back a small bundle with her grandfather's watch and some paper bills. Both were covered in blood and they smelled of corpses. She said that she will never forget this smell.

Group II: 7 out of 10 said that the text did not bring back any memories. 3 subjects confirmed that the text triggered some memories associated with the WWII. M.S. said that the text reminded him of the time when he was visiting the Auschwitz. M.N.'s memory

was associated with the scenes from the movie the “Jewish Room”, whereas Y.M. said she remembered her grandma’s attic full of old suitcases (pers.comm.).

Question no.4: What part of the text would you say left the deepest impression on you?

Group I: 8 respondents identified the second part of the excerpt, the description of dead bodies of women and children. 2 respondents said the first part left the deepest impression on them, particularly the description of an old man and the woman with the small girl holding shoes.

Group II: 5 respondents identified the 3rd part. 4 have said the 2nd part of the text left the deepest impression on them, while 1 respondent found the 1st part as the most striking one.

Question no.5: Did you feel like you are watching the action happening rather than reading about it?

Group I: 10 out of 10 respondents replied with a „yes“.

Group II: 8 out of 10 respondents said they felt like watching the action happening, 2 felt more like reading about it.

If we refer to the theory introduced in the Part I, we could say that the identification with the narrative voice in this particular text is at very high percentage with both sample groups which only stands in favor of a claim that McEwan is a master of narration. There are plenty of subjective expressions that McEwan uses to project the narrative voice in this particular excerpt. Even without reading the entire novel, readers are able to create more or less valid profile of Robbie Turner after reading the text. The character's beliefs, convictions, values seemed to be easily determined by readers.

Question no. 6: In the sequence of images that the text triggers is there one or more images that stays in your mind longer than the others?

Group I: 9 out of 10 answered affirmatively, identifying the following images:

- a) The image of a hot summer day and soldiers throwing their coats away (3)

These 3 repeated the following sentence to me almost in the original version: „A glorious day. In another time this was what would have been called a glorious day“ (*Atonement*, 217). It's interesting that 3 respondents chosen specifically this sentence that contains the pragmatic signals.

b) Dead bodies along the road; women and children (3)

c) The image of an old man in a suit and a tie (3)

1 respondent said he tried to focus on the entire text as a whole, thus he would prefer not to point to any image in particular.

Group II: 8 respondents answered affirmative identifying the following images:

a) Dead bodies along the road; women and children (6)

b) Shoe shop and the girl holding shoes (1)

c) Description of the bombed village in the 3rd part (1)

2 respondents said that no particular image stayed longer in their mind.

Thematic difference: Same as with the Question no. 1, here we can also identify a difference in perspective between the groups. The theme/feeling of disappointment and regret is identified within Group I. No such theme identified in the Group II.

Question no. 7: Do you find the narrator's description of the refuge procession credible?

Group I: 8 out of 10 replied with a „yes“. The main reason being the narrator's detailed description of the people in the procession and their behavior. They pointed out that they believe the description to be credible as it very closely resembles their memory of similar events. 2 respondents said that they believe that the excerpt is not fully credible. M.B. considered that the presence of motor vehicles was what made him doubt the credibility. B.B. found the presence of a shop not to be fully credible.

Thus, 95% respondents found the narrator reliable. As pointed out earlier, since the respondents haven't read the entire novel, they have assumed the narrator to be Robbie Turner. As we can see from the respondents' answers above, they all used the combination of textual data and their preexisting knowledge to determine the narrator's reliability,

which is according to Ansgar Nunning's definition in the first part of the paper, is an appropriate method.

Group II: All 10 respondents found the narrator to be reliable. I have grouped their answers in the following categories:

- a) I believe that it's like this in reality. I have seen many documentaries and movies on this topic. (3)
- b) The amount of details and the tone makes me believe the story. Certain bits are absurd, such as the shoe shop, but that's exactly what it makes it credible. (4)
- c) The great amount of details and objectivity (the lack of deep feelings) is what makes it credible. (3)

Question no. 8: How would you describe the main idea / point the text is trying to make?

Group I: Respondents had difficulties answering this question, thus they were encouraged to identify at least one word or a phrase that sums up the meaning or the message of the text they've read. For the sake of the analysis, I have divided their answers into 3 categories.

Category A is the category that includes the answers that in one way or another are connected to the concept of history. 5 respondents' answers fall into this category. Below are the answers:

- a) Who is going to make sure that the history is recorded? Will those who survived write down the story? Will they tell anyone?
- b) Will all this be forgotten?
- c) There is no way to go back and change what happened. What's written down in history books cannot be changed.
- d) No matter what happens, there will always be someone who will tell the story.
- e) Will anyone be able to tell the story in such a way that others will realize how it was to go through something like this?

Category B is the category that includes the answers that are connected with the feeling of helplessness and desperation. 4 respondents' answers fall into this category:

- a) There is nothing anyone can do to change this.
- b) The world sits silent and no one is doing nothing to stop this.
- c) Doesn't anyone realize that this is wrong? War makes no sense. Why is this happening? Why are the innocent dying?
- d) Nobody cares. What's next?

Category C is the category that I will refer hereby as the *contrast* category. 2 respondents fall into this category. As pointed out earlier, those who had difficulties answering the question were encouraged to sum up the point in just one word. They have chosen words: „*peace*“ and “*suffering*”.

Group II: As with the first group, the respondents were encouraged to identify at least a word or a phrase that comes to their mind after reading the text.

- a) Cruelty of wars and suffering of people (6)
- b) Ignorance and passiveness of the rest of the world (1)
- c) No one who hasn't been through something like this, cannot even imagine how it was like for people who survived. (1)
- d) Fear (2)

Thematic difference: The most noticeable thematic difference can be seen in the Group I, Category A (History). The existence of this category points to fact that Bosnians are extremely preoccupied by the idea of recording history and making sure that the rest of the world and generations to come, are aware of what had happened, therefore 50% of readers found this particular theme to be the main point that the text is trying to make. The Category B (Desperation and Helplessness) also points to the difference in the perspective, as 4 answers from the Group I fall into this category, whereas just 1 respondent from the Group II considered this to be the main text idea.

Question no. 9: Do you agree with the narrator's remark (an idea) given at the end?

No one would ever know what it was like to be here.

Group I: 10 out of 10 relied with a yes.

Group II: 6 out of 10 replied with no. Some of the reasons pointed out were:

- a) There are people who will tell the story and the rest of the world will know. The stories like these are carried from generation to generation, so even the generations who haven't seen this first-hand will still be aware of it.
- b) If you are a sensitive person, you can easily sympathize and understand how it was for the people who went through something like this.

Question no. 10: What piece of clothing is being mentioned more than once in this story?
(Fig 5)

Group I: 10 out of 10 respondents answered: „carpet sleepers“. Some added shoes and a suit, but the carpet sleepers were everyone's first pick.

Group II: Only 3 respondents have identified carpet slippers. “Suit” was identified by 3 respondents. 3 respondents confirmed “shoes” as their answer, whereas 1 respondent said he doesn't remember at all.

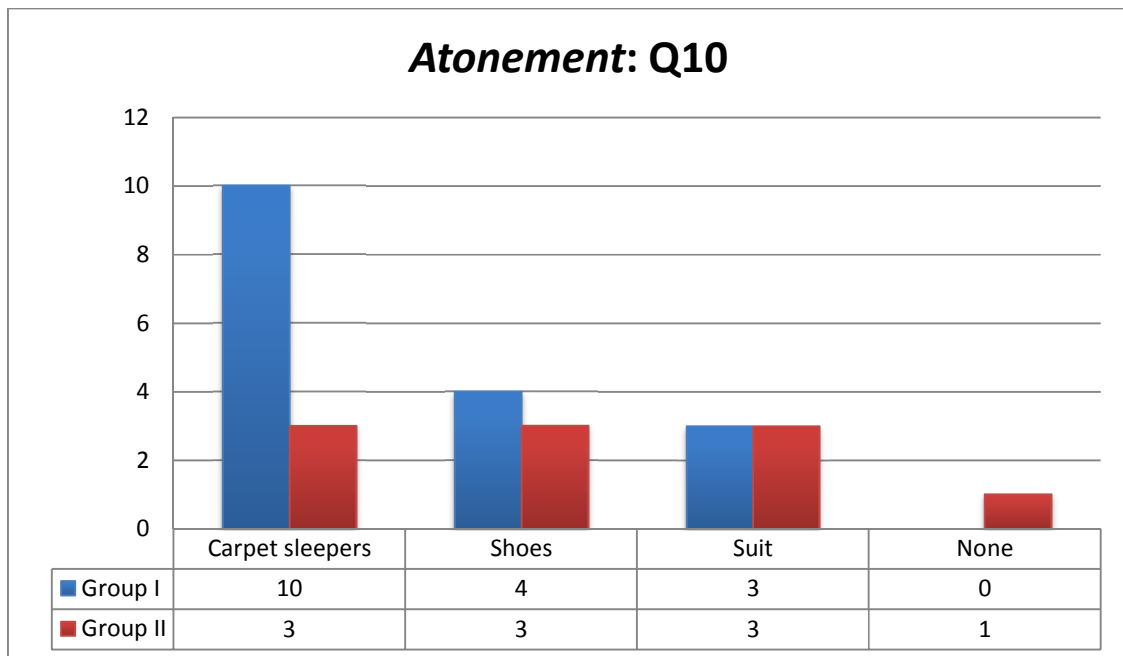


Figure 5 Atonement: Q10

Question no. 11: Do you avoid reading texts with similar subject?

