

The Role of Context in the Interpretation of Ernest Hemingway's "Hills Like White Elephants" in terms of Verschueren's Mental World

Naghm Ja'far Hussein
Shat Al-Arab University College
naghmhussein@g.ial.com

Abstract

There is an obvious notion that developed over time. This notion reveals that language is embodied within a context that strongly influences the interpretation of meaning. It introduces the point of view of a large number of scholars, linguists, sociolinguists, social psychologists and anthropologists. The Context has also its own influence on semantics and especially in pragmatics. Pragmatics studies the relations between language and context that are considered as basic to account of language understanding. In addition, it is important to consider the role of mental world in language interpretation and understanding. The present study concentrates on using Verschueren's mental world in the analysis and the interpretations of Hemingway's "Hills Like White Elephants". Verschueren's mental world includes certain properties which deal with aspects of personality, emotions, beliefs, desires or wishes and motivations or intentions.

Keywords: context, mental word.

الخلاصة

لقد تطور مفهوم ملحوظ عبر الوقت والذي يبين بان اللغة تتجسد ضمن سياق الكلام (Context) والذي بدوره يؤثر بشكل كبير على تفسير المعنى. يقدم هذا المفهوم وجهة نظر العديد من العلماء واللغويين (Linguists) وعلماء علم اللغة الاجتماعي (Sociolinguists) وعلماء علم النفس الاجتماعي (Social Psychologist) بالإضافة إلى علماء علم الإنسان أو الأنثروبولوجيين (Anthropologists) . أن سياق الكلام (Context) له تأثيره الخاص في علم الدلالة (Semantics) وبالخصوص في علم التداولية (Pragmatics) ، وذلك لأن علم التداولية يعنى بدراسة العلاقة بين اللغة وسياق الكلام الذي بدوره يعتبر أساساً لتبيان فهم اللغة وإدراكها. فضلاً عن ذلك، انه لمن المهم ان يؤخذ بنظر الاعتبار دور العالم العقلي (Mental World) في فهم اللغة وتفسيرها.

تركز الدراسة الحالية على ما قدمه فيرستجيورن حول العالم العقلي (Verschueren's mental world) في تحليل القصة القصيرة "تلال كالقيلة البيضاء" (Hills Like White Elephants) للكاتب الأمريكي ارنست همنغواي (Ernest Hemingway) وتفسيرها . حيث يتضمن هذا العالم العقلي العديد من الميزات والتي تتعامل مع الشخصية والعواطف والاعتقادات والرغبات والأمنيات وكذلك النوايا والمحفزات.

الكلمات المفتاحية: سياق الكلام، العالم العقلي.

1.1 Introduction

Context has its importance in linguistics and pragmatics. Leech and Short (1981:190) state that "language will be seen as a text or discourse – the exchange of meaning in interpersonal context". As far as pragmatics is concerned, Fromkin, et. al

(1997:199) mention that pragmatics deals with the interpretation of linguistic meaning in context. This interpretation depends on considering the participants' minds. Verschueren (1999:76) emphasizes that without the functioning of the utterer's and interpreter's mind, there is no language use at all. He adds that " mental states have always been central to certain endeavours in linguistic pragmatics. Beliefs, for instance, are at the core of the 'background assumption' that the verbal behavior is anchored into and that are also implicitly communicated (ibid:90).

The present study focuses on using Verschueren's mental world in the analysis and the interpretations of Hemingway's "Hills Like White Elephants". It aims at showing the role of context in terms of the mental world in language interpretation and understanding of literary work. Moreover, it explores how this context can present a great deal concerning Hemingway's "Hills Like White Elephants" especially the characters' mental states, i.e. their goals, emotions, desires, opinions, attitudes and ideologies.

1.2 What is Context

The lexical meaning of "context" is a general term used in Linguistics and Phonetics. It is used to refer to a specific part of an utterance (or text) near to a unit which is the main focus of attention. It is mentioned that the occurrence of any unit (i.e. sound or word) is completely determined by its context. In addition, when one 'put a word in context' so as to present the meaning intended, it is called "contextualizes." Then, providing a context in this way is referred to as " contextualization." Moreover, it is suggested that words can have meanings only when seen in context (Crystal, 2003:103).

Widdison (2007:19) affirms that a language can be produced only in certain occasions and such occasions occur in continuous changing contexts of our daily life. He adds that context can be considered as "a psychological construct, a conceptual representation of a state of affairs." Moreover, it is argued that, with respect to communication, a first-person party (a speaker or writer) can produce a certain text which keys the second-person party (a listener or reader) into a context which is supposed to be shared. Thus, when the context is keyed in, it can be modified or extended by means of text (ibid:22). In this concern, Van Dijk, (1998:8) emphasizes that talk and text do not always embody the relationships between group, rather it is the context that can be used to interfere, reinforce and transform such relationships.

