Comparison of Authentic and Simplified Texts

A case study of *Wuthering Heights*

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Abstract

The aim of this essay is to explore in what way Graded Readers are different from authentic texts against the background of English as a Second Language (ESL) and the use of authentic and simplified text in ESL teaching. The material used for this purpose is the authentic text of *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Brontë and two upper-intermediate Graded Readers from two different publishers. The study uses the software *readability-score* and manual analysis to examine the texts with regards to lexical choice, language structure and story. The study showed that the Graded Readers are simplified in all aspects studied. Moreover, the Graded Readers differ from each other as well, most notably in the style of the text due to sentence structure and story simplification. This could imply that different authors of Graded Readers adopt different styles when simplifying text and that the grading levels are not comparable between different publishers.

*Keywords*: ESL teaching, Graded Readers, Extensive reading, Language learning, Simplified text.
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1 Introduction

Reading is widely acknowledged to be beneficial for language acquisition and English as a second language (ESL) learning. However, when it comes to what to read and how to read, opinions differ. This essay will look at different types of text, namely authentic and graded versions of the novel *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Brontë, and compare the lexical choice, sentence structure and story. The following definition will be used when referring to authentic text: “a stretch of real language, produced by a real speaker or writer for a real audience and designed to convey a real message of some sort” (Morrow, 1977, as cited in Gilmore, 2007, p. 98). This includes not only novels but restaurant menus, timetables, tickets, etc. in short, everything written that is produced to share a message. Authentic texts can be simplified, i.e. rewritten to become easier, in several ways and for different purposes, and one of the purposes of simplifying a text is to use that text to help teach the language. Using Morrow’s definition, a text produced for teaching the language it is written in would not be classified as an authentic text, since the main purpose is not the message but rather the language learning.

Graded Readers are texts that are constructed exclusively for language learning purposes. They are defined as “books written for learners of English using limited lexis and syntax, the former determined by frequency and usefulness and the latter by simplicity” (Hill, 2008, p. 185). The grading of the language is carried out according to levels in a grading scheme with increasing difficulty with regards to lexis, syntax, length and format (Hill, 2008, p. 185). Therefore, the Graded Readers can be seen as a language learning tool which allows the learner to pick adequately challenging books and, with growing proficiency, advance through the levels which increase in difficulty and continue to pose a suitable challenge and therefore support learning.

In the field of ESL research there are different opinions regarding the use of authentic texts and graded texts. Those who are against Graded Readers, for example Honeyfield
argue
d that simplified texts risk becoming bland due to the use of high frequency vocabulary and may lack cohesion since sentences are broken up (pp. 434-5). This line of reasoning finds less support in more recent research. The techniques for writing Graded Readers have been refined since the 1980s and, according to Hill (2008), they now read well (p. 185). Although Graded Readers are not authentic text they can nevertheless give an authentic reading experience and prepare for subsequent reading of authentic texts (Claridge, 2005, p. 157). This essay will shed some light on the different uses of texts for ESL learning and the process of simplification of text, as reported in previous research, and specifically study simplification by comparison of authentic and graded text. Furthermore, it aims to determine in what way Graded Readers are different from authentic text by use of Wuthering Heights as a specific example.

1.1 Aim
This essay aims to study text samples of an authentic text, Wuthering Heights, and two simplified versions of the same text in the form of Graded Readers. The purpose is to compare the texts with regards to the lexical choice, sentence structure and story, therefore the following research questions are posed:

- What are the linguistic differences between the authentic text and the Graded Readers?
  - In what way has the language been simplified with regard to lexical choice?
  - In what way has the sentence structure been simplified?
  - In what way has the story been simplified or abridged?

- Are there linguistic differences between the two Graded Reader versions of Wuthering Heights from the different publishers, and, if so, what are they?
2 Background

This section will define different types of reading and give an overview of research regarding the use of authentic and graded texts in ESL learning and teaching. Following that, there is a short description of different approaches to the way authentic text is simplified to achieve different levels of difficulty and an introduction to how comprehension and ease of reading can be measured.

2.1 Different Types of Reading

In order to evaluate and discuss the value of reading and the use of authentic and graded text it is important to distinguish between the approaches to and purpose of two different types of reading, namely intensive and extensive.

2.1.1 Intensive reading

Intensive reading is when learners use a text to study the language. This is a part of every language class and can be done using authentic texts or graded texts such as course books and/or Graded Readers. The learners read the text and pay attention to language features and look for new vocabulary (Waring, 2011, p. 3). This is typically done with shorter texts paired with different tasks and the teacher may use an authentic text and grade the task accordingly to meet the level of the students instead of using the course book. Another option is to use simplified texts from a teaching resource website, such as onestopenglish.com, which has simplified texts paired with graded tasks. A third option is to use Graded Readers where the text itself is graded and additional teacher’s resources, such as crosswords, quizzes, etc., are available from the publisher. The focus of all three is on learning vocabulary and grammar rather than the reading experience.
2.1.2 Extensive reading

Extensive reading for ESL learners means reading large amounts of text with the purpose of understanding the content and enjoying the experience, which can be compared with a native speaker reading for leisure. To be able to do this, the text must not contain more than a couple of unknown words per page, otherwise the learner will start studying the text instead of reading for comprehension. Waring (2011) summarises this as R.E.A.D., stating that learners should “Read quickly and Enjoyably with Adequate comprehension so they Don’t need a dictionary” (p. 3). Thus, the choice of text and its level is more crucial for extensive reading compared to intensive reading. The texts for extensive reading must be comprehensible for the student, which means that authentic texts are often not suitable for this purpose, since they risk being too difficult for learners of English and prevent them from an extensive reading of the text. Hill (2008) describes extensive reading as “feeding [language] into the non-conscious memory system of the brain and reinforcing the language knowledge acquired through direct learning” (p. 197). This means that ESL learners can learn and consolidate vocabulary and grammar by reading large quantities of easily comprehensible text.

2.2 Use of Authentic and Simplified Text in an ESL Context

Several studies have been done comparing authentic texts and ESL learning course books with a favourable outcome for the authentic text. These are mainly studies that propose the use of a text as a vehicle to learn the language or a springboard for different exercises and would therefore fall under Waring’s (2011) definition of intensive reading, i.e. using a text to study the language (p. 3). Fernàndez de Caleyà Dalmau, Bobkina and Sao Martes (2012) believe that a piece of literature can be used holistically for working with language features as well as a source for discussions about the historical setting, characterisation and style. Thus, a creative process can begin which motivates the students and enhances their learning of
English. (pp. 218, 220-1, 235). In addition, Lazar (1990) points out that an authentic text is aimed at native speakers and represents the real world, therefore, the use of novels gives the learners a real sense of achievement. The text should be challenging but not overwhelmingly so and different activities can be done in class to support the reading and aid understanding, for example pre-teaching of vocabulary or summarising chapters (pp. 204-6, 210-1). These studies are in agreement with Honeyfield’s (1977) position that learners can be challenged by a more difficult text because they can decode more advanced language than they can produce. Furthermore, Honeyfield believes that the sooner the ESL learner can work with authentic material, the better. Focus can then be given to practising techniques for decoding unknown vocabulary using context and making deductions in syntactic, semantic, rhetorical and factual ways (pp. 137-8, 435, 440). In this way, the authentic text provides the basis for studying the language and a challenging text provides examples of syntax and lexis that can be studied and learned through intensive reading.

Although many learners feel motivated by authentic material paired with tasks and prefer it to the ESL course book, the use of authentic texts for English teaching is not widespread. This can partly be because research findings are not reaching the teachers and/or the teachers do not have sufficient time to find authentic material suitable for their students or design appropriate tasks to complement it with (Gilmore, 2007, p. 112). Also, the publishers are hesitant to develop new material not knowing if the international market will receive it well (Gilmore, 2011, p. 811). This indicates that, in reality, finding and crafting authentic teaching material for ESL learners is not always plausible for the teacher, which can be why teachers continue to rely on the course book despite research showing that students benefit from authentic material.