Group I: 6 respondents said that they do their best to avoid reading texts with similar topics. 4 answered that they do not mind reading similar texts and that they try not to divide text according to the topic.

Group II: 5 respondents said they do not mind reading text with similar topics. 3 have said they do not categorize texts by theme (they read everything), 2 have said they enjoy reading texts like this pointing out the literary value of similar texts.

Question no. 12: Read each statement carefully. Then, using this scale, rate the extent to which the statement is true of you:

1 = I strongly agree

2 = I agree partially

3 = I quite disagree

4 = I neither agree nor disagree (undecided)

Statement 1:

“Atonement”: I find it strange that Turner walked by a man in a suit, wearing a tie. I do not believe people look like that during the war.

Group I: 9 out of 10 picked the option 3. 1 respondent chose option 4.

Group II: 5 out of 10 chose the option 3 (important to note that 2 out these 5 were quite indecisive before choosing the option 3 in the end). 3 respondents agreed partially (option 2), while 2 have chosen the option 4 (neither agree nor disagree)

Statement 2:

“Atonement”: Two of the refugees wore carpet slippers. I don’t find this credible.

Group I: 10 out of 10 answered that they quite disagree with this statement.

Group II: 9 out of 10 disagreed with this statement pointing out that anything is possible. 1 respondent said he neither agrees nor disagrees.

Graphic representation of answers: *Atonement* (Fig 6):

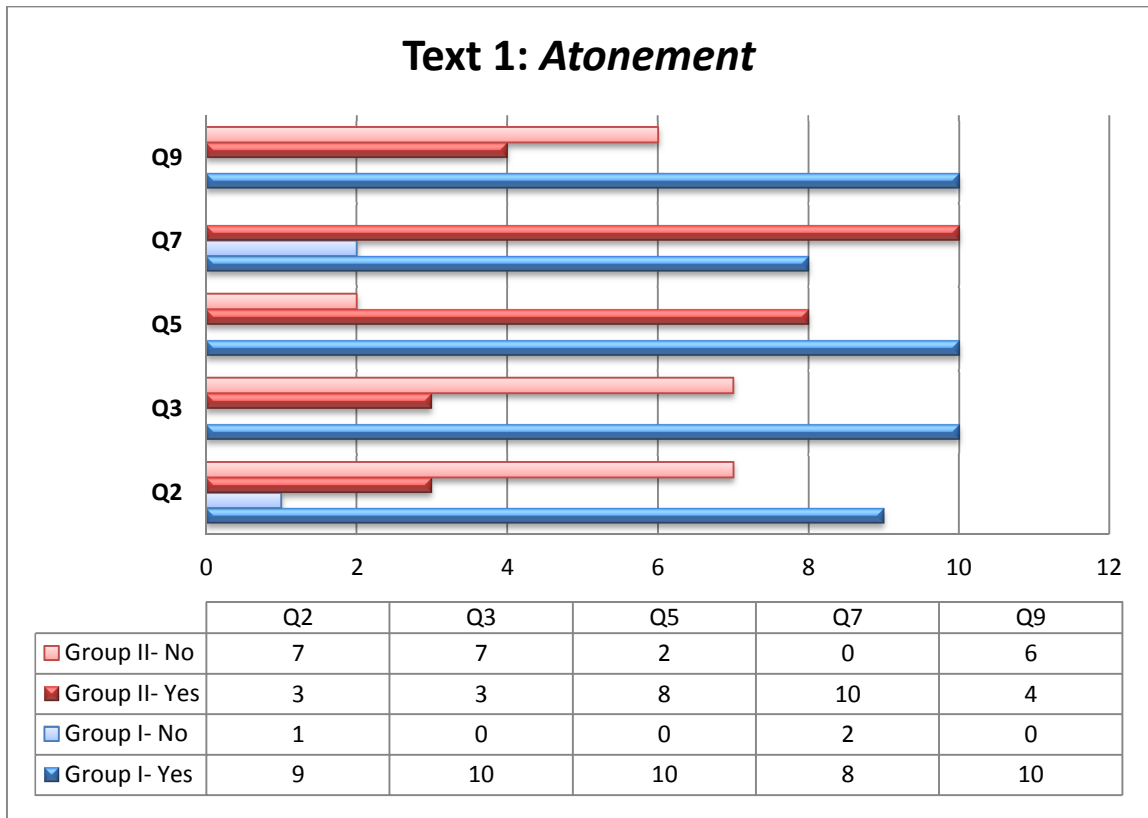


Figure 6 Text I: *Atonement*

5.2 Data coding: *Cement Garden*

Question no.1: How does the text make you feel?

Group I: Out of 10 respondents, 5 have confirmed option A (sadness) as an answer. Out of these 5, respondent (M.A) said she felt a bit angry as well as no child should be placed in this kind of situation. 2 respondents said they felt upset after reading the text. Three

respondents identified different feelings. One said that the text makes him angry, one said he feels weird, and one that the text doesn't provoke any feelings.

Group II: The feeling of being upset was identified by 3 respondents. 2 confirmed the feeling of sadness. 1 was angry, 1 terrified and one both angry and disappointed. Surprisingly, the text have left 2 respondents with the feeling of indifference.

Question no. 2: Did the text cause any physical reaction with you (sweating, accelerated heartbeat, intense breathing, sickness, some other feeling of discomfort).

Group I: 7 out of 10 respondents answered with a „yes“. 1 of them identified the difficulties in breathing, 3 have confirmed the text gave them the goose bumps, 3 have felt a strange feeling of discomfort associated with fear.

Group II: 8 out 10 respondents answered with a “no”. One out of this 8 was indecisive. The respondent A.V. said she felt some kind of stress while reading, but she cannot associate it with any physical reaction. 2 respondents confirmed the physical reaction to the text. M.S. felt his stomach turning, while Y.M. said she lost breath at certain moments.

Question no.3: Did the text trigger some old memory (an image, sound, smell)?

Group I: 6 have responded affirmatively, 4 negatively.

The replies of those who said „yes“ are below:

- a) It reminded me of my grandma that died during the war. We had to bury her in an improvised graveyard.
- b) The text brought back the memory of a shoveling sound. I remember hearing that sound very often during the war – people digging ditches all around the neighborhood.
- c) It brought back the image of the basement where we spent most of our childhood.

(3)

d) It brought back the image of all the graves around our building, in our children's playground.

Group II:

9 respondents answered negatively to this question. 1 affirmative answer was given by M.S. who said the text reminded him of a movie he saw.

Question no.4: What part of the text would you say left the deepest impression on you?

Group I: 5 respondents said that the last part of the text (the actual burial) left the deepest impression on them. 3 said they found the second part very striking; three have mentioned this one particular sentence: „We can have a private funeral“ (McEwan, *The Cement Garden*). 2 have said that the first part left the deepest impression on them, referring to the sentence: “We can't leave her in the bedroom or she'll start to smell” (McEwan, *The Cement Garden*).

Group II: Third part of the text was chosen by most of the respondents (8 of them). The first part where the kids are discussing the plan was chosen by 2 respondents. Interestingly, these two also identified the sentence: “We can't leave her in the bedroom or she'll start to smell” (McEwan, *The Cement Garden*).

Thematic difference: almost non-existing.

Question no.5: Did you feel like you are watching the action happening rather than reading about it?

Group I: 8 out of 10 respondents replied with a „yes“.

2 said that they haven't really felt as watching the action, if they compare it to the first text, where the identification with the narrative voice was on a much higher level.

Group II: 6 have said they felt like watching the action. 2 have actually emphasized that they felt exactly as watching some thriller movie. 4 respondents said they did not engage in the text that much, and they felt exactly as reading a story.

Question no. 6: In the sequence of images that the text triggers is there one or more images that stays in your mind longer than the others?

Group I:

Very interestingly, 4 respondents identified the image of Julie holding her head under the sink water tap, soaking her hair.