It is important to mention that the context has a significant role within both semantics and pragmatics. Lyons (1977: 572-573) states that many philosophers have stated that the context is a matter of pragmatics rather than semantics. He maintains that among linguist, there are two extreme positions in this concern. At first extreme, Kats and Foder (1963) do not deny that contextual factors are relevant to the interpretation of actual utterances. At the second extreme, there are scholar like J.R. Firth, who built up his whole theory of semantics upon the notion of context. Locastro (2003:12) also confirms that the concept of context is critical within the pragmatic inquiry.

1.3 The Significance of Context in Linguistics and Pragmatics

In 1923, the British anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski (cited in Locastro,2003:12) produced the term of context of situation. This term is used to clarify that "the situation in which words are uttered can never be passed over as irrelevant to linguistic expressions." He considers the language as it is embedded in a sociocultural framework and cannot be interpret outside its local use. In this concern, Malinowski (cited in Malmkjar,1999:158) also states that a language use is entirely

context-dependent. He adds that the context of situation is indispensable for the understanding of the words.

In 1938, Carnap (cited in Levinson, 1983:5) introduces a definition that refers to those "linguistic investigations that make necessary reference to aspects of context". It is illustrated that context is understood to cover certain identities, such as participants, the temporal and spatial parameters of the speech event, besides the beliefs, knowledge and intentions of the participants in their speech event. In addition, in 1958, Wittgenstein (cited in Locasrto,2003:13), explains that people are engaged in action within recognizable natural activities that provide certain context. He also proposes the notion of activity types. The notion of activity type means "the organizing context that structures the talks as well as the permissible behaviors and roles of the participants".

In 1964, Hymes (cited in Brown and Yule, 1983:38) specifies the features of context which identify a type of speech event as in the following:

- The role of addressor and addressee: The former is the speaker or writer who produces the utterance and the latter is the hearer or reader who is recipient of the utterance.
- Topic: What is being talked about?
- Setting: Where is the event situated in time and place, as well as in terms of the physical relations of the interactants taking in consideration posture, gesture and facial expressions?
- Channel: How do the participants contact with each other by speech, writing, singing, smoke signals?
- Code: What language, dialect or style of language is being used?
- Message-form: What form is intended ,i.e. chat, sermon, debate, etc?
- Event: The nature of the communicative event within which a genre may be embodied?
- Key: Which involves evaluation, i.e. was it a good sermon, a pathetic explanation, etc?
- Purpose: What did the participants intend that it should come about as a result of the communicative event?

In 1979, a linguistic anthropologist, Ochs (Locasrto,2003:13) mentions that the context includes the following variables:

1-Setting: It means the social and spatial framework within which encounters are situated.

2-Behavioral environment: It refers to the way that the participants can use their bodies and behavior as a source so as to frame and organize their talk.

3-Language as context: It introduces the notion of contextualization cues, that is, "the way language itself provides a context for other language".

4-Extrasituational context: It includes background knowledge , i.e. social, cultural, historical, political frames within which local instances needed to be interpreted.

In 1998, Van Dijk (1998:6) regards certain important categories included within context. They involve the overall definition of the situation, setting (time and place), ongoing action (including discourse and discourse genres), participants (in various communicative, social or institutional roles), and their mental representations (i.e. goals, knowledge, opinions, attitudes and ideologies). In addition, He explores that there is, what is called, personal or episodic memory. It can be defined as the store of experiences or subjective representations and it is called mental models. It includes

the specific knowledge and opinions people have accumulated during their life. Moreover, the experience of the ongoing situation, interaction and discourse is also represented in a mental model which we call context model (ibid:9).

Locastro (2003:14) emphasizes that as a result of recent contribution to pragmatics from certain related fields, it has been adopted a more dynamic view of context. This view presents an interactive and mutual constitutive relationship between context and language. Accordingly, the definition of context has come to include sociocultural and cognitive dimensions. It is also affirmed that the term context can be considered as the linguistic, social, and psychological world in which the language users can operate at any given time.

Considering also the significance of context in pragmatics, Pragmatics is defined as "the study of those relations between language and context that are grammaticalized or encoded in the structure of language." Moreover, it deals with all non-semantic features that are encoded in language and these features are considered as aspects of context. Moreover, there is an important distinction made between universal pragmatics, that is, the general theory of what aspects of context get encoded and how, and the language-specific pragmatics of individual language (Levinson, 1983:9-10). Furthermore, McCarthy (1991) defines pragmatics as "the study of meaning in context". Also, Clark (1996) clarifies that pragmatics includes "the study of utterances in context" (Locastro, 2003:6-7). What is more, Yule (2006:112-113) argues that pragmatics is the study of invisible meaning, in other words, it is the study of how we recognize what is meant even when it is not really said or written. In order to understand or interpret the intended meaning or invisible meaning, it is important to consider the meaning of the words and the context in which they occur.

1.4 Context and Shared Knowledge

Context can be defined as a situation in which there is a consideration for ourselves and the actual circumstances of time and place. Thus, when people communicate with each other, they will introduce references to what is presented in these situations in terms of the place and time. For example:

- The chalk is over there.
- Pass me the tape measure.