When choosing material and planning for a reading activity it is important to consider what kind of reading is intended, that is, intensive or extensive. The studies mentioned above
which show the motivational benefits of authentic texts all refer to intensive reading. On the other hand, if the purpose of the activity is extensive reading, authentic texts may be too difficult for the majority of ESL learners and thereby turn extensive reading into language studying, i.e. intensive reading. Bearing in mind Waring’s (2011) definition of extensive reading as enjoyable, fast reading for comprehension, the level of difficulty of the text is crucial (p. 3). Therefore, the Graded Readers are a useful material where it is easy to find the right level of text, since they are produced as part of an educational programme built on the idea of extensive reading (Waring, 2011, p. 5; Allen, 2009, p. 586). So while intensive reading can make use of authentic texts, for extensive reading Graded Readers may be more suitable.

As well as providing material for extensive reading, Graded Readers can also be used as an alternative to the course book for intensive reading. Both the Penguin Readers and Oxford Bookworms provide a wide range of language learning material to complement the readers. Some of these are included in the reader itself and a wider range can be downloaded from their websites. Combining the reading of Graded Readers with exercises must be done sensibly and with a clear purpose. Such material may jeopardise the interest in reading and thereby prevent the reading from becoming extensive and is therefore more suitable for intensive reading (Hill, 2008, p.196). By contrast, Gareis, Allard and Saindon (2009) propose the use of authentic texts as a complement to the course book for extensive reading, although they acknowledge the difficulty finding material with an appropriate level for ESL learners. According to Krashen (1989) and Nation (2001) (as reported by Gareis et al. 2009, p. 137), the texts would need to contain no more than four to five unknown words, that are essential for the understanding, per page. To find an authentic text with such a number of unknown

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2 Learning material provided by the publishers: www.penguinreaders.com/teachers-main.html and https://elt.oup.com/teachersclub
words per page would pose a problem for many learners. Gareis et al. (2009) also advocate the use of authentic text as a springboard for practising different language skills, such as speaking, reading, writing and listening as well as working with grammar and lexis. The theme of the book would provide background for tasks practising the skills covered in the curriculum and in this way replace the course book (pp. 139-45). With this approach, the activity would cease to be extensive reading and become intensive reading, since the focus would be the form of the language and its features rather than a comprehensive and enjoyable reading experience. This also shows the importance of having a clear goal when setting up the reading activity and choosing the material.

In older research, reading is more often thought of as a way of studying the language and there are indications that Graded Readers were not as readable then as they are now. Honeyfield (1977) not only argues for authentic texts but also strongly against simplified and graded texts, claiming that simplified texts could potentially be ambiguous and therefore difficult to comprehend (pp. 434-5). However, Honeyfield is challenged by more recent research such as Crossley, Allen and McNamara (2012), who found that simplified texts were easier to comprehend by learners and therefore proved useful as ESL learning material. The disadvantage of less specific words and therefore more potentially inaccurate words was seen as playing a less important role for comprehension, where the advantages of familiar words outweigh the potential confusion that could be caused (pp. 14-15, 17). Honeyfield (1977) further held the idea that simplified texts contain artificial language and therefore do not prepare the students for reading authentic text. He also stated that the methods of simplifying texts for Graded Readers were outdated and needed to be modernised (p. 431). Later research, for example by Hill (2008), who strongly advocates the use of Graded Readers, points out that the methods for producing them have been refined since the 1980s and most Graded Readers offer a good reading experience. Furthermore, Graded Readers should not be seen as an
‘insult’ to the original text but rather as an alternative version with a specific purpose, comparable with theatre scripts which are authentic texts adapted for the stage (pp. 185-6). Waring (2011) points out that the popularity of extensive reading is a by-product of the understanding of the importance of actively using the language in communication, in addition to studying vocabulary and grammar, and that this movement took place in the 1980s and 1990s (p. 2-3). From this, the conclusion may be drawn that the quality of Graded Readers has improved and the newer readers function better than in the 1970s when Honeyfield conducted his research.

Several studies show the benefits of extensive reading over time. Pellicer-Sanches and Schmitt (2010), Waring and Takaki (2003) and Nation (1997) all reported a positive effect on learning new vocabulary through long term extensive reading. For this to happen, though, the reader needs to encounter the word repeatedly and it is essential that the learner reads vast quantities of text over a long period of time. Nation (1997) recommends one book per week on the 1000-word level and two books per week on the 2000-word level, in order to encounter the words frequently enough to consolidate the knowledge. Waring and Takaki (2003) point out that if the learner does not encounter the new words enough times, the word will soon fall out of memory. This is the benefit of the Graded Readers, since they provide text specially designed to use a limited vocabulary (pp. 153-5). Thereby, the learner encounters and consolidates the vocabulary level by level.

Extensive reading is often seen as optional, although studies have shown it beneficial for ESL learning. Waring (2011) strongly suggests that it should be part of every language curriculum, in addition to traditional course work, due to its positive effect on language consolidation (p. 13). In addition, Yamashita (2013) and Ying Lao and Krashen (2013) reported positive motivational effects from substituting traditional language teaching with extensive reading (p. 256-8; 2000, 267-8). Developing a positive attitude towards reading
could create a beneficial trend leading to more reading and increased learning. However, Yamashita acknowledges that previous research shows that a positive attitude towards reading does not necessarily equal a lot of reading (Crawford-Camiciottoli, 2001, as reported in Yamashita, 2013, p. 258). Having said that, there are studies, for example by Mason and Krashen (1997), which show that extensive reading can inspire students with little or no study motivation and lead to significant knowledge gains (pp. 100-1). This shows that motivation is an acknowledged factor that contributes to learning, although what students do in their spare time is another matter which further supports the idea of including extensive reading in the curriculum.

2.3 Different Approaches to Simplifying Text

There are two main approaches for simplifying authentic texts: structural and intuitive (Allen, 2009, p. 586). The structural approach is based on a grading scheme and this is what the Graded Readers are based on. The scheme regulates the lexical and grammatical level and makes it possible to grade the difficulty of the text so the learners can advance from level to level. The publishers provide their writers with word lists and a set of grammar rules for each level: beginner and 1-6. Oxford University Press, who publish the Oxford Bookworms, provide an overview of the guidelines which can be downloaded for registered users\(^3\). Pearson Longman, who publish the Penguin Readers, offer a brief description of their grading scheme which can be viewed online\(^4\). The intuitive approach, on the other hand, relies on the writers’ personal and professional experience for the simplification of the text (Allen, 2009, pp. 586, 590). These writers, who are experienced English teachers and/or material writers, follow intuition and although the text is simplified to three different levels, elementary, intermediate

\(^3\) Oxford University Press’ guidelines for simplification: https://elt.oup.com/teachers/bookworms/introductions/obw_00_cc_languagesyllabus.pdf?cc=gb&selLanguage=en&mode=hub

and advanced, the levels as such become less homogeneous than the Graded Readers, since the simplification is a product of every author’s own intuition rather than a fixed scheme (Allen, 2009, pp. 587, 595; Crossley, Allen, & McNamara, 2012, p. 17). For intuitively simplified texts, Crossley et al. found that although the elementary and advanced texts were distinct in level, the intermediate texts shared features with both elementary and advanced (Crossley, Allen & McNamara, 2012, p. 16). This means that, due to lack of an external framework or fixed scheme for simplification, the intuitively simplified texts fluctuate in level between elementary and intermediate and between intermediate and advanced. The authors responsible for creating these materials work according to the rule “grade the task, not the text” when intuitively simplifying the authentic news text and pairing them with tasks for the three levels of difficulty (Bowen, 2007 as cited in Allen, 2009, p. 587). This means that the texts are not simplified more than necessary, since easier tasks can compensate for a more difficult text and in this way the learner can be challenged by a more difficult text as proposed by Honeyfield (1977, p. 435). Also, these texts are purpose-made for intensive reading activities and, therefore, more challenging texts can be used compared to extensive reading, which requires easily readable texts to provide a quick and enjoyable reading experience (Waring, 2011, p. 3). Therefore, the different approaches can be seen as producing texts geared towards different types of reading: the structural approach creates graded material which makes it easy for the learner to choose an adequate text for extensive reading, while the intuitive approach creates texts along with tasks which provide useful material for intensive reading.