3 respondents said the image of someone breaking in the house (if they don't tell anyone) and demolishing the kid's home stayed in their mind longer than others.

2 have pointed out the image of a trunk filled with cement. 1 the image of actual shoveling.

Group II: 7 have confirmed that certain images had stayed longer in their mind.

The last image of shoveling the cement was identified by 4 respondents.

The image of garden discussion was confirmed by 1 respondent.

The image of a mother starting to decay and smelling was confirmed by one respondent.

The youngest girl crying while others are discussing the plan was identified by one respondent.

Thematic difference: 40% of Group I identified the image of Julie soaking her hair and 30% identified the image of breaking into the house. These images haven't been identified by the Group II. I would dare to argue that this is a clear proof on how previous experience plays a huge rule in reading.

Question no. 7: Do you feel sorry for the kids?

Group I: 9 out 10 said they feel sorry for the kids. The main reason being that the kids have lost their mother and that they are in a very hard situation where they have to make a

decision. 1 out of 10 said he at the same time does and doesn't feel sorry for them, as children's actions make him less sympathetic.

Group II: 9 out of 10 said they feel sorry for the kids. The reason mostly being the same as with the previous group. The answers varied mostly, from "they have lost their mother and they have to live on their own" to "they are too young to be making these decisions".

1 respondent (L.Z) said that even though she is sorry that kids lost their mother, she still cannot justify their actions and she considers them to be utterly selfish.

Question no.8: How would you describe the main idea / point the text is trying to make?

Group I: On the basis of answers I got to this question, I have categorized them into 3 categories/themes:

- a) Sometimes fear and circumstances can make us do things that we never thought we were able to do. 2 respondents
- b) The strongest survive. Courage and strength. 5 respondents
- c) There is a way out from any situation we find ourselves in. 1 respondent
- d) What kind of life awaits these kids? Life is unjust. 1 respondent
- e) Innocence and ruined childhood. 1 respondent.

Group II: I have put together the following categories for the answers I got from the second sample group:

- a) Selfishness. (1)
- b) Human tragedy, injustice and cruelty of life. (3)
- c) The sanctity of proper burial. (1)
- d) Survival; one does not know what he's capable of until he finds himself in a given situation. (3)
- e) Hiding is never the right thing to do; covering up evidence. (2)

Thematic difference: There is no big difference in themes identified, however, in Group I there is a slight prevalence of the theme concerned with survival and courage which is

present in 3 categories identified (a,b, c) whereas, in Group II, the same theme is present only in one category (d).

Question no.9: Is the children's behavior in accordance to the situation they are in?

Group I: 8 out of 10 said that the children's behavior is in accordance to the situation they are in. 2 said they believe kids should have told someone. The respondent M.A. as a justification for kid's behavior says „from the view point of the society and its norms, children's actions cannot be justified, but from the point of view of a human being that follows the basic survival instincts this is kind of behavior is justified” (pers.comm.).

Group II: 6 respondents said they did not find the children's behavior in accordance to the situation they are in. 4 have said they believe the kids have acted in accordance to the situation they are in as they were trying to save what is left of their family.

One of McEwan's ideas on benefits of childhood is that children allow themselves to be completely absorbed by a situation. They, unlike grownups, do not think about future and what their actions in the present may bring; they simple live in the moment. Maybe, I would dare to suggest that difference in the perspective between the groups, when it comes to Q9, might be caused by the fact that respondents from Group I sympathize with the children more as they, on a certain level, miss this particular aspect of childhood, as they were forced to grow up (think about the consequences of their actions) a lot sooner than the respondents from Group II.

Question no. 10: If you could add one sentence to the text, what sentence would that be?

The following sentences/themes were extracted:

- a) Life has to go on! We have to endure! 5 respondents
- b) We cannot do this. It's our mother we are talking about. 2 respondents
- c) We have to bury the mother. 1 respondent
- d) Everyone sat down and cried together. 1 respondent

- e) Everything is going to be alright! 1 respondent believed that the reassuring and comforting voice was missing in this story.

The respondents from category b) and c) emphasized that they find it strange that the children haven't mentioned not even once the word „mother“, but instead they kept referring to the mother using pronouns such as *her* and *she*.

Group II: The following sentences/themes were extracted from the answers given:

- a) We will always regret doing this. (1)
- b) Everything is going to be alright; we have to remain strong. (2)
- c) Damn it! (1)
- d) We can't tell anyone. (1)
- e) We need to do it properly. (1)
- f) We have to remember our mother, we can't forget her. (1)

3 respondents said they would not add anything to the text.

Thematic difference:

The most important theme identified with the Group I is the theme of endurance, whereas I would say that Group II was more pragmatic and 3 respondents decided to add sentences that were concerned more with action than feelings. The noticeable theme in the remaining sentences that were added is the theme of regret and guilty conscience.

Question no. 11: Do you avoid reading texts with similar subject?

Group I

4 out of 10 answered they don't mind reading text like this.

3 out of 10 answered that they (almost) never read texts like these.

3 respondents said they do their best to avoid texts with similar topics.

Group II

8 out of 10 answered they don't mind reading texts like these.

1 respondent said he rarely reads anything traumatizing.

1 have said that she does her best to avoid texts like this.

Question no. 12: Agreement with the statements given.

Read each statement carefully. Then, using this scale, rate the extent to which the statement is true of you:

1 = I fully agree

2 = I agree partially

3 = I quite disagree

4 = I neither agree nor disagree (undecided)

Statement 1:

In the story "Cement Garden" the kids are just being resourceful. I do not pass any judgment on their actions

Group I: 5 respondents said that they fully agree with this statement. 5 said that they partially agree.

Group II: 5 respondents fully agreed with the statement. 3 have said they quite disagree, whereas 2 have partially agreed.

Statement 2:

"Cement Garden": All the kids act in accordance with their age.

Group I: 8 said they quite disagree with this. 1 respondent agreed with the statement, while 1 partially agreed.

Group II: 5 have agreed with this statement. 3 have partially agreed, whereas 1 respondent disagreed with the statement. I found A.V.'s clarification on why she agrees with this

statement interesting. A.V. said she believed that the children acted in accordance with their age because if they would have been acting like grownups (mature) they would never be able to do this (pers.comm.). They would stop in the middle of it and realize that they just cannot do something like this and continue with their lives. Out of those 3 who have partially disagreed, 2 have pointed out they believed that kids are at moments acting like grown-ups.

Statement 3:

“Cement Garden”: If I were in their shoes, I would have done the same.

Group I: 3 have agreed, 2 have partially agreed, 3 have disagreed and 2 were indecisive.

Group II: 2 have agreed, 3 have been indecisive, while 5 said they quite disagree with this statement. Out of the 3 indecisive ones, 2 have pointed out that they would not probably have the courage to do something similar.