In these examples, people make a connection between the language and the physical context of the utterance in order to make sense of what is said. More particularly, the listener can understand what the speaker means by utterances when he can make the necessary connection. Accordingly, the shared situation is important to understand the intended meaning, otherwise they have nothing to point to and will lose their point (Widdowson, 2007 : 19-20).

Context is not considered as an external set of circumstances but it is a selection of them which internally presented in mind. In other words, context is "an abstract representation of state of affairs." It is the common knowledge of the two persons concerned, which has been established in their conversation. Then, context is not what is perceived in a particular situation, rather it is what is conceived as relevant in this situation. The important point is that there must be shared knowledge or there is no communication at all. Such context can be created by means of the text itself. The following, for example, is the opening paragraph of a magazine article (ibid: 20-21):

With 300 million native speakers scattered across 20 countries, Arabic is the world's six largest language. Yet, British ignorance of and indifference to the Arab world remains startling: of 737 postgraduate students in Islamic or Middle Eastern studies

funded by the Economic and Social Research Council last year, 12 were British national. (p.21)

Examining the first sentence, it seems that the writer present certain information to establish the context of shared knowledge. In this case, it activates knowledge that is not made directly in the text. The writer clarifies that the Arab world can be identified with Islam and the Middle East. Accordingly, if such knowledge is not activated clearly, the text may not make sense to the reader (ibid:21).

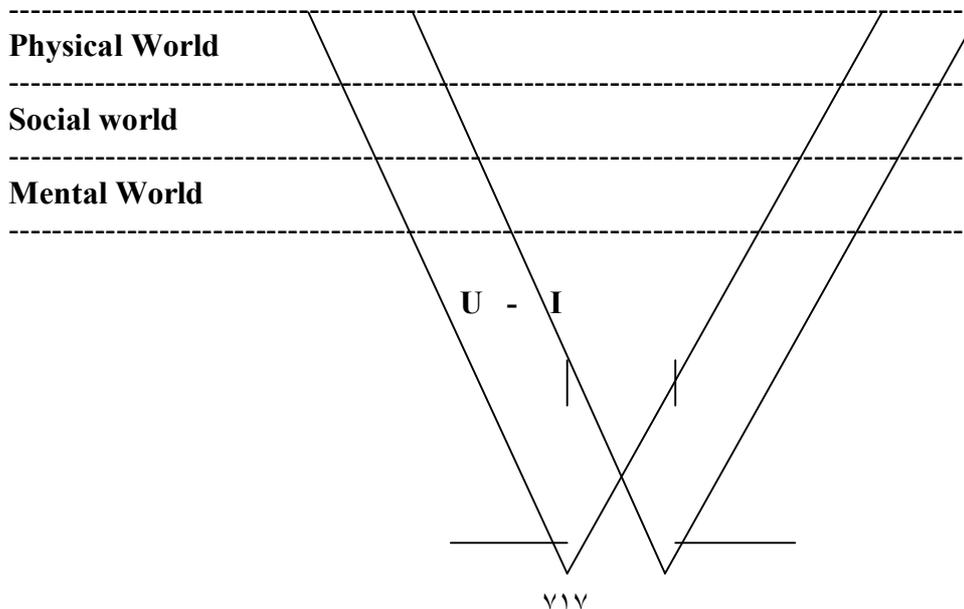
The second example is in the following :

At the height of the Kosovo crisis in may 1999, Tony Blair was on his way to Bucharest, the Romanian capital, to drum up local support for NATO's high risk confrontation with Serbia. The Prime Minister astonished his advisers by suddenly announcing on the areoplane that he was going to promise Romania early membership of the European Union in return for its continued backing. (p. 21-22).

In this paragraph, the writer assumes that the location of Bucharest is not regarded as common knowledge, thus, he mentions that it is the Capital of Romania. Whereas, when he talks about Tony Blair, he presupposes that there is shared knowledge about him that will enable the reader to infer that the Prime Minster refers to the same person. Moreover, there are other points which are assumed to have shared knowledge and so left unsaid, such as the nature of Kosovo crisis, NATO's confrontation with Serbia, and what those have to do with each other. To sum, it is important to take in consideration that "text does not in itself establish context but serves to activate it in the reader's mind. And once activated, it can be extended by inference" (ibid:22).