The intuitively and the structurally simplified texts show great differences in the number of levels and how they are categorised. For the intuitively simplified text, Allen (2009) reported a minimal difference between the advanced and the authentic texts, with only a few changes in lexical choice. He stated that the advanced texts contained the authentic
features of a news text, while the intermediate and elementary texts formed an artificial genre described as “simplified news texts” (p. 587). These intuitively simplified texts have not been simplified more than necessary, instead the tasks have been graded to compensate for a more difficult text to meet the levels elementary, intermediate and advanced (Bowen, 2007, as reported in Allen, 2009, p. 587). By comparison, the Graded Readers scheme have seven levels, where the highest contains 3,000 headwords for the Penguin Readers and 2,500 headwords for the Oxford Bookworms. According to Hill (2008), this still leaves a gap to the level of an authentic text (p. 195). Therefore, it is necessary for advanced ESL learners to use authentic text to bridge the gap from the highest level of Graded Readers and the vocabulary needed to reach proficiency in English (Nation, 2006 as reported in Pellicer-Sanches & Schmitt, 2010, pp. 31-2). This shows that although the Graded Readers are a useful tool for language learning, especially with regards to consolidating language through extensive reading, it will, with increasing language skills, be natural to transfer to authentic text. So, while the Graded Readers are more defined in their grades of simplification, they leave a greater gap to authentic texts compared to these samples of intuitively simplified text.

Apart from the intuitive and structural approach, there are different elements to the simplification. A text can be simplified linguistically, where vocabulary and language structure are simplified, and by content, where the story is either rewritten completely or abridged (Honeyfield, 1977, p. 433; Waring, 2003). Both structurally and intuitively simplified texts include these elements but in different ways. With regards to content simplification, a Graded Reader is abridged to a great extent and the complexity of the story is simplified to create a more comprehensive novel by, for example, leaving out subplots.

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5 A headword is a word that forms a head word in a dictionary under which its meaning is described, for example, go, happy and book. The different forms of the word, for example, went and gone, belong to the headword go (Oxford Bookworms syllabus) https://elt.oup.com/teachers/bookworms/introductions/obw_00_cc_languagesyllabus.pdf?cc=gb&selLanguage=en&mode=hub
Intuitively simplified texts, such as the news articles from onestopenglish.com mentioned above, are only slightly simplified with regards to content and in some cases the simplified article can be longer due to the author’s use of circumlocution to explain something (Allen, 2009, pp. 593). This means that Graded Readers are shorter than the authentic text while simplified news texts are roughly the same length.

Indications have been found that the type of simplification used is more important than the level. Twessi (1998) studied the comprehensibility of simplified texts and concluded that ESL learners did comprehend simplified text better than authentic text. However, lexical simplification contributes to comprehension to a greater extent than syntactic simplification and a text does not necessarily become easier to understand the more simplified it is (p. 200-1). Gardner and Hansen (2007) compared authentic texts with the simplified versions and found that all learners regarded the simplified texts as easier to understand than the authentic text (p. 37). The texts they used were simplified by scanning for low frequency words and replacing them with high frequency words according to the following methods: lexical modification, slight structural change, and circumlocution. The lexical change was only made when it made sense to do so, if none of these methods seemed to improve comprehension the word was left unchanged (Gardner & Hansen, 2007, pp. 32-5). These studies indicate that lexical simplification contributes to the ease of reading and that learners comprehend lexically simplified text better than authentic text.

2.4 Readability

Readability can be defined as the “ease of understanding or comprehension due to the style of writing” (Klare, 1963, p. 1). There are several formulae that calculate readability, this study uses the software Readability-score which produces a readability score based on several different formulae calculated in similar ways: the Flesch-Kincaid grade level (Flesch, 1981),
the Coleman-Liau Index (Coleman & Liau, 1975, p. 283) and the Automated Readability Index (Senter & Smith, 1967, p. 5) are all based on the number of syllables per word and the number of words per sentence. The Gunning-Fog Score (Seely, 2013, p. 121) and the Smog Index (McLaughlin, 1969, p. 639), are based on the number of complex words and the number of words per sentence. Readability-score produces an average score from these formulae. This score, as with each formula, corresponds to a school year in the US system and refers to the expected reading ability of someone in that year. When writing for the general public, Readability-score suggest to aim for a score of 8. In this study, readability is used as the basis for comparison between the authentic and the graded texts.

3 Material
The material for this study is the novel Wuthering Heights by Emily Brontë. This material proved suitable for several reasons. Firstly, it is considered an English classic. Secondly, it is very popular, which can be seen in the various editions available in print despite the material being out of copyright and therefore available for free in digital format. Thirdly, the story is complex: Jones (2004) mentions dual narrations, past and present setting, and dreams as different aspects of the narration. In addition, the style of the language is sometimes poetic, for example in descriptions, and some characters are depicted using Yorkshire dialect (pp. 101-5). Therefore, I believe this novel provides an interesting authentic text for the study. Lastly, Graded Readers of Wuthering Heights are available for the same level from two different publishers, which makes it possible to compare not only the authentic text with the Graded Readers, but also to compare them with each other. However, due to the scope of this study and the lack of access to digital formats of the Graded Readers, only the first two

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8 http://readability-score.com
chapters of the authentic text will be studied, along with the equivalent material from the Graded Readers.

3.1 An Introduction to the Primary Sources

3.1.1 The authentic text of Wuthering Heights

The authentic text of Wuthering Heights, the 1910 John Murray edition as found in the Gutenberg project, contains 119,576 words. The chapters do not have titles and there are no time indications apart from the year 1801 for chapter I and the year 1802 for chapter XXXII, which is the time-setting of the frame story while the main part of the story is set in the past. This edition contains no introduction.

3.1.2 Wuthering Heights from Penguin Readers

The Penguin Readers edition corresponds to level 5 according to Pearson Longmans’ grading scheme, which contains 2,300 headwords. It is labelled upper-intermediate and is marked B2 in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. This edition is simplified and written by Evelyn Attwood and contains a total of 46,304 words. The story is divided into 6 parts with descriptive titles, a time-setting and information about the narrator. In addition, the chapters have titles. Chapters I and II, which are the part of the text this study is concerned with, are called “A rough welcome” and “Even less welcome”. There is an introduction which contains three parts: introduction of the story, of the author and her family and the reception of the authentic novel when first published. There are nine pages with activities in the back of the book and a wordlist containing 30 words from the text.

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9 It is a database which provide digital copies of novels and short stories which are out of copyright. It is run by volunteers and texts are available free of charge. See https://www.gutenberg.org/ for more information.
11 Note that the grade refers to the publisher’s grading system and does not refer to the readability score of the text.
3.1.3 Wuthering Heights from Oxford Bookworms

The Oxford Bookworms\textsuperscript{12} edition also corresponds to level 5 according to the Oxford University Press grading scheme\textsuperscript{13}, which contains 1,800 headwords. It is labelled upper-intermediate and marked B2 in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. This edition is simplified and written by Clare West and contains 23,180 words. It contains an introduction about the protagonists’ complicated relationship. A list of the cast of characters is provided, divided into two parts due to the two different time-settings in the novel. The chapters are labelled with the year and a descriptive title. Chapter I, which is called “Mr Lockwood visits Wuthering Heights”, covers the same content as the two first chapters in the authentic text and the Penguin Readers edition. Therefore, for ease of referencing, the content of this chapter will be referred to as chapter I for pages 1-2 and chapter II for pages 3-5 throughout the study. In the back of the Oxford Bookworms reader there are eight pages with activities to do before, during and after reading. There is an introduction about Emily Brontë and a word list containing 44 words from the text. In addition, this reader contains illustrations.