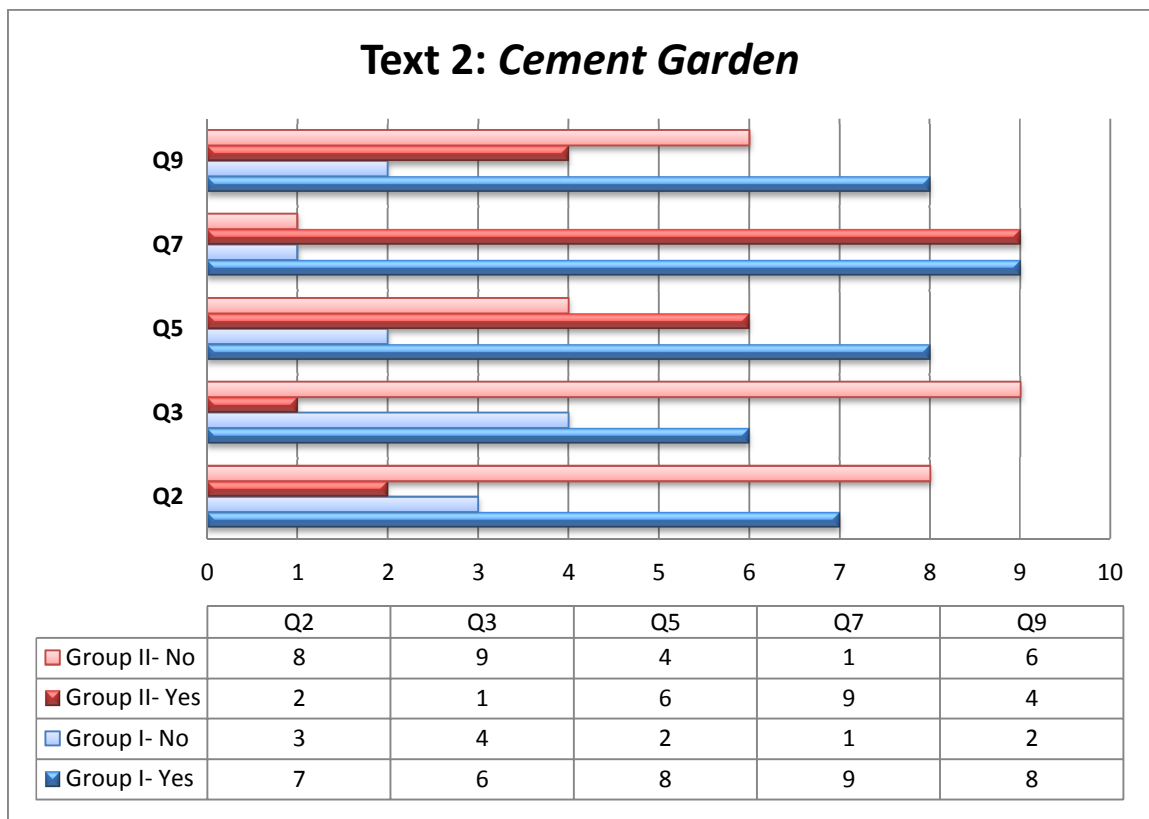


Figure 7 Text 2: Cement Garden

5.3 Data coding: *The Innocent*

Question no.1: How does the text make you feel?

Group I: Out of 10 respondents, 6 were disgust by the text. 2 have said they felt very confused while reading, 1 respondent felt angry and 1 said the text did not trigger any feelings with him.

Group II: 7 have said the text made them feel disgusted. 2 were upset while and after reading. 1 respondent was indifferent to the text.

Thematic difference: almost non-existing.

Question no. 2: Did the text cause any physical reaction with you (sweating, accelerated heartbeat, intense breathing, sickness, some other feeling of discomfort).

Group I: 9 out of 10 respondents answered with „yes“. 7 of them said they felt stomach sickness, 1 respondent said he did not feel sick, but definitely uncomfortable. 1 said he lost his breath several times while reading, while 1 said he had no physical reaction to the text.

Group II: 7 out of 10 answered positively. 6 have felt stomach sickness, 1 respondent said he had difficulty breathing. 3 respondents said they had no physical reaction to the texts.

Question no.3: Did the text trigger some old memory (an image, sound, smell)?

Group I: 6 have answered positively, 4 negatively to this question.

3 respondents associated the text with an image of massacres (e.g. Markale²). The remaining 3 have associated text with different memories. M.B. said that the text triggered

² The Markale massacres were two bombardments carried out by the Army of the Republika Srpska targeting civilians during the Siege of Sarajevo in the Bosnian War. They occurred at the Markale (marketplace) located in the historic core of Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The first occurred on 5 February 1994; 68 people were killed and 144 more were wounded. The second occurred on 28 August 1995 when five mortar shells killed 43 people and wounded 75

the memory of the smell of a dead body. Z.B. said the text reminded him on the practical classes in anatomy he attended at university. J.M. said she felt like watching one of those forensics TV shows.

Group II: 7 have answered this question negatively, saying that the text does not trigger any memory. 3 have associated the text with a TV show.

Question no.4: What part of the text would you say left the deepest impression on you?

Group I:

- a) Holding the body with one leg; balancing, guts spilling out (2)
- b) The maul; guts spilling out (5)
- c) Cutting through the spine; the maul (2)
- d) The description of Maria sitting and looking through the window (1)

Group II:

- a) Holding the body with one leg; balancing, guts spilling out (6)
- b) Cutting through the spine; the maul (4)

Thematic difference: almost non-existing.

Question no.5: Did you feel like you are watching the action happening rather than reading about it?

Group I: Out of 10, 8 respondents confirmed they felt as watching the action happening before their eyes. 2 have said they felt more like reading the text.

Group II: 7 have said they felt like watching, 3 like reading.

others. This latter attack was the stated reason for NATO air strikes against Bosnian Serb forces that would eventually lead to the Dayton Peace Accords and the end of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Borger).

Question no. 6: In the sequence of images that the text triggers is there one or more images that stays in your mind longer than the others?

- a) The maul image; guts spitting out on the floor (4)
- b) Balancing and holding the body with one leg (2)
- c) Maria, sitting and looking through the window (2)
- d) Keeping his head high; the sound of jelly desert eased from its mold (1)

One respondent did not want to point to any particular image.

Group II:

- a) Cutting through the spine; the maul image (4)
- b) Maria, sitting and looking through the window (2)
- c) Trying not to damage the table while cutting (1)
- d) Cutting through the belly skin (2)

One respondent did not want to point to any particular image.

Thematic difference: almost non-existing

Question no. 7: Did you find that something is missing from the description of the dismemberment?

Group I: 7 have answered positively, 3 have answered negatively. These are the answers of those who replied affirmatively.

- a) No description of the weapon he is using (e.g. the sharpness of the knife) (2)
- b) Maria's reaction. (2)
- c) No mentioning of the dead man's head. (1)
- d) No mentioning of blood. (1)
- e) The sound of cutting through bones. (1)

Group II: 9 have answered negatively. 1 respondent said he believes the character's emotions are missing.

Thematic difference: Group I was keener to think about the text and analyze the details, whereas 90% of readers from Group II answered this question negatively pointing out that not only that nothing is missing, but there is too much of everything in this text.

Question no. 8: How would you describe the main idea / point the text is trying to make?

Group I:

- a) Man is an animal; the cruelty of mankind (5)
- b) Resourcefulness (1)
- c) Maria's indifference (1)

3 respondents chose not to answer to this question; saying that they really do not know what point is the text trying to make.

Group II:

- a) Violence. (5)
- b) Cruelty of mankind (2)
- c) Resourcefulness (1)
- d) The point of the text is to shock. (2)

1 respondent chose not to answer this question.

Thematic difference: almost non-existing.

Question no.9: Do you consider the narrator to be reliable? Do you think he is being honest with the reader?

Group I: 7 have found the narrator to be reliable pointing out mostly the amount of details that are present in the text. Some have also referred to the description of the dismemberment scene saying that it's portrayed authentically as this undertake must be quite tiring and a few respondents found that credible. 3 that didn't find the narrator reliable said that the amount of details is actually what makes them doubt the narrator's reliability as there is simply too much of the logical thinking present and some details make the text too sensational.

Group II: 8 have found the narrator to be reliable, the main reason for it being, as with the first group, the amount of details. For this same reason, 2 respondents considered the narrator unreliable pointing out that all these details make it less believable.

If we add the answers from the respondents who found the narrator unreliable to the answers obtained by the Question 10 (What would you add to the text?), then we can conclude that this narrator is indeed an unreliable one, as there is a vast amount of details depicting the scene of dismemberment, but almost no emotion whatsoever, which according to Malcolm signals the “narrator’s emotional reserve” (50) as well as indicates unreliability of the narrator. Interestingly, the majority of readers of both groups found the narrator reliable precisely because of the amount of details.

Question no.10: If you could add one sentence to the text, what sentence would that be?

Group I:

Answers were categorized by the resemblance and common themes:

- a) Maria got up and walked towards the table. (4)
- b) I felt a giant relief. (1)
- c) I woke up all in sweat. (2)
- d) I told her to leave the room! (2)

Group II:

- a) Suddenly, I felt nausea. (2)
- b) Maria started laughing. (1)
- c) He could not help himself and he puked all over the body. (1)
- d) Why are we doing this Maria? (1)
- e) He couldn't stop washing his hands covered with blood. (1)
- f) Please leave, I do not want you to watch this (1)
- g) Suddenly, he heard footsteps (1)

2 respondents chose not to answer this question.

Thematic difference: Even though answers given by both groups point to the reader's concern about Maria characters' behavior, Group I is more preoccupied Maria's ignoring the situation in which the main character is engaged in, whereas Group II in her character sees more of a victim that the main character needs to protect.

Question no.11: Do you avoid reading texts with similar subject?

Group I: 4 out 10 answered they don't mind reading texts like this.

2 respondents said they never read similar texts.

4 have said that they do their best to avoid texts like this.

Group II: 6 out 10 answered they don't mind reading texts like this.

1 respondent said she never reads similar texts.

3 have said that they do their best to avoid texts like this.

Question no. 12: Agreement with the statements given.

Read each statement carefully. Then, using this scale, rate the extent to which the statement is true of you:

1 = I strongly agree

2 = I agree partially

3 = I quite disagree

4 = I neither agree nor disagree (undecided)

Statement 1:

“The Innocent”: I believe that the character's behavior and the decision to dismember the body is caused by the situation in which the character found himself.

The character himself is not a negative character.