1.5 Context in Terms of Mental World

Verschueren (1999:65-66) clarifies that there are certain focal points in one coherent pragmatic approach to language use. The first point, which will be the core of the discussion in this section, is contextual correlates of adaptability. It includes all the ingredients of the communicative context with which linguistic choices have to be interadaptable. It has certain range which goes from aspects of physical surroundings to the social relationships between speakers and hearers and to aspects of the interlocutors' state of mind. Using states of mind under the label of context is considered as a deviation from common practice in linguistics. At the same time, it eliminates certain misleading implications of regarding context as simply 'out there'. Clearly, contextual correlates should not be seen as static extralinguistic realities. To sum, this range can be clarified in the following sketch, (see Figure 1), (ibid: 76):



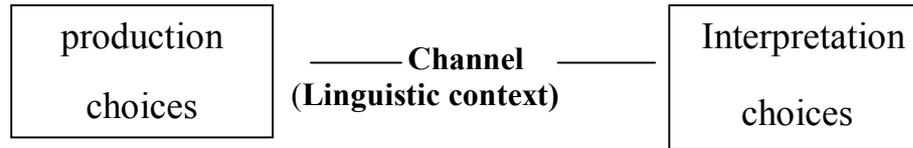


Figure (1) Contextual correlates adaptability

In dealing with this sketch, it seems that the utterer (U) and the interpreter (I) are considered as focal points. This is due to an inescapable fact that without the functioning of their minds, there will be no language use. Thus, their point of view will be regarded in order to look out at the world of potential correlates of adaptability, starting with mental world, going on to the social world and ending up in the physical realm (ibid). For the limitation of the present study, the main concern will be on the first level in this sketch, i.e. the mental world. In addition, there is a brief illustration for what is meant by utterer and interpreter.

1- Language users: Utterer and Interpreter: It refers to a speaking subject who is an utterer, (first person, the deictic center, i.e. "the point of reference from which the dimension is looked at", in face to face communication), an addressee who is an interpreter (second person) and others (third person).

2- Mental World

Actually, in verbal interaction, there should be a communication from mind. It is also important to mention that we should never forget that minds are 'minds in society'. That is why Figure (1) has at its base the utterer's and interpreter's 'perspective' on a mental, social and physical reality. In dealing with the mental world, let's consider a meeting of the board governors of the international leather-manufacturing company Croc & Co. The chairperson of the board, Al, has come under attack from Toproc, which is one of the most efficient and productive branches company. This attack is due to his refusing to divert some of the production from smaller branches that are less modern and less favorably situated to meet demands at short notice. In order to force the issue, Toproc managers have used some of their customers to threaten that there will be a complete stop of their orders unless Toproc's capacity is extended to guarantee a faster supply. In this case, Al's judgment has been called into doubt and he is also regarded as he has been inspired by anti-Toproc sentiments. Consequently, one of Al's friends on the board, Mike, says (ibid:87-88):

- Al, I think you should seriously consider resigning.

The interpretation of this sentence, in relation to the state of mind that makes Mike decide to utter this sentence, needs certain properties which are followed by certain related propositions. What is more, any aspect of interpretation may point at certain properties of Mike's mental world that triggered the choices he made. These properties and their propositions will be clarified in the following (ibid: 88):

1- Aspects of his *personality*:

- Is Mike a trustworthy friend?
- Does he lack the courage to face a storm?
- Is he trying to create a situation in which his own influence could increase?

2- *Emotions*:

- Is Mike actually afraid that things will get out of hand?

- Is he, may be, inspired by his sympathy for AI?
- Does he fear the possible consequences of AI's having to force more antagonism?

3- What are the *beliefs* involved ?

- Does Mike truly believe that what he proposes is the best possible course of action?
- Best for whom?
- What does he think is going to happen if AI does not resign?
- Does he think AI really made a mistake that is grave enough to ask him to resign?

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4- What *desires* or *wishes* are involved?

- Does Mike want AI to resign?
- How strong is this wish?
- Is it a wish that has anything personal to it?
- Is it purely circumstantial?

5- Are there any specific *motivations* or *intentions*?

- Is it the intention to save AI?
- To save the company?
- To achieve personal gain?

To account for what is mentioned previously, Verschueren (1999:89-90) affirms that just as the utterance needs to interadapt with the utterer's mental world, the choices made are always adapted to the utterer's assessment of what the mental world of the interpreters look like. Accordingly, judgments of the interpreter's personality traits, emotional involvement, patterns of beliefs, wishes and desires, motivations and intentions, may all enter the picture and really create meaning as much utterances and their utterers do. These properties represented a variety of mental states which is significant and also has been relied upon for the definition of speech acts types, as ingredients of felicity conditions. In addition, a pragmatic perspective that searches its way through the reality of language use, which is guided by the notion of adaptability, cannot neglect the interplay between linguistic choices and the mental states of interpreters. To sum up, the mental world activated in language uses includes cognitive and emotional elements.

2. Introduction to Hemingway's Hills Like White Elephants

Ernest Hemingway writes short stories, novels, novella and poems. He has a great influence on the direction of American Fiction. As the Nobel Prize committee argued, his greatest contribution is in area of the 'prose style'. In his use of 'zero ending', which is considered as counter to the traditional one or 'well – made ending', he has influenced the form of modern short story. In addition, he also has influenced an entire generation of writers and artists (Mangum, 1982:1621). Moreover, Stone et. all (1976:358-359) emphasize that Hemingway's technical development, tone and themes have presented an immense influence to American fiction. When he won the Nobel Prize for literature in 1954, actually, he was cited for his "powerful, style-making mastery of art of modern narration".