4 Method

This study consists of a quantitative and a qualitative part. For the quantitative part, software was used to determine and compare readability levels between the text samples of the authentic and graded texts, both for the total sample and for chapter I and II separately. This includes comparison of readability score, the number of words in total per sample and the number of words per sentence. This was done using the free version of the software available from \textit{readability-score.com}. For this purpose, the digital file of the authentic text was downloaded from the Gutenberg project and the Graded Readers from Penguin Readers and


\textsuperscript{13} Note that the grade refers to the publisher’s grading system and does not refer to the readability score of the text.
Oxford Bookworms were manually copied from their paperback editions. For the qualitative part of the study, three sets of excerpts which are representative of the chapters were chosen. They were compared and analysed manually to illustrate and explain the differences and similarities indicated by the software analysis. The manual analysis concerns the lexical choice, language structure and simplification of the story, comparing the two Graded Readers with the authentic text and with each other.

5 Results

The results from the quantitative and qualitative study show that the authentic text of Wuthering Heights and the Graded Readers differ from each other in all three aspects studied: lexis, sentence structure and story.

When looking at the language used in the authentic and graded texts, it might be expected that the authentic text of Wuthering Heights would contain more low frequency words and a more complex sentence structure compared to the Graded Readers and therefore gain a higher readability score. However, when the texts are processed by the software Readability-score, the results are a bit more complex than that. As can be seen in Table 1, the average readability score for chapter I and II of the authentic text is 8.7, which is slightly above 8.0, the recommended level when writing for the general public. Furthermore, analysing the chapters individually shows a difference in readability-score between the chapters: 10.7 for chapter I and 7.7 for chapter II. This is a considerable difference which means that chapter I is more difficult than chapter II and this difference is comparable with three years of education.
Table 1: Readability scores for the excerpts of the three texts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Authentic text</th>
<th>Penguin Readers</th>
<th>Oxford Bookworms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I &amp; II</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Regarding the Graded Readers, as seen in Table 1, the readability scores reflect the same patterns as the authentic text. Chapter I has a higher readability score than chapter II for both Graded Readers, but the difference between the chapters’ readability is less distinct than for the authentic text. Comparing the two readers, the difference between the chapters is greater in the Penguin Readers edition than in the Oxford Bookworms edition. The readability scores for the Penguin Readers edition show above six for chapter I and exactly five for chapter II, while the Oxford Bookworms edition is slightly above five for chapter I and slightly below five for chapter II. This indicates that the Penguin Readers edition follows the structure of the authentic text more closely than the Oxford Bookworms edition.

Further quantitative analysis of the language includes looking explicitly at the language structure. As seen in Table 2, chapter I of the authentic text has longer sentences with an average of 21.1 words per sentence, compared to chapter II with 15.2. This indicates that the chapters have different styles. The Penguin Readers edition follows the same pattern but the difference between the chapters is smaller: 13.6 for chapter I, compared to 11.4 for chapter II. However, for the Oxford Bookworms edition, chapters I and II are almost the same, 9.9 and 9.8 words per sentence. This shows that it does not follow the style of the authentic text with regards to sentence structure, which in turn could explain the small difference between the readability scores of the chapters. Overall, the Penguin Readers edition
has a higher number of words per sentence than the Oxford Bookworms edition which could explain its higher readability score.

Table 2: Words per sentence across text

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Authentic text</th>
<th>Penguin Readers</th>
<th>Oxford Bookworms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I &amp; II</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The last part of the quantitative study regards the story simplification. As seen in Table 3, the word count of the text samples shows that chapter II is longer than chapter I, in the authentic text as well as in both Graded Readers. Both Graded Readers are abridged, but the text sample from the Oxford Bookworms edition is significantly shorter than that from the Penguin Reader edition, 1,409 words compared to 2,274. The Penguin Reader edition has been abridged to less than half the number of words compared to the original, while the Oxford Bookworms edition has been reduced to nearly a fourth. This indicates that the story has been simplified to a higher extent in the Oxford Bookworms edition than in the Penguin Readers edition.

Table 3: Word count comparison across texts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Authentic text</th>
<th>Penguin Readers</th>
<th>Oxford Bookworms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>1,962</td>
<td>884</td>
<td>557</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>3,428</td>
<td>1,390</td>
<td>832</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I &amp; II</td>
<td>5,390</td>
<td>2,274</td>
<td>1,409</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results of the quantitative study show differences between the two Graded Readers in readability score, sentence length and number of words per chapter. This indicates
that the simplification of the authentic text has been carried out in different ways and the results of the qualitative study will look further into what considerations have been made with regards to lexis, sentence structure and story by studying specific samples.

The qualitative study shows that chapter I, to a large extent, contains descriptive text. The excerpts shown in Table 4 are examples from the authentic version of Wuthering Heights and the two Graded Readers, which show that the Graded Readers have different ways of simplifying the authentic text, with regards to lexical choice, sentence structure and story:

**Table 4: Excerpts from chapter I of the authentic text and the Grader Readers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Wuthering’ being a significant provincial adjective, descriptive of the atmospheric tumult to which its station is exposed in stormy weather.</td>
<td>“Wuthering” is a local word, used to describe the wildness of the weather in this part of Yorkshire in time of storm.</td>
<td>The name means “windswept house on a hill”, and it is a very good description.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Firstly, with regards to lexis, as can be seen in Table 4, the authentic text uses many words to explain the name of Mr Heathcliff’s house. The word wuthering is defined using low frequency words such as provincial and atmospheric tumult. The Penguin Readers edition has exchanged provincial for local and atmospheric tumult for wildness, replacing the low frequency words with high frequency words. The Oxford Bookworms edition has rewritten the sentence and offers a summary of the meaning of the name of the house rather than the adjective wuthering, and states that the description is good, rather than describing the origin of the adjective, as in the authentic text and the Penguin Readers edition.

Secondly, the sentence structure in the Penguin Readers edition follows the same pattern as the authentic text, one main clause followed by a dependent sub-clause set off with a comma. The Oxford Bookworms edition chooses a simpler construction joining two independent clauses with the conjunction and, creating a compound sentence. This indicates that the Penguin Readers edition is closer to the authentic text.
Lastly, with regards to the story, this excerpt shows that the Penguin Readers edition follows the style of the authentic text closely, making lexical changes when needed but keeping the sentence structure of the authentic text while the Oxford Bookworms edition has a more summarising and explanatory way of writing and, in addition, simplifies the story more than the Penguin Readers edition.

Table 5 shows another example of descriptive text from chapter I. This excerpt from the authentic text reflects the low frequency words and long sentences contributing to the higher readability score. The sentence is composed of one main clause followed by four subclauses, and four different types of punctuation are used: colon, semicolon, comma and full stop. This is an example of the poetic formulations which are frequent in the descriptions.

Table 5: Excerpts from chapter I of the authentic text and the Graded Readers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>He is a dark-skinned gipsy in aspect, in dress and manners a gentleman: that is, as much a</td>
<td>He is a dark-skinned gipsy in appearance, but in manners and dress a gentleman: that is, as much</td>
<td>Mr Heathcliff certainly does not look like a farmer. His hair and skin are dark, like a gipsy’s, but he has the manners of a gentleman. He could perhaps take more care with his appearance, but he is handsome.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gentleman as many a country squire: rather slovenly, perhaps, yet not looking amiss with</td>
<td>a gentleman as many country landowners – rather careless of his dress, perhaps, but upright and</td>
<td>I think he is proud, and also unhappy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>his negligence, because he has an erect and handsome figure; and rather morose.</td>
<td>good-looking. His expression is rather severe and unsmiling.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Firstly, with regards to lexical choice, as seen in Table 5, the Penguin Readers edition has exchanged the low frequency words for high frequency words, for example, *squire* for *landowner* and *erect* for *upright*. The Oxford Bookworms edition has chosen other head words: *squire* is exchanged for *farmer* and *erect* for *proud*. This could be explained by the fact that the Penguin Readers edition has a larger number of headwords for the level compared to Oxford Bookworms edition, 2,300 compared to 1,800, but without actually seeing the word lists it is impossible to say.
Secondly, the Penguin Readers edition keeps a similar sentence structure to the authentic text, keeping the full variation of punctuation: colon, semicolon, comma and full stop. The information is kept close to the original but divided into two sentences where *and rather morose* is explained in its own sentence: *His expression is rather severe and unsmiling.* Here, the Oxford Bookworms edition shows a significant difference since the long sentence in the authentic texts has been divided into four shorter sentences. Furthermore, the sentences are constructed with only commas and full stops.