Group I: 4 have agreed. 2 have partially agreed with this statement. 3 have disagreed.

Group II: 3 have agreed. 6 have disagreed. 1 have agreed partially.

Difference: Readers from the Group I sympathized more with the character trying to justify his actions, whereas only 3 readers from Group II thought the character deserves a benefit of a doubt.

Statement 2:

“The Innocent”: I had difficulties imagining a dismembered body. The body in pieces is not something I have seen in reality.

Group I: 6 have disagreed with this statement. 3 have agreed, while 1 respondent agreed partially.

Group II: 8 have agreed, 1 partially agreed, 1 disagreed.

Thematic difference: Majority of readers from Group I had no difficulties imaging the dismembered body and they confirmed they’ve seen it in reality as well. The opposite was the case with the 2nd group.

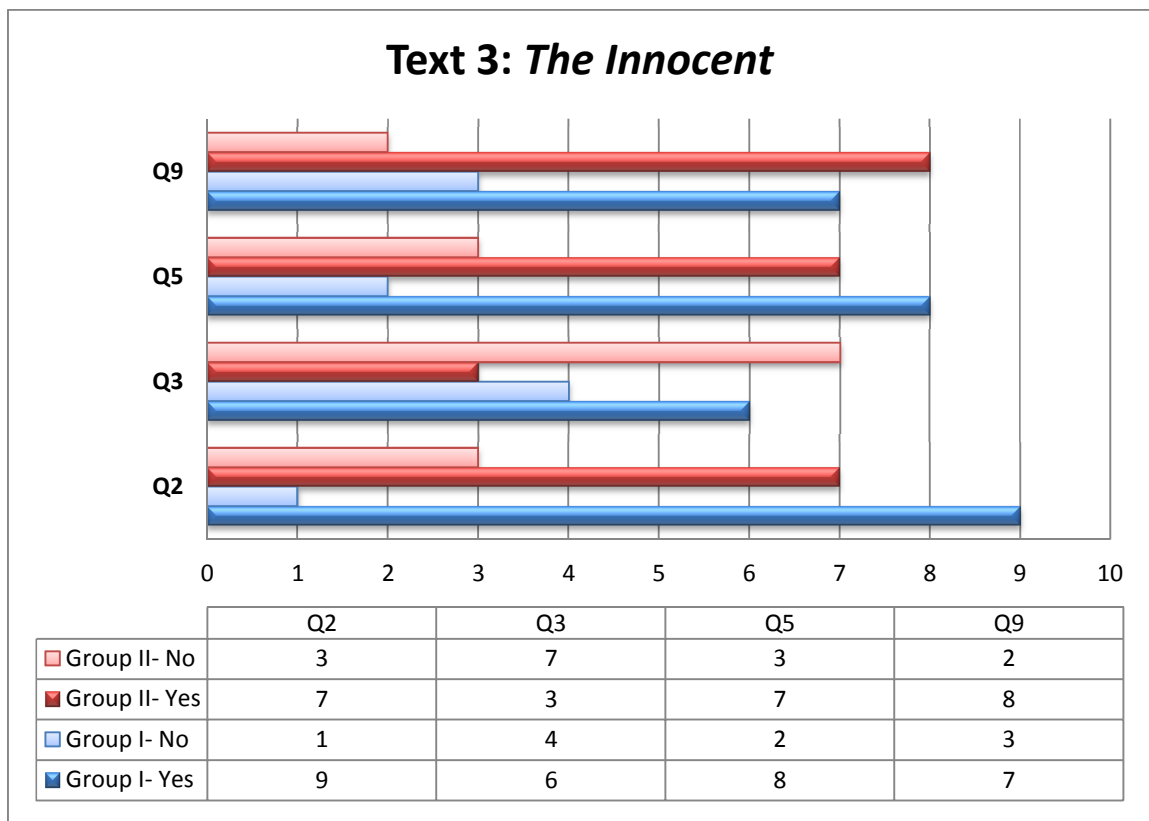


Figure 8 Text 3: *The Innocent*

6.1 Research summary

This study had for its main goal to answer the research question and either prove or disprove the existence of different perspectives between the two sample groups. The main variable for sampling was the past experience of a particular trauma – war. The methodology was constructed around twenty semi-interviews with respondents being chosen by a non-sampling method. The respondents from Group I are people that were direct witnesses to the war in Bosnia (1992-1995). Important to note is that the respondents were from age seven to eleven when they went through this particular traumatic experience. The only difference between the two groups is in their nationality and past war experience. Texts used for analysis were carefully chosen, the main criteria being resemblance with events that occurred during the Bosnian war. Especially the first excerpt from Ian McEwan's novel *Atonement* fulfills this criteria. The second text, excerpt from the novel *The Cement Garden*, was used because it is concerned with several concepts that can be associated with war, such as losing a family member, burial of the dead, the theme of strength and courage and decision making at a very early age. One of the main reasons why this text was used is that its protagonists are children. The third excerpt from the novel *The Innocent* was chosen due to a very graphic description of the disambiguation of a human body. Even before the data collection, my belief was that differences in perspective will be the least recognizable or even non-existing when it comes to this excerpt. Even though most respondents from Group I have seen a human body in pieces, still none of them managed to escape the feeling of utter disgust while reading this text. Group II had almost an exact reaction. Sharing these basic moral norms, instincts and reactions is what makes us human after all. I believe that the excerpt no. 3 serves as a proof that that respondents from Group I, regardless of the atrocities they witnessed, still assume the same perspective in reading texts like this, like those respondents who never saw anything similar.

The findings obtained during this study are both quantitative and qualitative results. The majority of answers were assigned numerical values and were presented in graphics. The questions that were in an open form and were more focused on encouraging readers to try to describe in more words their feelings, opinions, and perception were presented in the forms of themes.

6.2 Discussion of findings

After data coding of the first text used, we can conclude that the greatest difference between the two sample groups was noted with questions: 1, 2, 3, 9 and 10. We have seen that 4 respondents from the Group I said they experienced **disappointment** after reading the excerpt. Not a single respondent from the Group II identified this feeling. The important difference is noted with question no.2 where all respondents from Group I had a **physical reaction** to the text. Physical reaction was noted only with 3 respondents from Group II. The same results were obtained by analysis of answers to the 3rd question, where all members of Group I confirmed that the text triggered a certain **memory**. Only 3 respondents from Group II had this response. The question no. 9 that contained a statement *No one will ever know how it was like to be here*, was answered affirmatively by all the respondents from Group I, whereas 6 affirmative answers were obtained by Group II. Question no. 10 that had for a goal to prove that certain images from the past (people walking in **carpet slippers** in a refugee procession) play an important role in identifying those same images in texts. This proved true, since all readers from Group I have identified a particular clothing piece with no difficulties, while only 3 respondents from Group II were able to do this. Apart from the memories, I would also like to point out one peculiarity that I have noticed and it's concerned with answers to the thematic question no. 6 where 3 respondents from Group I identified the image of hot summer day and pointed to the sentence: "A glorious day. In another time this was what would have been called a **glorious day**" (*Atonement* 217). I can hardly believe this to be a coincidence, but instead I would dare to suggest that this is directly related to the past experience since it's very likely that the Bosnians associated this sentence with the images from the early 90s. The first

shots were fired in the spring in 1992 and I myself recall that the summer that followed was one of the sunniest summers we ever had so, in some other time, maybe that would have been called a glorious summer. Also, the personal tone and different subjective perspective can be noticed in the answers Group I gave to the question no. 9 that asked the respondents to identify what is the main point or idea of this text. The answers from Group I were categorized in 3 categories: **history- fear of forgetting**, helplessness and desperation, and contrast category. The categories identified with Group II were: cruelty and suffering, ignorance and passiveness, and fear. Answers of 5 respondents from Group I fall under the category of History. None of the respondents from Group II pointed out the importance of telling the story and not allowing the history to be forgotten. On the other hand, the second category from Group I **“heplessness and desperation”** shares a lot in common with the second category from Group II which is “ignorance and passiveness”, both referring to the image of the rest of the world that just sits with its hands crossed and witnesses the injustice. The last question from *Atonement* part had for a goal to test respondents’ cognitive perception and see how many respondents from Group II will be able to draw a picture in their head that would match the reality as much as possible. I did not expect any surprises with Group I, as I was almost 100% positive that they will all have the same answer. In Group II, only 5 respondents have “passed the test” and most of them were quite indecisive before they finally decided to go for an option 3 which was with no difficulties or second thoughts chosen by 90% of Group I.