Hills Like White Elephants becomes an important piece in Hemingway's second collection of short stories, i.e. "Men without Women". It is regarded as a widely anthologized and much discussed story. It offers prose and dialogue that reflect Hemingway's mastery of style. It is told in its entirety through dialogue. It presents a conversation between a young woman and an American man waiting a train in Spain. During their conversation, it becomes clear that the woman is pregnant and the man

wants her to have an abortion. At the end of the story, there are many questions arisen about what decision has been made and what will happen to those two characters (Gale, 2010:1-2).

3. Practical Part

3.1 Language Users: Utterer and Interpreter

In Hemingway's Hills Like White Elephants, there are two main characters. A woman and an American man who calls her "Jig". They play exchangeable roles in being utterer and interpreter throughout the story. There is another minor character who is a quest at the bar.

In this short story, the third-person narration reveals very few facts about the characters. It never explicitly states what it is that the couple is arguing about. Actually, the reader must interpret the context in which they use their language and taking in consideration their body language. This will help the reader to infer the characters' background and attitudes with respect to their situations and also their attitudes towards one another. From the outset of the story, it is clear that the contentious nature of the couple's conversation represents resentment and unease. It seems as if Hemingway here prefers to leave certain details concerning the characters to the sensibility of the readers. Thus, he allows the characters to speak for themselves free of an omniscient narrator's subjective observation (see Hills Like White Elephants: Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia, 2010: 3-4).

Stone, et. al (1976:13) states that the exact opposite of omniscient is the direct observer. In dealing with omniscient, the story teller can go everywhere, knows everything and comment when he chooses. in contrast, the direct observer " has no memory of the past, no understanding of the present; he is little more than a fly on the wall, recording the scene." Hills Like White Elephants deals with this type of point of view, i.e. direct observer. It shows that about seven-eighths of the story is enclosed within quotation marks. Actually, the dialogue of this story has justly admired for its power and realism [

3. 2 The Analysis of Hills Like White Elephants in Terms of Mental World

The story opens with a description of distant hills across a river in Spain. An American man and his girl friend sit outside a train station in the heat. No other details about their relationship are provided at the beginning of this story. They decide to order beer and the woman who works at the bar brings the drink to the table. The girl remarks that the distant hills look like white elephants, but the man discount her remark, just like in the following (Stone et. all (1976: 359):

- "They look like white elephants," she said.
- "I've never seen one," the man drank his beer.

In fact, white elephant is something which does not exist in real life. Terjo (2008:1) clarifies that "the phrase "Hills Like White Elephants" is symbolic of the pregnant Jig's belly." Thus, it seems that it is the girl's dream to have a baby, a family and a normal life. In Hills Like White Elephants: Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia (2010 :2) it is mentioned that the abortion is never made explicit in the text, but it is made clear through certain phrases of the dialogue such as:

- "It's just to let air in."
- "But I don't want anybody but you."

These phrases present context clues which reflect that Jig is pregnant and that the procedure in question is an abortion. It is clear that the American man does not want

to have a baby or a serious family life, such as in the following (Stone et. all (1976: 360):

- "It's really an awfully simple operation, Jig", the man said. "It's not really an operation at all."
- " I know you wouldn't mind, Jig. It' really not anything. It's just to let the air in."
- "I'll go with you and I'll stay with you all the time. They just let the air in and then it's all perfectly natural."

Within the framework of context in terms of Verschueren's mental world, the interpretation of the characters' conversation should be in relation to their states of mind. Verschueren (1999:66) affirms that without the functioning of both the utterer and interpreter minds, there will be no language use at all. Consequently, there is a need to focus on the American man's state of mind that make him decide to utter and repeat his statements concerning the operation or abortion. Then, the focus will be on Jig's state of mind with respect to such decision. To do so, it is important to consider the following properties and their propositions:

1. Aspect of his *personality*:

1.1 Is the American man a trust worthy lover?

In order to suggest that Jig should have abortion, then the American man has to be a person with considerable influence and authority. He can be her lover. Throughout the story, the American man repetition of the word ' perfectly' firms up that this man is a manipulator and not to be trusted. Stone et. all (1976:358) ,in his discussion concerning the American man, emphasizes that " his frequent repetition of the word 'perfectly' defines his insincerity." This can be clarified in the following (ibid: 360-361):

- "I'll go with you and I'll stay with you all the time. They just let the air in and then it's all perfectly natural."
- "well," the man said, "if you don't want to you don't have to. I wouldn't have you do it if you didn't want to. But I know it's perfectly simple."
- "I won't worry about that because it's perfectly simple."
- "Of course it does. But I don't want anybody but you. I don't want anyone else. And I know it's perfectly simple."

1.2 Does he lack the courage to face a new life (i.e. a family life)?

It seems that the American man is selfish. He abused Jig physically and emotionally. She wants to get the baby, but he does not want such a life. As if he lacks the courage to face a new life and to be responsible of a family. To avoid this impending responsibility, he attempts to manipulate Jig into having an abortion by presenting the operation as a simple procedure which will be the best for their relationship, just like what is mentioned above and also in the following (ibid:360) :

- "It's really an awfully a simple operation, Jig", the man said. "It's not really an operation at all."
- "We'll be fine afterwards. Just like we were before."