Lastly, while the Penguin Readers edition has kept the information largely the same as the original, the Oxford Bookworms edition has included a personal opinion: *He could perhaps take more care with his appearance,* which replaces the authentic text’s description of Mr Heathcliff as *slovenly.* This is a simplification further from the original than the Penguin Readers edition, which replaced the word *slovenly* with *rather careless of his dress.* In addition, the last sentence the Oxford Bookworms edition gives the narrator’s opinion why he looks *morose* rather than exchanging the adjective: *I think he is proud, and also unhappy.* Again, the Penguin Readers edition is closer to the authentic text, exchanging *morose* for *[h]is expression is rather severe and unsmiling,* which explains the adjective with a descriptive sentence. In sum, this set of samples show that the Penguin Readers edition’s simplification is closer to the authentic text in style, with its lengthy descriptions and complex sentence structure, while the Oxford Bookworms edition has shorter and less complex sentences. In addition, the Oxford Bookworms edition also include the narrator’s personal opinions which are not apparent in the authentic text.

Table 6 is an example of dialogue from chapter II of the authentic text and the Graded Readers. The excerpts show different lexical considerations and a shorter sentence structure compared to chapter I, which contributes to its lower readability score.
Table 6: Excerpts from chapter II of the authentic text and the Graded Readers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authentic text, chapter II</th>
<th>Penguin Readers edition, p. 6</th>
<th>Oxford Bookworms edition, p. 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘Are you going to mak’ the tea?’ demanded he of the shabby coat, shifting his ferocious gaze from me to the young lady. ‘Is he to have any?’ she asked, appealing to Heathcliff. ‘Get it ready, will you?’ was the answer, uttered so savagely that I started.</td>
<td>‘Are you going to make the tea?’ asked the young man, looking at the lady. ‘Is he to have any?’ she asked, turning to Heathcliff. ‘Get it ready, will you?’ was the answer, so fiercely spoken that I moved in surprise.</td>
<td>‘Get the tea ready, will you?’ he added fiercely to the young woman. I was shocked by his unpleasantness.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Firstly, in this example, lexical simplifications have been made with regards to the non-standard *mak’*, which has been replaced by the standard vocabulary *make* in the Penguin Readers edition. Another consideration is the metaphorical description, *the shabby coat*, which is replaced with *the young man*. In addition, *shifting his ferocious gaze* has been replaced by *looking at*, which makes the remark lose its hostility. The Oxford Bookworms edition has omitted this passage completely. Both readers have exchanged *savagely* for *fiercely* in the last passage. Secondly, with regards to sentence structure, it is notable that the Penguin Readers edition has kept the structure of the authentic text completely while the Oxford Bookworms edition only kept the order given by Mr Heathcliff followed by the narrator’s description of his reactions to Mr Heathcliff’s behaviour. This, in turn, is formulated in two shorter sentences rather than one as in the authentic text.

Lastly, the excerpts in Table 6 show a smaller degree of story simplification in the Penguin Readers edition than the Oxford Bookworms edition. The Penguin Readers edition has left out the description of the way the young man looks at the young lady, which is explicitly described as *ferocious* in the authentic text. The Oxford Bookworms edition has left out parts of the conversation completely and also simplified the latter part by adding *to the young woman* to clearly state the receiver in the conversation. In general, some passages have
been left out completely in the readers, some of what is left out contribute to the details of the authentic story but removing them makes the story easier to follow, since the focus remains with the main characters. Bearing in mind that the Oxford Bookworms edition has a lower word count, it is expected that it is abridged to a greater extent than the Penguin Readers edition. The main difference between the authentic text and the Penguin Readers edition is with regards to lexical choice, where simplifications have been made according to the grade, while the Oxford Bookworms edition shows greater differences with regards to sentence structure and story.

In short, the Penguin Readers edition mirrors the style of the authentic text, which is reflected in the readability scores and the word count per sentence, chapter I scores higher than chapter II, for both the authentic text and the Penguin Readers edition. However, as mentioned above, the Oxford Bookworms edition’s readability scores are nearly identical for chapters I and II, 9.8 and 9.9 respectively. This is explained by the similarity of style between the chapters. As seen in the excerpts, the Oxford Bookworms edition is summarising the information and presenting it in shorter sentences and a simpler sentence structure compared to the Penguin Readers edition. This, in turn, explains the lower number of words per chapter and the overall lower readability scores.

6 Conclusion
This study has identified linguistic differences between the authentic text of Wuthering Heights and the Graded Readers with regards to all three aspects studied: lexical choice, sentence structure and story.

Firstly, lexical simplification has been carried out in both Graded Readers, whereby low frequency words and non-standard words have been exchanged for high frequency words. The Penguin Readers edition employs substitution to a greater extent than the Oxford
Bookworms edition, which also rephrases and omits passages. Occasionally, the readers use different high frequency words, but without access to the publisher’s word lists, it is not possible to determine if the larger number of headwords in the Penguin Readers’ grading scheme allows for more possibilities than the Oxford Bookworms’.

Secondly, with regards to sentence structure, the Penguin Readers edition largely keeps the structure of the authentic text, which has longer sentences in the more descriptive chapter I and shorter sentences in chapter II, which contains more dialogue. There are smaller changes to simplify the overall structure and readability but the full variation of punctuation is kept. The Oxford Bookworms edition has simplified the language structure to a greater extent, using a simpler sentence structure with mainly commas and full stops and fewer sub-clauses. The most notable simplification is that the Oxford Bookworms edition employs a different style of writing, the authentic text is often rephrased and the story summarised. Therefore, the Penguin Readers edition’s text is very much in keeping with the authentic style of writing while the Oxford Bookworms summarises the events.

Lastly, the Graded Readers are, in general, shorter than the authentic text and therefore the story is simplified, for example, passages of less importance are left out in order to provide a less complex story. Comparing the simplification of the story in the readers, it seems that the Penguin Readers edition has been abridged, sub-plots and less important parts are left out but the overall style remains the same. The Oxford Bookworms edition, on the other hand, is largely a re-write of the authentic text; not only have sub-plots been left out but descriptive parts have been exchanged for explanations and part of the dialogue has been replaced by summaries. The result is two quite different readers which cannot be explained by the grading scheme.

These results show two very different simplifications of the authentic text and this poses the question whether this is due to the authors’ personal writing style or a product of
guidelines that are not public. Within the scope of this study, it is not possible to further explore this. However, a comparison of several Graded Readers, both by these authors and others could give some clarity. Furthermore, it would be interesting to interview the authors about their work and, by this, gain further knowledge about the method of structural simplification and whether there is an intuitive element to structural simplification. If different authors produce Graded Readers that are different in style, this would mean that the learner can choose which style they prefer, just as a native speaker can choose a book not only for the content but for the style of writing as well.

The difference between the Graded Readers, with regards to lexical choice, sentence structure and story simplification also raises the question of how comparable the grades are between the different publishing companies. Both Graded Readers are labelled as level 5, upper-intermediate and B2, however the results of this study not only report differences in readability score but also different ways of executing lexical, syntactical and story simplification. Therefore, it would be interesting to investigate this further, for example by asking upper-intermediate ESL learners to read the two readers and surveying their reading experience, their perception of the readability and whether they found one reader more enjoyable to read than the other.
References


Appendix I:

Analysis of chapter I and II of the Authentic Text, by readability-score.com

Analysis of reading ease:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Readability formula</th>
<th>Chapter I</th>
<th>Chapter II</th>
<th>Chapter I &amp; II</th>
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<td>7.8</td>
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Text statistics:

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<th>Chapter II</th>
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<tr>
<td>Word count</td>
<td>1,962</td>
<td>3,428</td>
<td>5,392</td>
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<td>21.1</td>
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Retrieved 2016-03-17
Appendix II

Analysis of chapter I and II of the Penguin Readers Edition by readability-score.com

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<th>Chapter I &amp; II</th>
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<td>3.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average Grade Level</td>
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Retrieved 2016-03-17
Appendix III

Analysis of chapter I and II of the Oxford Bookworms Edition by readability-score.com

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<td>3.1</td>
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<td>2.6</td>
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<td>Average Grade Level</td>
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Text statistics:

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<th>Chapter II</th>
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<td>9.8</td>
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</table>

Retrieved 2016-03-17
Appendix IV

Chapter I and II of the Authentic Text of *Wuthering Heights*

Retrieved from the Gutenberg project, www.gutenberg.com 2016-03-17

CHAPTER I

1801.--I have just returned from a visit to my landlord—the solitary neighbour that I shall be troubled with. This is certainly a beautiful country! In all England, I do not believe that I could have fixed on a situation so completely removed from the stir of society. A perfect misanthropist's heaven: and Mr. Heathcliff and I are such a suitable pair to divide the desolation between us. A capital fellow! He little imagined how my heart warmed towards him when I beheld his black eyes withdraw so suspiciously under their brows, as I rode up, and when his fingers sheltered themselves, with a jealous resolution, still further in his waistcoat, as I announced my name.