People that witnessed the war know that the human mind works in mysterious ways when governed by fear, injustice and survival instincts. One of the most interesting phenomena, is taking care of, one would say most trivial, unimportant things, such as being well dressed, wearing a tie, even make up and simply pretend that life goes on its normal course. This particular phenomenon was extremely noticeable in Sarajevo during the siege. Thousands of photographs taken by different news reporters support this claim. One of the most famous photographs from the surrounded Sarajevo that travelled the world in the 90s is the photograph of a Bosnian woman, with perfect hair and make-up, wearing pearls and heels, in a stylish dress walking towards a soldier holding a riffle (Stoddart).

In *Cement Garden’s* excerpt, the data collected confirms the existence of different perspectives between the two groups. Most noticeable discrepancies, when it comes to

closed questions, were noticed in answers to questions 2, 3 and 9. Namely, it seems like the text left deeper impression on the Bosnian group, as 70% of readers had a **physical reaction** to it, whereas only 20% of Czechs confirmed mild physical discomfort. Further on, **memories/past experience** was triggered only with the first group and readers from the Group I **sympathized** with children, justifying their actions, whereas a considerable portion of readers from Group II did not find children's behavior appropriate. When it comes to thematic differences, the most noticeable ones are those connected with the feelings of **disappointment, regret and fear of intruders** that were quite easily recognized in answers given by the readers from Group I. Also, the concept of **courage, endurance and survival** was more distinguished in the perspective assumed by Group I than Group II. Answers given by Group II were concerned more with concepts of regret and guilty conscience.

As pointed out in the methodology of this paper, I suspected the last text, excerpt from McEwan's *The Innocent* to show almost no difference in perspective between the two groups of readers. This proved true for most of the questions related to this text, except for a few. For instance, a noticeable difference was once again noted with the question related to triggering memories, where a considerable portion of Group I confirmed **the text awaken some old memories**. Also, Group I was keener to think about the text, pointing to certain details, whereas Group II was utterly disgusted by the text and did not want to fully engage in reading into it. Once again, the theme of passiveness (in case in form of Maria's character) was pointed out by Group I, whereas Group II did not judge the Maria's behavior at all (however, the answers do acknowledge the character's presence as important). The last difference worth mentioning is the one related to imagining the dismembered body, which proved, as suspected an easier task for the Group I than for Group II.

With all three texts, I have paid special attention to observing the body language, facial expression and readers' behavior during and immediately after the reading. I have looked for signs that could signal a very unseal reaction. This is the data I have collected: With both groups, there was no peculiar body language noticed (except from frowning, different facial expression signaling confusion, distress, disgust and other emotions). I would like to

single out only 2 Bosnian's behavior after reading the first text (*Atonement*). The respondent J.M. reached for the pack of cigarettes, lit a cigarette, laid it in an ashtray and then just 3 seconds after repeated the same, ending up with two cigarettes. The respondent B.B. asked a waiter for a glass of water even though she already had one on the table.

6.3 Conclusion, contribution and limitations of the study

Over the past 50 years, the focus of literary theory shifted from the author, literary text and techniques on to the reader and what he brings to the text. The leading figures of this innovative approach, such as Norman Holland, David Bleich and Stanley Fish pointed to the reader's importance, suggesting that the understanding of the text is dependent on factors such as reader's age, sex, frame of mind and past experience.

I have found Holland's theory of personal identity and the role it plays in reading very useful. According to Holland, one person's identity would not exist without another person's identity with which it needs to be put in correlation. I went one step further and applied the same logic to a group (group identity). However, it is a well known fact that every person's abilities to perceive are unique and it is simple impossible to have a group composed of people that would have absolutely the same perspective, therefore by establishing one major common variable for both groups (existence/non-existence of traumatic past experience of war) and having the readers read the appropriate texts, I have tried to demonstrate the importance of past experience and the role it plays in the reading process, understanding of the literary text and finally in readers' subjective perspectives.

As one of the biggest limitations of this study, I would point to the certain interview questions which in the end provided non-conclusive data. I believe, if they have been more clear and better formulated, the data collected would point to even bigger difference between the sample groups. I have learned that for a research of this type a more detailed and enhanced version of the questionnaire is needed. Also, there is a possibility that not only past experience, but nationality played a role in the results obtained, thus I would

point this out as a limitation. It would be interesting to conduct the same study, but have both sample groups consist of people of the same nationality with different past experience which would eliminate any potential cultural and ethical differences, but since that it possible only in theory, and in reality usually one excludes the other, the nationality variable should not be taken into consideration.

The results obtained provide evidence that people that went through the traumatic experience of war share a mutual perspective in reading excerpts from Ian McEwan's fiction. This was especially prominent in the analysis of the answers related to feelings, physical reaction to the texts, memories, and images that the texts were triggering with Bosnian respondents. Also, Bosnians, unlike Czechs, showed bigger sympathy for negative characters and tried to justify their actions, whereas Group II was mostly quick to pass the judgment.

This study could undoubtedly contribute to both fields of psychology and literature. Since my expertise in these fields is moderate, I am sure that that the paper leaves some open questions that could serve as a starting point of some other research concerned with the topic of reader's subjective perspectives or further research on why McEwan's fiction triggers strong emotional reactions.

Additionally, the study enhances awareness of the public about the atrocities of Bosnian war, or any war in general and the importance it plays in shaping one person's identity. Finally, it helped me, a person of 30, to realize that what I went through as a child is an inseparable part of me which cannot be put aside even when flying on the wings of imagination through the world of fiction.

Těžištěm této práce je analýza subjektivního pohledu čtenáře. Hlavním cílem tohoto výzkumu je potvrdit nebo vyvrátit myšlenku, že lidé, kteří prošli válečným traumatem sdílejí subjektivní pohled při četbě literatury. Myšlenka a motivace této studie vyplynula z osobní zkušenosti, jež měla za úkol prokázat, že se jedná o zkušenost celé skupiny. Texty použité pro výzkum a analýzu čtení byly vyňaty z beletrie Iana McEwans. Práce je rozdělena do dvou částí.

První část je zaměřena na vymezení klíčových pojmů a vytvoření teoretického základu pro výzkumné studie obsažené v části druhé. V části I byl kladen důraz na příběh, vyprávění hlasem vypravěče a typ vypravěče, narativní situace a fokalizace perspektiv. Zvláštní pozornost byla věnována vyprávění hlasem vypravěče, jelikož hraje klíčovou roli v pochopení určité části práce a je to právě hlas vypravěče, který čtenář určí.

Práce se dále zabývá vysvětlením použitých prvků, které se promítaly v hlase vypravěče jako například obsah, subjektivní výrazy a pragmatické signály. Část I zabývající se převážně teorií vyprávění končí poznámkami o vypravěči, typech vyprávění a různých pohledech na vyprávění příběhu. V části II se důraz přesouvá od teorie vyprávění ke čtenáři. Druhá část začíná krátkým přehledem literární kritiky kladoucí důraz na význam reakce čtenáře na kritiku, jež vrhá jiné světlo na analýzu literárního textu. Žádná předcházející teorie se nezabývala čtenářem a jeho schopností interpretace. Ty nejzákladnější myšlenky a jejich zastánci jako například Norman Holland, David Bleich a Stanley Fish jsou zmíněny v úvodu části II.

Jejich teorie jsou stručně diskutovány v souvislosti na důležitosti čtenáře stejně jako jejich jedinečnosti, přesto s podobným přístupem k literární analýze. Speciální pozornost v této části byla věnována Normanu Holandovi, který jako první prozkoumal literaturu za pomoci psychologie v roce 1968, když se snažil najít odpověď proč různí lidé čtou různými způsoby. Článek pokračuje dále za pomoci určitých stěžejních vlastností zaměřující se na psychologickou kritiku osobnosti a identity jako hlavní bod. Zde, ještě jednou, je speciální pozornost kladena na důležitost Hollandovi práce a jeho teorie smyčky, kde paměť a předchozí zkušenost hrají klíčovou roli ve čtení a nakonec i v předpokladu jisté perspektivy.

Následující odstavec se dotýká nastavení metodologického základu pro výzkum následující studie. Metodologie opakuje výzkumovou otázku a poskytuje více podrobností o typu výzkumu.

S ohledem na široký rozsah subjektivních pohledů čtenářů, pro potřeby analýzy jsem seskupila čtenáře podle jejich zkušeností z minulosti. Hlavním záběrem je zkušenost *traumatu*: zkušenost z války, nebo žádná zkušenost z válka. Holland poukazuje na skutečnost, že zkušenost hraje velmi důležitou roli v procesu formování hypotézy a

dosahování závěrů, stejně tak paměť a původ hrají klíčovou roli v *tématu identity*. Proto se studie zaměřuje na dokázání, že lidé se společnou zkušeností sdílejí stejný pohled při čtení textu.