1.3 Is he trying to create a situation in which his own influence could increase?

Throughout the story, the American man is always rational. He takes control by taking the initiative to begin the conversation and ordering drinks. Whereas the girl is quite, distant and almost subservient on every issue except the pregnancy. She draws the comparison of the hills with white elephants, but hyper-rational male is trying to create a situation in which his own influence could increase. He immediately denies

her comparison, dissolving the bit of poetry into objective realism when he says "I've never seen one", such as in the following (ibid:359):

- The hills across the valley of the Ebro were long and white, the writer said.
- "They look like white elephants," she said.
- "I've never seen one," the man drank his beer.
- "No, you wouldn't have."
- "I might have," the man said. "Just because you say I wouldn't have doesn't prove anything."

2. Emotions:

2.1 Is the American man actually afraid that things (i.e., having a baby) will get out of hand?

It is apparent that after posing arguments to which the American man is unresponsive concerning having a baby, Jig, at the beginning, may assert to do the operation, giving the justification that is in the following (ibid:361)

- "I don't care about me."
 - "Well, I care about you."
 - Oh, yes. But I don't care about me. And I'll do it and everything will be fine."
- Even after this dialogue, the American man persists to convince her to have an operation . As if he is still unsure of her emotion and mental state. He is afraid that things may get out of his hand. He affirms the following (ibid:361):

- "Of course it does. But I don't want anybody but you. I don't want anyone else. And I know it's perfectly simple."
- " Yes, you know it's perfectly simple."

2.2 Is he, may be, inspired by his sympathy (or love) for Jig?

Actually, the American man is not caring about Jig. He is hypocritic. He is trying to convince her to terminate her pregnancy. He makes her puzzle between getting an abortion or keeping the baby. She attempts to show him her feelings concerning the baby when she says (ibid: 360-361):

- "I said the mountain looked like white elephants." "Wasn't that bright?"
- "And once they take it away, you never get it back."

In contrast, he ignores her feelings and wants to make her restrain herself from the emotional outburst of a woman in her situation would have so as to avoid the impending responsibility of having a baby. His response is unsympathetic with her feelings. In this concern, Timothy (2011:22) states that the man's response is predictable as it works against her connection with natural surroundings and even tries to deny her feelings. This can be seen especially when he says the following (Stone, et. all ,1976: 361):

- "Come on back in the shade," he said. "You mustn't feel that way."

2.3 Does he fear the possible consequences of Jig's baby may make him face more problem?

It is obvious that the American man fears to face the problems if he has a baby. As if an unborn child will be an approaching obstacle for his current life. He does not want to undertake such responsibility of being a father. In this case, he will lose his free life of fun, entertainment and travel. Then, he will be obliged to settle down and face a real life of being responsible of a family and all its needs. Thus, he wants to convince Jig to have abortion in order to go on in their previous free and happy life, such as follows (ibid:360):

- "Then what will we do afterwards?"

- "We'll be fine afterward. Just we were before."
- "That's the only thing that bother us. It's the only thing that's made us unhappy."

3. What are the *beliefs* involved?

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3.1 Does the American man truly believe that what he proposes is the best possible decision?

At the beginning of the story, the dialogue shows that there is certain conflict which emerges in the brief and sharp disagreement over who has and has not seen white elephants. After Jig compares hills to white elephants, the man refuses to participate in her imaginative discourse. He remarks that he has "never seen one." The man encounters her imaginative discourse with language of proofs and reason. He thinks that having abortion is truly the best possible decision because he believes that pregnancy makes them lose their happiness. Thus, he emphasizes for her the following (ibid:360):

- "I think it's the best thing to do."
- "That's the only thing that bother us. It's the only thing that's made us unhappy."

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3.2 Best for whom?

First of all, it is significant to see this decision is best for whom, i.e. for him or for Jig. When they began to drink the beer, Jig is looking off into the hills. This is a sign that she thinks of other things possibly the operation and also a new life with a child. She also mentions "look at things and try new drinks". As if she is dissatisfied with their life just together. She wants more from life, thinking about possible new life including a baby. Indifferently, the man emphasizes that "It's really an awfully a simple operation, Jig". It seems that he is trying to convince her to go through with abortion. As he says that the girl looks at the ground which the table legs rest on. As if her body language at that moment reflects that she is submissive to him and he dominates her physically and emotionally. He proceeds to say "I know you wouldn't mind, Jig. It's really not anything". The man is very pushy with his words. He is telling her how she should feel about it. Clearly, he is selfish and always thinks about what is the best for himself without respect to his partner's beliefs or opinions. This can be seen in the following (ibid):

- "I said the mountains looked like white elephants. Wasn't that bright?"
- "I want to try this new drinks. That's all we do, isn't it – look at things and try new drinks."
- The girl looked across at the hills.
- "They're lovely hills," she said.
- "Should we have another drink?"
- "It's really an awfully a simple operation, Jig", the man said. "It's not really an operation at all."
- The girl looked at the ground the table rested on.
- "I know you wouldn't mind, Jig. It's really not anything. It's just to let the air in."
- The girl did not say anything.