'Mr. Heathcliff?' I said.

A nod was the answer.

'Mr. Lockwood, your new tenant, sir. I do myself the honour of calling as soon as possible after my arrival, to express the hope that I have not inconvenienced you by my perseverance in soliciting the occupation of Thrushcross Grange: I heard yesterday you had had some thoughts—'

'Thrushcross Grange is my own, sir,' he interrupted, wincing. 'I should not allow any one to inconvenience me, if I could hinder it—walk in!'

The 'walk in' was uttered with closed teeth, and expressed the sentiment, 'Go to the Deuce:' even the gate over which he leant manifested no sympathising movement to the words; and I think that circumstance determined me to accept the invitation: I felt interested in a man who seemed more exaggeratedly reserved than myself.

When he saw my horse's breast fairly pushing the barrier, he did put out his hand to unchain it, and then sullenly preceded me up the causeway, calling, as we entered the court,—'Joseph, take Mr. Lockwood's horse; and bring up some wine.'

'Here we have the whole establishment of domestics, I suppose,' was the reflection suggested by this compound order. 'No wonder the grass grows up between the flags, and cattle are the only hedge-cutters.'

Joseph was an elderly, nay, an old man: very old, perhaps, though hale and sinewy. 'The Lord help us!' he soliloquised in an undertone of peevish displeasure, while relieving me of my horse: looking, meantime, in my face so sourly that I charitably conjectured he must have need of
divine aid to digest his dinner, and his pious ejaculation had no reference to my unexpected advent.

Wuthering Heights is the name of Mr. Heathcliff's dwelling. 'Wuthering' being a significant provincial adjective, descriptive of the atmospheric tumult to which its station is exposed in stormy weather. Pure, bracing ventilation they must have up there at all times, indeed: one may guess the power of the north wind blowing over the edge, by the excessive slant of a few stunted firs at the end of the house; and by a range of gaunt thorns all stretching their limbs one way, as if craving alms of the sun. Happily, the architect had foresight to build it strong: the narrow windows are deeply set in the wall, and the corners defended with large jutting stones.

Before passing the threshold, I paused to admire a quantity of grotesque carving lavished over the front, and especially about the principal door; above which, among a wilderness of crumbling griffins and shameless little boys, I detected the date '1500,' and the name 'Hareton Earnshaw.' I would have made a few comments, and requested a short history of the place from the surly owner; but his attitude at the door appeared to demand my speedy entrance, or complete departure, and I had no desire to aggravate his impatience previous to inspecting the penetralium.

One stop brought us into the family sitting-room, without any introductory lobby or passage: they call it here 'the house' pre-eminently. It includes kitchen and parlour, generally; but I believe at Wuthering Heights the kitchen is forced to retreat altogether into another quarter: at least I distinguished a chatter of tongues, and a clatter of culinary utensils, deep within; and I observed no signs of roasting, boiling, or baking, about the huge fireplace; nor any glitter of copper saucepans and tin cullenders on the walls. One end, indeed, reflected splendidly both light and heat from ranks of immense pewter dishes, interspersed with silver jugs and tankards, towering row after row, on a vast oak dresser, to the very roof. The latter had never been under-drawn: its entire anatomy lay bare to an inquiring eye, except where a frame of wood laden with oatcakes and clusters of legs of beef, mutton, and ham, concealed it. Above the chimney were sundry villainous old guns, and a couple of horse-pistols: and, by way of ornament, three gaudily-painted canisters disposed along its ledge. The floor was of smooth, white stone; the chairs, high-backed, primitive structures, painted green: one or two heavy black ones lurking in the shade. In an arch under the dresser reposed a huge, liver-coloured bitch pointer, surrounded by a swarm of squealing puppies; and other dogs haunted other recesses.

The apartment and furniture would have been nothing extraordinary as belonging to a homely, northern farmer, with a stubborn countenance, and stalwart limbs set out to advantage in knee-breeches and gaiters. Such an individual seated in his arm-chair, his mug of ale frothing on the round table before him, is to be seen in any circuit of five or six miles
among these hills, if you go at the right time after dinner. But Mr. Heathcliff forms a singular contrast to his abode and style of living. He is a dark-skinned gipsy in aspect, in dress and manners a gentleman: that is, as much a gentleman as many a country squire: rather slovenly, perhaps, yet not looking amiss with his negligence, because he has an erect and handsome figure; and rather morose. Possibly, some people might suspect him of a degree of under-bred pride; I have a sympathetic chord within that tells me it is nothing of the sort: I know, by instinct, his reserve springs from an aversion to showy displays of feeling—to manifestations of mutual kindliness. He'll love and hate equally under cover, and esteem it a species of impertinence to be loved or hated again. No, I'm running on too fast: I bestow my own attributes over-liberally on him. Mr. Heathcliff may have entirely dissimilar reasons for keeping his hand out of the way when he meets a would-be acquaintance, to those which actuate me. Let me hope my constitution is almost peculiar: my dear mother used to say I should never have a comfortable home; and only last summer I proved myself perfectly unworthy of one.

While enjoying a month of fine weather at the sea-coast, I was thrown into the company of a most fascinating creature: a real goddess in my eyes, as long as she took no notice of me. 'I never told my love' vocally; still, if looks have language, the merest idiot might have guessed I was over head and ears: she understood me at last, and looked a return—the sweetest of all imaginable looks. And what did I do? I confess it with shame—the sweetest of all imaginable looks. And what did I do? I shrunk icily into myself, like a snail; at every glance retired colder and farther; till finally the poor innocent was led to doubt her own senses, and, overwhelmed with confusion at her supposed mistake, persuaded her mamma to decamp. By this curious turn of disposition I have gained the reputation of deliberate heartlessness; how undeserved, I alone can appreciate.

Joseph mumbled indistinctly in the depths of the cellar, but gave no intimation of ascending; so his master dived down to him, leaving me _vis-a-vis_ the ruffianly bitch and a pair of grim shaggy sheep-dogs, who shared with her a jealous guardianship over all my movements. Not anxious to come in contact with their fangs, I sat still; but, imagining they would scarcely understand tacit insults, I unfortunately indulged in winking and making faces at the trio, and some turn of my physiognomy.
so irritated madam, that she suddenly broke into a fury and leapt on my knees. I flung her back, and hastened to interpose the table between us. This proceeding aroused the whole hive: half-a-dozen four-footed fiends, of various sizes and ages, issued from hidden dens to the common centre. I felt my heels and coat-laps peculiar subjects of assault; and parrying off the larger combatants as effectually as I could with the poker, I was constrained to demand, aloud, assistance from some of the household in re-establishing peace.

Mr. Heathcliff and his man climbed the cellar steps with vexatious phlegm: I don't think they moved one second faster than usual, though the hearth was an absolute tempest of worrying and yelping. Happily, an inhabitant of the kitchen made more despatch: a lusty dame, with tucked-up gown, bare arms, and fire-flushed cheeks, rushed into the midst of us flourishing a frying-pan: and used that weapon, and her tongue, to such purpose, that the storm subsided magically, and she only remained, heaving like a sea after a high wind, when her master entered on the scene.

'What the devil is the matter?' he asked, eyeing me in a manner that I could ill endure, after this inhospitable treatment.