Jako v každém kvantitativním výzkumu, účelný vzorek je použit a k jeho definování jsem použila maximální variaci. Demografickým koeficientem proměnné, které byly použity jsou vzorkování podle národnosti, věku a nejdůležitější proměnná byla: zkušenost války či ne. Dva vzorky se soustřeďují na skupinu 10-ti dotázaných. Při výběru stejných národností, etnika, pohlaví a věku, jsem zkusila eliminovat kulturní a etnické rozdíly s ohledem na jednu zkoumanou skupinu.

Samostatná část této kapitoly se věnuje stanovení identity respondentů ze Skupiny I tím, že vyčísluje část klíčových historických faktů spojených s válkou v Bosně (1992-1995). Následně poskytuje více informací o konkrétních úryvcích použitých ve výzkumné studii. V této části je stanoveno a do detailů vysvětleno spojení mezi příběhy McEwana a zkušenosti respondentů z minulosti. Hlavním kritériem pro výběr textů byla podobnost s událostmi během války, např. první úryvek z novely Iana McEwana *Atonement* (Vykoupení) byl vybrán z důvodu podoby s průvodem bosenských utečenců. Druhý text, úryvek z novely *Cement Garden* (Betonová zahrada), byl použit, jelikož využívá několik konceptů, které mohou být ztotožňovány s válkou, jako je ztráta člena rodiny, pohřbívání mrtvých, téma síly a odvahy a potřeby činit rozhodnutí již ve velmi ranném věku. Jedním z hlavních důvodů, proč byl použit tento text je, že jeho hlavní protagonisté jsou děti. Třetí úryvek z novely *The Innocent* (Nevinný) byl využit kvůli velmi grafickému znázornění rozřezání lidského těla.

Analýza a rozdělování posbíraných dat je prezentovaný v Kapitole 5. Každý příběh je analyzován zvlášť. Nejdříve jsou zde shrnuty odpovědi první studijní skupiny a vypočítán průměr shodných odpovědí pro ty odpovědi, které mohou být neurologicky prezentovány. Odpovědi na otevřené otázky jsou představeny ve formě témat (které jsou později porovnávány). Totožný postup byl použit i pro druhou skupinu. Každý příběh obsahuje grafické znázornění pohledu převzatých čtenářů a tyto jsou pak porovnány.

Poslední část práce se zabývá závěry, omezeními a přínosu studie. Získaný výsledek přináší důkazy o tom, že lidé, kteří zažili traumatické zkušenosti z války sdílejí vzájemný pohled na četbu úryvků z literatury Iana McEwana. Toto je obzvláště viditelné na analýze odpovědí souvisejících s pocity, fyzickými reakcemi na texty, vzpomínkami a obrázky, které vyvolaly texty u respondentů.

I přesto, že analýza dat zanechává několik otevřených otázek, věřím, že tato studie poslouží jako dobrý záchytný bod pro další výzkum vlivu zkušeností z minulosti na četbu a porozumění textů. Tato studie by mohla dále pozvednou povědomí veřejnosti na krutost bosenské války, respektive války jako takové, a významu, který má na tvarování lidské identity.

8.1 Appendix A

Story excerpts

Ian McEwan: Atonement

Walking with the soldiers were families hauling suitcases, bundles, babies, or holding the hands of children. The only human sound Turner heard, piercing the din of engines, was the crying of babies. There were old people walking singly. One old man in a fresh lawn suit, bow tie and carpet slippers shuffled by with the help of two sticks, advancing so slowly that even the traffic was passing him. He was panting hard. Wherever he was going he surely would not make it. On the far side of the road, right on the corner, was a shoe shop open for business. Turner saw a woman with a little girl at her side talking to a shop assistant who displayed a different shoe in the palm of each hand. The three paid no attention to the procession behind them [...]

[...] Minutes later they passed five bodies in a ditch, three women, two children. Their suitcases lay around them. One of the women wore carpet slippers, like the man in the lawn suit. Turner looked away, determined not to be drawn in. If he was going to survive, he had to keep a watch on the sky. He was so tired, he kept forgetting. And it was hot now. Some men were letting their greatcoats drop to the ground. A glorious day. In another time this was what would have been called a glorious day. Their road was on a long slow rise, enough to be a drag on the legs and increase the pain in his side. Each step was a conscious decision. A blister was swelling on his left heel which forced him to walk on the edge of his boot. Without stopping, he took the bread and cheese from his bag, but he was too thirsty to chew. He lit another cigarette to curb his hunger and tried to reduce his task to the basics:

[...] None of that mattered. From here it looked simple. They were passing more bodies in the road, in the gutters and on the pavement, dozens of them, soldiers and civilians. The

stench was cruel, insinuating itself into the folds of his clothes. The convoy had entered a bombed village, or perhaps the suburb of a small town—the place was rubble and it was impossible to tell. Who would care? Who could ever describe this confusion, and come up with the village names and the dates for the history books? And take the reasonable view and begin to assign the blame? No one would ever know what it was like to be here.

Ian McEwan: Cement Garden

I said 'If we tell someone ...' and waited. Sue said, 'We have to tell someone so there can be a funeral.' I glanced at Julie. She was gazing past our garden fence, across the empty land to the tower blocks.

'If we tell them,' I began again, 'they'll come and put us into care, into an orphanage or something. They might try and get Tom adopted.' I paused. Sue was horrified.

'They can't do that,' she said.

'The house will stand empty,' I went on, 'people will break in, there'll be nothing left.'

'But if we don't tell anyone,' said Sue and gestured vaguely towards the house, 'what do we do then?' I looked at Julie again and said louder, "Those kids will come in and smash everything up.' Julie tossed her pebbles across the fence. She said, 'We can't leave her in the bedroom or she'll start to smell.' Sue was almost shouting.

'That's a terrible thing to say.'

'You mean,' I said to Julie, 'that we shouldn't tell anybody.'

Julie walked off towards the house without replying. I watched her go into the kitchen and splash her face at the sink. She held her head under the cold-water tap till her hair was soaked, then she wrung it out and swept it clear of her face. As she walked back towards us, drops of water ran on to her shoulders. She sat down on the rockery and said, 'If we don't tell anybody we've got to do something ourselves quickly.' Sue was close to tears.

'But what can we do?' she moaned. Julie was playing it up a bit. She said very quietly, 'Bury her, of course.' For all her terseness, her voice still shook.

'Yes,' I said, thrilling with horror, 'we can have a private funeral, Sue.' My younger sister was now weeping steadily and Julie had her arm round her shoulder. She looked at me

coldly over Sue's head. I was suddenly irritated with them both. I got up and walked round to the front of the house to see what Tom was up to (...)

Julie was shoveling faster too, staggering to the trunk with huge loads, and running back for more. I plunged my hands into the cement and threw in a heavy armload.

We worked like maniacs. Soon only a few patches of the sheet were visible, and then they too were gone. Still we kept on. The only sounds were the scrape of the shovel and our heavy breathing. When we finished, when there was nothing left of the pile but a damp patch on the floor, the cement in the trunk was almost overflowing. Before we went back upstairs we stood about looking at what we had done, and catching our breath. We decided to leave the lid of the trunk up so the cement would harden quicker.

Ian McEwan: The Innocent

“You keep it,” she said, “and let’s start.”

Soon he had to change his grip to avoid burning his fingers. The paper came away and the tobacco spilled out. He let it all fall to the floor and stamped on it. He took up the saw and untucked Otto’s shirt, exposing the back just above the waistband of the trousers. Right on the spine was a big mole. He felt squeamish about cutting through it and positioned the blade half an inch lower. His saw cut now was the whole width of the back, and again the vertebra kept him on track. He was through the bone easily enough, but an inch or so further in he began to feel that he was not cutting through things so much as pushing them to one side. But he kept on. He was in the cavity that contained all that he did not want to see. He was keeping his head raised so that he did not have to look into the cut. He looked in Maria’s direction. She was still sitting there, gray and tired and not wanting to watch. Her eyes were on the open window and the big cumulus clouds that drifted over the courtyard.

There was a glutinous sound that brought him the memory of a jelly dessert eased from its mold. It was moving about in there; something had collapsed and rolled onto something

else. He was through to the bottom, and now he faced the old problem. He could not cut through the belly skin without sawing into the wood. It was a good table, too, sturdily constructed of elm. And this time he was not reaching his hand in. Instead he turned the carcass through ninety degrees and pulled it forward by the front half, so that the saw cut was in line with the table's edge. He should have asked for Maria's help. She should have foreseen the difficulty and come to his rescue. He was supporting the top half with both hands. The lower half still rested on the table. How then was he supposed to use the knife to cut through the belly skin? He was too tired to stop, even though he knew he was attempting the impossible. He brought his left knee up to bear the weight and stretched forward for the knife, which was on the table. It might have worked. He could have held the upper body with his knee and his hand, and with his free hand he could have reached under and cut through the skin. But he was too tired to be balancing on one leg. He almost had the knife in his hand when he felt himself toppling. He had to put his left foot down. He tried to get the free hand back in time, but the whole thing fell from his grasp. The top half swung on its hinge of skin toward the floor, exposing the vivid mess of Otto's digestive tract and pulling the bottom half with it. Both tipped to the floor and disgorged onto the carpet.