3.3 What does he think is going to happen if Jig doesn't have an abortion?

As it is mentioned previously, the American does not want Jig to go on in her pregnancy. He views the couple's unborn child as an approaching obstacle or a hindrance to his life of pleasure and irresponsibility. Thus, he believes that it is better to avoid this situation as soon as possible. He tries to manipulate Jig into having

abortion by presenting the operation as a simple one. Moreover, this operation will be a panacea for all things that are ailing her and also trouble their special relationship, such as in the following (ibid:360):

- "It's really an awfully a simple operation, Jig", the man said. "It's not really an operation at all".
- "I know you wouldn't mind it, Jig. It's really not anything. It's just let the air in."
- "We'll be fine afterwards. Just like we were before".

3.4 Does he think Jig really made a mistake that is a grave enough to ask her to have abortion?

To deal with this proposition, it is worth mentioning that the name "Jig" is symbolically significant. As can be noticed that her name is not given and this name is only her lover's name for her. First of all, it is a slang term for sexual intercourse. In addition, it can mean a sprightly Celtic dance or any several different kinds of tools, i.e. whisky, measure, wood working tools, etc. (Hornby, 1974:528). This can be seen in the following (Stone et. all ,1976: 360):

- "You started it," the girl said. "I was being amused. I was having a fine time."
- "Well, let's try to have a fine time."
- "We'll be fine afterword. Just we were before."

This implies that the American man views the women as just a loving object or tool for pleasure rather than considering her a person with feeling and values to be respected. Thus, he believes that having a baby is a mistake that is a grave enough to ask her to have abortion. Clearly, he is just ready to spend 'a fine time' with her, but he is not ready to have responsibility as a husband or a father for a family.

4.What *desires* and *wishes* are involved?

4.1 Does the American man want Jig to have abortion?

In this story, it is noteworthy that the setting is used in a way that can symbolize a great deal about the story. With respect to it, the contrast between fertility and sterility may mirror the tension between the girl's desire to have the baby and the man's 'sterile' wish to continue their relationship without it. Actually, the contrast within the natural setting reflects that the real tension between the girl's discourse and desires and the man's. This can be realized in the following description of the writer to the places that surround the station in which they are waiting for the train (ibid:359-361):

- The hills across the valley of the Ebro were long and white. On this side there was no shade and no trees and the station was between two lines of rails in the sun.
- The girl stood up and walked to the end of the station. Across, on the other side, were fields of grain and trees along the banks of the Ebro. Far away, beyond the river, were mountains. The shadow of a cloud moved across the field of grain and she saw the river through the trees.

4.2 How strong is the wish?

It can be assumed that Jig's dream is to have a baby and a family. This means that she wishes to settle down and she does not want to travel anymore. Contrarily, the American man apparently really wants this abortion. The bags with all the hotel labels on them are symbolic of his vivacious spirit. So, if the woman keeps on her pregnancy, he would have to settle down. This means that he should abandon his youth desires of seeing the world and getting pleasure, such as in the following (ibid:361)

- "I said we could have everything".
- "We can have the whole world".
- "We can go everywhere".

4.3 Is it a wish that has anything personal to him?

It is obvious that the American man wishes that he can get rid of this pregnancy because he is afraid of taking serious action in his free life of pleasure. Actually, Hemingway gives us the chance to find out also that this abortion is something personal for him, just like in the following (ibid:361):

- "I'm perfectly willing to go through with it if it means anything to you."

As if he wants to say that it does not mean anything to him. His personal desire is just to get pleasure and fine time with her and not to have a family life, such as in the following (ibid :360-361):

- "And if I do it you'll be happy and things will be like they were and you'll love me?"

- "We'll be fine afterward. Just like we were before."

- "But I don't want anybody but you. I don't want anyone else. And I know
It's perfectly simple."

4.4 Is it purely circumstantial?

Generally speaking, throughout the story Jig is distant while the American man is rational. He attempts to show that this pregnancy is the source of the couple's discount with life and one another. The tone and pattern of their dialogue indicate that there may be deeper problem with their relationship rather than purely circumstantial. They cannot trust and believe each other. This can be realized in the following (ibid:361-362):

- "Yes, you know it's perfectly simple."

- "It's all right for you to say that, but I do know it."

- "Would you do something for me know?"

- "I do anything for you."

- "Would you please please please please please please please stop talking?"

- "But I don't want you to," he said " I don't care anything about it".

- "I'll scream", said the girl.

5- Are there any specific *motivations or intentions*?