'What the devil, indeed!' I muttered. 'The herd of possessed swine could have had no worse spirits in them than those animals of yours, sir. You might as well leave a stranger with a brood of tigers!'

'They won't meddle with persons who touch nothing,' he remarked, putting the bottle before me, and restoring the displaced table. 'The dogs do right to be vigilant. Take a glass of wine?'

'No, thank you.'

'Not bitten, are you?'

'If I had been, I would have set my signet on the biter.' Heathcliff's countenance relaxed into a grin.

'Come, come,' he said, 'you are flurried, Mr. Lockwood. Here, take a little wine. Guests are so exceedingly rare in this house that I and my dogs, I am willing to own, hardly know how to receive them. Your health, sir?'

I bowed and returned the pledge; beginning to perceive that it would be foolish to sit sulking for the misbehaviour of a pack of curs; besides, I felt loth to yield the fellow further amusement at my expense; since his humour took that turn. He--probably swayed by prudential consideration of the folly of offending a good tenant--relaxed a little in the laconic style of chipping off his pronouns and auxiliary verbs, and introduced what he supposed would be a subject of interest to me,--a discourse on the advantages and disadvantages of my present place of retirement. I
found him very intelligent on the topics we touched; and before I went home, I was encouraged so far as to volunteer another visit to-morrow. He evidently wished no repetition of my intrusion. I shall go, notwithstanding. It is astonishing how sociable I feel myself compared with him.

CHAPTER II

Yesterday afternoon set in misty and cold. I had half a mind to spend it by my study fire, instead of wading through heath and mud to Wuthering Heights. On coming up from dinner, however, (N.B.--I dine between twelve and one o'clock; the housekeeper, a matronly lady, taken as a fixture along with the house, could not, or would not, comprehend my request that I might be served at five)--on mounting the stairs with this lazy intention, and stepping into the room, I saw a servant-girl on her knees surrounded by brushes and coal-scuttles, and raising an infernal dust as she extinguished the flames with heaps of cinders. This spectacle drove me back immediately; I took my hat, and, after a four-miles' walk, arrived at Heathcliff's garden-gate just in time to escape the first feathery flakes of a snow-shower.

On that bleak hill-top the earth was hard with a black frost, and the air made me shiver through every limb. Being unable to remove the chain, I jumped over, and, running up the flagged causeway bordered with straggling gooseberry-bushes, knocked vainly for admittance, till my knuckles tingled and the dogs howled.

'Wretched inmates!' I ejaculated, mentally, 'you deserve perpetual isolation from your species for your churlish inhospitality. At least, I would not keep my doors barred in the day-time. I don't care--I will get in!' So resolved, I grasped the latch and shook it vehemently. Vinegar-faced Joseph projected his head from a round window of the barn.

'What are ye for?' he shouted. 'T' maister's down i' t' fowld. Go round by th' end o' t' laith, if ye went to spake to him.'

'Is there nobody inside to open the door?' I hallooed, responsively.

'There's nobbut t' missis; and shoo'll not oppen 't an ye mak' yer flasome dins till neeght.'

'Why? Cannot you tell her whom I am, eh, Joseph?'

'Nor-ne me! I'll hae no hend wi't,' muttered the head, vanishing.

The snow began to drive thickly. I seized the handle to essay another trial; when a young man without coat, and shouldering a pitchfork, appeared in the yard behind. He hailed me to follow him, and, after marching through a wash-house, and a paved area containing a coal-shed,
pump, and pigeon-cot, we at length arrived in the huge, warm, cheerful apartment where I was formerly received. It glowed delightfully in the radiance of an immense fire, compounded of coal, peat, and wood; and near the table, laid for a plentiful evening meal, I was pleased to observe the 'missis,' an individual whose existence I had never previously suspected. I bowed and waited, thinking she would bid me take a seat. She looked at me, leaning back in her chair, and remained motionless and mute.

'Rough weather!' I remarked. 'I'm afraid, Mrs. Heathcliff, the door must bear the consequence of your servants' leisure attendance: I had hard work to make them hear me.'

She never opened her mouth. I stared--she stared also: at any rate, she kept her eyes on me in a cool, regardless manner, exceedingly embarrassing and disagreeable.

'Sit down,' said the young man, gruffly. 'He'll be in soon.'

I obeyed; and hemmed, and called the villain Juno, who deigned, at this second interview, to move the extreme tip of her tail, in token of owning my acquaintance.

'A beautiful animal!' I commenced again. 'Do you intend parting with the little ones, madam?'

'They are not mine,' said the amiable hostess, more repellingly than Heathcliff himself could have replied.

'Ah, your favourites are among these?' I continued, turning to an obscure cushion full of something like cats.

'A strange choice of favourites!' she observed scornfully.

Unluckily, it was a heap of dead rabbits. I hemmed once more, and drew closer to the hearth, repeating my comment on the wildness of the evening.

'You should not have come out,' she said, rising and reaching from the chimney-piece two of the painted canisters.

Her position before was sheltered from the light; now, I had a distinct view of her whole figure and countenance. She was slender, and apparently scarcely past girlhood: an admirable form, and the most exquisite little face that I have ever had the pleasure of beholding; small features, very fair; flaxen ringlets, or rather golden, hanging loose on her delicate neck; and eyes, had they been agreeable in expression, that would have been irresistible: fortunately for my susceptible heart, the only sentiment they evinced hovered between scorn and a kind of desperation, singularly unnatural to be detected there. The
canisters were almost out of her reach; I made a motion to aid her; she
turned upon me as a miser might turn if any one attempted to assist him
in counting his gold.

'I don't want your help,' she snapped; 'I can get them for myself.'

'I beg your pardon!' I hastened to reply.

'Were you asked to tea?' she demanded, tying an apron over her
neat black
frock, and standing with a spoonful of the leaf poised over the pot.

'I shall be glad to have a cup,' I answered.

'Were you asked?' she repeated.

'No,' I said, half smiling. 'You are the proper person to ask me.'

She flung the tea back, spoon and all, and resumed her chair in a pet;
her forehead corrugated, and her red under-lip pushed out, like a child's
ready to cry.

Meanwhile, the young man had slung on to his person a decidedly shabby
upper garment, and, erecting himself before the blaze, looked down on me
from the corner of his eyes, for all the world as if there were some
mortal feud unavenged between us. I began to doubt whether he were a
servant or not: his dress and speech were both rude, entirely devoid of
the superiority observable in Mr. and Mrs. Heathcliff; his thick brown
curls were rough and uncultivated, his whiskers encroached bearishly over
his cheeks, and his hands were embrowned like those of a common labourer:
still his bearing was free, almost haughty, and he showed none of a
domestic's assiduity in attending on the lady of the house. In the
absence of clear proofs of his condition, I deemed it best to abstain
from noticing his curious conduct; and, five minutes afterwards, the
entrance of Heathcliff relieved me, in some measure, from my
uncomfortable state.

'You see, sir, I am come, according to promise!' I exclaimed, assuming
the cheerful; 'and I fear I shall be weather-bound for half an hour, if
you can afford me shelter during that space.'

'Half an hour?' he said, shaking the white flakes from his clothes; 'I
wonder you should select the thick of a snow-storm to ramble about in. Do
you know that you run a risk of being lost in the marshes? People
familiar with these moors often miss their road on such evenings; and I
can tell you there is no chance of a change at present.'

'Perhaps I can get a guide among your lads, and he might stay at the
Grange till morning--could you spare me one?'

'No, I could not.'
'Oh, indeed! Well, then, I must trust to my own sagacity.'

'Umph!'

'Are you going to mak' the tea?' demanded he of the shabby coat, shifting his ferocious gaze from me to the young lady.

'Is _he_ to have any?' she asked, appealing to Heathcliff.

'Get it ready, will you?' was the answer, uttered so savagely that I started. The tone in which the words were said revealed a genuine bad nature. I no longer felt inclined to call Heathcliff a capital fellow. When the preparations were finished, he invited me with--'Now, sir, bring forward your chair.' And we all, including the rustic youth, drew round the table: an austere silence prevailing while we discussed our meal.