8.2 Appendix B

Interview Questions

Ian McEwan: *Atonement*

1. How does the text make you feel?
 - A) sad
 - B) angry
 - C) upset
 - D) disappointed
 - E) indifferent
 - F) other

2. Did the text cause any physical reaction with you (sweating, accelerated heartbeat, intense breathing, sickness, some feeling of discomfort)
 - A) Yes
 - B) NoIf yes, can you please briefly describe the feeling?

3. Did the text trigger some old memory (an image, sound, smell)
 - A) Yes
 - B) NoIf yes, can you please tell me more about this?

4. What part of the text would you say left the deepest impression on you?

5. Did you feel like you are watching the action happening rather than reading about it?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No

6. In the sequence of images that the text triggers is there one or more images that stays in your mind longer than the others?
 - a) Yes
 - b) NoIf yes, which one/ones?

7. Do you find the author's description of the refuge procession credible?

a) Yes

b) No

If YES, why? If NOT, why not?

8. How would you describe the main idea / point the text is trying to make?

9. Do you agree with the narrator's remark (an idea) given at the end?

No one would ever know what it was like to be here.

A) Yes

B) No

C) I do not have an opinion about this.

10. What piece of clothing is being mentioned more than once in this story?

11. Do you avoid reading texts with similar subject?

A) I never read texts with similar topics

B) I do my best to avoid these topics

C) I rarely read anything traumatizing

D) I do not categorize texts by theme (I read everything)

E) I do not mind texts like this

F) I enjoy reading texts like this

12. Read each statement carefully. Then using this scale, rate the extent to which the statement is true of you:

1 = I fully agree

2 = I agree partially

3 = I quite disagree

4 = I neither agree nor disagree (undecided)

Statement 1:

“Atonement”: I find it strange that Turner walked by a man in a suit, wearing a tie. I do not believe people look like that during the war.

Statement 2:

“Atonement”: Two of the refugees wore carpet slippers. I don't find this credible.

Ian McEwan: Cement Garden

1. How does the text make you feel?

- G) sad
- H) angry
- I) upset
- J) disappointed
- K) indifferent
- L) other

2. Did the text cause any physical reaction with you (sweating, accelerated heartbeat, intense breathing, sickness, some feeling of discomfort)

- C) Yes
- D) No

If yes, can you please briefly describe the feeling?

3. Did the text trigger some old memory (an image, sound, smell)

- C) Yes
- D) No

If yes, can you please tell me more about this?

4. What part of the text would you say left the deepest mark on you?

5. Did you feel like you are watching the action happening rather than reading about it?

- c) Yes
- d) No

6. In the sequence of images that the text triggers is there one or more images that stays in your mind longer than the others?

- c) Yes
- d) No

If yes, which one/ones?

7. Do you feel sorry for the kids?

- A) Yes
- B) No

If yes, why? If no, why?

8. How would you describe the main idea / point the text is trying to make?

13. Is the children's behavior in accordance to the situation they are in?

- a) Yes
- b) No

9. If you could add one sentence to the text, what sentence would that be?

10. Do you avoid reading texts with similar subject?

- G) I never read texts with similar topics
- H) I do my best to avoid these topics
- I) I rarely read anything traumatizing
- J) I do not categorize texts by theme (I read everything)
- K) I do not mind texts like this
- L) I enjoy reading texts like this

11. Read each statement carefully. Then using this scale, rate the extent to which the statement is true of you:

- 1 = I fully agree
- 2 = I agree partially
- 3 = I quite disagree
- 4 = I neither agree nor disagree (undecided)

Statement 1:

In the story "Cement Garden" the kids are just being resourceful. I do not pass any judgment on their actions

Statement 2:

"Cement Garden": All the kids act in accordance with their age.

Statement 3:

"Cement Garden": If I were in their shoes, I would have done the same.

Ian McEwan: *The Innocent*

1. How does the text make you feel?

- M) sad
- N) angry
- O) upset
- P) disappointed
- Q) indifferent
- R) other

2. Did the text cause any physical reaction with you (sweating, accelerated heartbeat, intense breathing, sickness, stomach churning, dizziness and etc.)

- E) Yes
- F) No

If yes, can you please briefly describe the feeling?

3. Did the text trigger some old memory (an image, sound, smell)

- E) Yes
- F) No

If yes, can you please tell me more about this?

4. What part of the text would you say left the deepest impression on you?

5. Did you feel like you are watching the action happening before your eyes more than reading a text?

- a) Yes
- b) No

6. In the sequences of images, does one image or more stay longer in your conscious than others? If yes, which one/ones?

7. Did you find that something is missing from the description of the dismemberment?

- a) Yes
 - b) No
- If YES, what?

8. How would you describe the main idea / point the text is trying to make?

9. Do you consider the narrator to be reliable? Do you think he is being honest with the reader?

a) Yes

b) No

If Not, why not?

10. If you could add one sentence to the text, what sentence would it be?

11. Do you avoid reading texts with similar subject?

M) I never read texts with similar topics

N) I do my best to avoid these topics

O) I rarely read anything traumatizing

P) I do not categorize texts by theme (I read everything)

Q) I do not mind texts like this

R) I enjoy reading texts like this

12. Read each statement carefully. Then, using this scale, rate the extent to which the statement is true of you:

1 = I strongly agree

2 = I agree partially

3 = I quite disagree

4 = I neither agree nor disagree (undecided)

Statement 1:

“The Innocent”: I believe that the character’s behavior and the decision to dismember the body is caused by the situation in which the character found himself.

The character himself is not a negative character.

Statement 2:

“The Innocent”: I had difficulties imagining a dismembered body. The body in pieces is not something I have seen in reality.

8.3 Appendix C

CONSENT FORM

SUBJECTIVE PERSPECTIVES, NARRATION AUTHORITIES AND LEVELS OF TEXTUAL COMMUNICATION IN IAN MCEWAN'S NOVELS AND SHORT STORIES

Subjective Perspectives: Reading Ian McEwan
Reader Criticism Approach

Research purpose and your role in my research:

The goal of this small research is to answer the research question and either prove or disprove the existence of mutual subjective perspective within the particular sample group. My research question is: "Do people that went through war assume a certain perspective in reading the passages of McEwan's fiction different from those readers that haven't been through war." I will use this interview as a method to answer my research question. Your answers to the interview questions will be published in my master's thesis which I am writing for the academic year 2013/2014.

The interview should take approximately 30 minutes. There is a risk of bringing up old memories associated with trauma or traumatic events. During the interview you may decide to withdraw or decline to answer questions in case you find them too stressful or delicate. Your participation in this study will remain confidential (only initials will be used). The details of your full identity will not be stored.

Date

Participants Signature

SAGLASNOST

SUBJECTIVE PERSPECTIVES, NARRATION AUTHORITIES AND LEVELS OF TEXTUAL COMMUNICATION IN IAN MCEWAN'S NOVELS AND SHORT STORIES

Subjektivne perspektive: Citajuci Ian McEwan-a
Knjizevna kritika: Analiza iz ugla citaoca

Cilj mog istrazivanja i vasa uloga u mom istrazivackom radu

Cilj ovog malog istrazivanja je da se odgovori na istrazivacko pitanje i bilo dokaze ili opovrgne postojanje zajednicke perspektivee unutar jedne istrazivacke grupe. Moje istrazivacko pitanje glasi: „Da li citaoci koji su prezivjeli rat zauzimaju odredjenu perspektivu u citanju isjecaka iz Ian McEwan-ovih romana koja je drugacija od perspective citaoca koji nisu prezivjeli rat?“ Kao metodu istrazivanja koristicu ovaj intervju. Vasi odgovori na intervju pitanja bice objavljena u mom magistarskom radu pisanom za 2013/2104 skolsku godinu.

Intervju bi trebao trajati otprilike 30 minuta. Postoji rizik budjena sjecanja povezanih sa traumom i traumaticnim dogadjajima. U toku intervjuja mozete odluciti da se povucete ili odbijete odgovoriti na pitanje ako ga smatrate previse neugodnim ili delikatnim. Vase licni podaci ce ostati zasticeni (koristeni ce biti samo inicijali). Vas identitet nece biti nigdje objavljen.

Datum

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