5.1 Is it the intention to save Jig?

The American man always tries to show Jig that he knows that the abortion is 'perfectly simple' or 'perfectly natural'. Contrarily, in his book "The Psychology Outcome of Induced Abortion", Ashton (1980)(cited in Prihala, 2004:2) affirms that abortions have extreme psychological effects on woman. He states that many woman suffer from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder or Post-Abortion Syndrome. A study on post- abortion patients declares that the researchers, only after 8 weeks after their abortions, found that 44% complained of nervous disorder, 36% had experienced sleep disorder, 31% had regretted about their decisions and 11% had seen prescribed psychotropic medicine by their family doctor. Consequently, the American man is a liar. It is not a simple or natural operation at all. He does not have the real intention to save Jig rather he has specific intention to be with her in flesh only ,i.e. just in terms of sexual relation, such as in the following (ibid:360-361):

- "It's really not anything. It's just let the air in."

- "They just let the air in and it's all perfectly natural."

- "I won't worry about that because it's perfectly simple."

- "We'll be fine afterward. Just like we were before."

5.2 To save their relationship?

With respect to the dialogue between the two characters, it seems that the American has the intention to persuade Jig to have abortion. He just want their

relationship to be for pleasure and fine time. He doesn't have the intention to have a legal relationship with her or to undertake the responsibility of being a husband for her baby. This can be seen in the following (ibid:360):

- "We'll be fine afterward. Just like we were before."
- "What makes you think so?"
- "That's the only thing that bother us. It's the only thing that's made us unhappy."
- The girl looked at the bead curtain, put her hand out and took hold of two of the strings of beads.
- "And you think then we'll be all right and be happy."

Immediately after he says that, "It's the only thing that made us unhappy, Jig takes two strings of beads from the curtain. This could mean that she is imagining a life with her and her child, instead of the life that she has been living alone with this man. So, it is clear that he has only one intention which is suitable for him despite of all the hints that are given by the girl to keep this baby and to have a real relationship of being a family.

5.3 To achieve personal gain?

Till the end of the story, the American man still confirms that he does not have the intention to give anything for this baby or being responsible for it. He is ready to continue his relationship with her just because she will have enough time for him and she can give him pleasure and happiness. He just has the intention to achieve his personal goals and desires. Thus, he tells her that he does not want anybody else and returns back to his repeated statement that 'it's perfectly simple', such as in the following:

- "Does it mean anything to you? We could get along."
- "But I don't want anybody but you. I don't want any one else. And I know it's perfectly simple"
- "Yes you know it's perfectly simple."
- "It's all right for you to say that, but I do know it."

After her long dialogue with him, she begins to realize that he just intends to achieve his personal aims and desires without respect to her desires and intentions. Thus, she becomes nerveous and asks him to stop talking because she is not ready to listen to more lies of him, such as follows (ibid:361-362):

- "Would you do something for me now?"
- "I do anything for you."
- " "Would you please please please please please please please stop talking?"
- "But I don't want you to," he said " I don't care anything about it".
- "I'll scream", said the girl.
- "But I don't want you to," he said, "I don't care anything about it."
- "I'll scream", said the girl.

It is important to mention that the end of this story reveals significant points concerning the consequences of the story. At the end of the story, the American man says (ibid):

- "Do you feel better?" he asked.

He tries to persuade her that her disturbances and unease are due to her pregnancy as if it is illness and she should recover from it. But, at this moment, she begins to realize all his plans to get rid of her baby not to save her life of pleasure, travel and irresponsibility. She affirms the following (ibid):

- "I feel fine," she said. "There's nothing wrong with me. I feel fine."

She wants to clarify that she is fine and her pregnancy will not cause anything wrong for her. Jig attempts to present her rejection for her lover's values and tries to protect her identity from his point of view concerning having abortion. So this point summarizes the American's and the girl's mental views or states of mind concerning their situation and what they intend to do with respect to it.

Conclusion

The use of context in terms of Verschueren's mental world in the analysis and interpretation of Hemingway's Hills Like White Elephants presents certain important and considerable conclusions. First, this context has a significant role in creating meaning that helps in recognizing what the character or the writer intended to mean in his utterances. It introduces knowledge concerning the world of the story that a text is used to refer to as it is known by the characters. It helps in matching between the characters' internal mental states and their external behavior. Actually, they achieve a great influence on the literary work understanding, comprehension and interpretations.

Second, Verschueren's mental world presents the actual situation of the characters. It has creative skills that can reflect the characters' behaviors, beliefs, wishes, emotions, intentions and attitudes towards each other. It shows that they have to face a decision that can ruin their relationship due to their different interpretation to the dilemma of pregnancy. The mental states of the girl reflect that she is confused between her emotions or her deliberate assurance for her love for the American man through having abortion and her wishes or intentions to have a child and a family life. On the contrary, the mental states of the American man reveal that his emotions, beliefs, wishes and intentions insist on getting rid of this child due to the conflict between responsibility and hedonism. Consequently, the mental world shows the complexity in the characters' relationship which is corrupted by selfishness.

Finally, the researcher believes that using context in terms of Verschueren's mental, social and physical worlds will provide insightful and creative means that can be usefully used in analyzing a literary work. In addition, these means can achieve adequate and significant results.

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