I thought, if I had caused the cloud, it was my duty to make an effort to dispel it. They could not every day sit so grim and taciturn; and it was impossible, however ill-tempered they might be, that the universal scowl they wore was their every-day countenance.

'It is strange,' I began, in the interval of swallowing one cup of tea and receiving another--'it is strange how custom can mould our tastes and ideas: many could not imagine the existence of happiness in a life of such complete exile from the world as you spend, Mr. Heathcliff; yet, I'll venture to say, that, surrounded by your family, and with your amiable lady as the presiding genius over your home and heart--'

'My amiable lady!' he interrupted, with an almost diabolical sneer on his face. 'Where is she--my amiable lady?'

'Mrs. Heathcliff, your wife, I mean.'

'Well, yes--oh, you would intimate that her spirit has taken the post of ministering angel, and guards the fortunes of Wuthering Heights, even when her body is gone. Is that it?'

Perceiving myself in a blunder, I attempted to correct it. I might have seen there was too great a disparity between the ages of the parties to make it likely that they were man and wife. One was about forty: a period of mental vigour at which men seldom cherish the delusion of being married for love by girls: that dream is reserved for the solace of our declining years. The other did not look seventeen.

Then it flashed upon me--'The clown at my elbow, who is drinking his tea out of a basin and eating his bread with unwashed hands, may be her husband: Heathcliff junior, of course. Here is the consequence of being buried alive: she has thrown herself away upon that boor from sheer ignorance that better individuals existed! A sad pity--I must beware how
I cause her to regret her choice.' The last reflection may seem conceited; it was not. My neighbour struck me as bordering on repulsive; I knew, through experience, that I was tolerably attractive.

'Mrs. Heathcliff is my daughter-in-law,' said Heathcliff, corroborating my surmise. He turned, as he spoke, a peculiar look in her direction: a look of hatred; unless he has a most perverse set of facial muscles that will not, like those of other people, interpret the language of his soul.

'Ah, certainly--I see now: you are the favoured possessor of the beneficent fairy,' I remarked, turning to my neighbour.

This was worse than before: the youth grew crimson, and clenched his fist, with every appearance of a meditated assault. But he seemed to recollect himself presently, and smothered the storm in a brutal curse, muttered on my behalf: which, however, I took care not to notice.

'Unhappy in your conjectures, sir,' observed my host; 'we neither of us have the privilege of owning your good fairy; her mate is dead. I said she was my daughter-in-law: therefore, she must have married my son.'

'And this young man is--'

'Not my son, assuredly.'

Heathcliff smiled again, as if it were rather too bold a jest to attribute the paternity of that bear to him.

'My name is Hareton Earnshaw,' growled the other; 'and I'd counsel you to respect it!'

'I've shown no disrespect,' was my reply, laughing internally at the dignity with which he announced himself.

He fixed his eye on me longer than I cared to return the stare, for fear I might be tempted either to box his ears or render my hilarity audible. I began to feel unmistakably out of place in that pleasant family circle. The dismal spiritual atmosphere overcame, and more than neutralised, the glowing physical comforts round me; and I resolved to be cautious how I ventured under those rafters a third time.

The business of eating being concluded, and no one uttering a word of sociable conversation, I approached a window to examine the weather. A sorrowful sight I saw: dark night coming down prematurely, and sky and hills mingled in one bitter whirl of wind and suffocating snow.

'I don't think it possible for me to get home now without a guide,' I could not help exclaiming. 'The roads will be buried already; and, if they were bare, I could scarcely distinguish a foot in advance.'
'Hareton, drive those dozen sheep into the barn porch. They'll be covered if left in the fold all night: and put a plank before them,' said Heathcliff.

'How must I do?' I continued, with rising irritation.

There was no reply to my question; and on looking round I saw only Joseph bringing in a pail of porridge for the dogs, and Mrs. Heathcliff leaning over the fire, diverting herself with burning a bundle of matches which had fallen from the chimney-piece as she restored the tea-canister to its place. The former, when he had deposited his burden, took a critical survey of the room, and in cracked tones grated out—'Aw wonder how yah can faishion to stand thear i' idleness un war, when all on 'ems goan out! Bud yah're a nowt, and it's no use talking—yah'll niver mend o'yer ill ways, but goa raight to t' divil, like yer mother afore ye!'

I imagined, for a moment, that this piece of eloquence was addressed to me; and, sufficiently enraged, stepped towards the aged rascal with an intention of kicking him out of the door. Mrs. Heathcliff, however, checked me by her answer.

'You scandalous old hypocrite!' she replied. 'Are you not afraid of being carried away bodily, whenever you mention the devil's name? I warn you to refrain from provoking me, or I'll ask your abduction as a special favour! Stop! look here, Joseph,' she continued, taking a long, dark book from a shelf; 'I'll show you how far I've progressed in the Black Art: I shall soon be competent to make a clear house of it. The red cow didn't die by chance; and your rheumatism can hardly be reckoned among providential visitations!'

'Oh, wicked, wicked!' gasped the elder; 'may the Lord deliver us from evil!'

'No, reprobate! you are a castaway—be off, or I'll hurt you seriously! I'll have you all modelled in wax and clay! and the first who passes the limits I fix shall—I'll not say what he shall be done to—but, you'll see! Go, I'm looking at you!'

The little witch put a mock malignity into her beautiful eyes, and Joseph, trembling with sincere horror, hurried out, praying, and ejaculating 'wicked' as he went. I thought her conduct must be prompted by a species of dreary fun; and, now that we were alone, I endeavoured to interest her in my distress.

'Mrs. Heathcliff,' I said earnestly, 'you must excuse me for troubling you. I presume, because, with that face, I'm sure you cannot help being good-hearted. Do point out some landmarks by which I may know my way home: I have no more idea how to get there than you would have how to get to London!'
'Take the road you came,' she answered, ensconcing herself in a chair, with a candle, and the long book open before her. 'It is brief advice, but as sound as I can give.'

'Then, if you hear of me being discovered dead in a bog or a pit full of snow, your conscience won't whisper that it is partly your fault?'

'How so? I cannot escort you. They wouldn't let me go to the end of the garden wall.'

'_You_! I should be sorry to ask you to cross the threshold, for my convenience, on such a night,' I cried. 'I want you to tell me my way, not to _show_ it: or else to persuade Mr. Heathcliff to give me a guide.'

'Who? There is himself, Earnshaw, Zillah, Joseph and I. Which would you have?'

'Are there no boys at the farm?'

'No; those are all.'

'Then, it follows that I am compelled to stay.'

'That you may settle with your host. I have nothing to do with it.'

'I hope it will be a lesson to you to make no more rash journeys on these hills,' cried Heathcliff's stern voice from the kitchen entrance. 'As to staying here, I don't keep accommodations for visitors: you must share a bed with Hareton or Joseph, if you do.'

'I can sleep on a chair in this room,' I replied.

'No, no! A stranger is a stranger, be he rich or poor: it will not suit me to permit any one the range of the place while I am off guard!' said the unmannerly wretch.

With this insult my patience was at an end. I uttered an expression of disgust, and pushed past him into the yard, running against Earnshaw in my haste. It was so dark that I could not see the means of exit; and, as I wandered round, I heard another specimen of their civil behaviour amongst each other. At first the young man appeared about to befriend me.

'I'll go with him as far as the park,' he said.

'You'll go with him to hell!' exclaimed his master, or whatever relation he bore. 'And who is to look after the horses, eh?'

'A man's life is of more consequence than one evening's neglect of the horses: somebody must go,' murmured Mrs. Heathcliff, more kindly than I
expected.

'Not at your command!' retorted Hareton. 'If you set store on him, you'd better be quiet.'

'Then I hope his ghost will haunt you; and I hope Mr. Heathcliff will never get another tenant till the Grange is a ruin,' she answered, sharply.

'Hearken, hearken, shoo's cursing on 'em!' muttered Joseph, towards whom I had been steering.

He sat within earshot, milking the cows by the light of a lantern, which I seized unceremoniously, and, calling out that I would send it back on the morrow, rushed to the nearest postern.

'Maister, maister, he's staling t' lanthern!' shouted the ancient, chasing after my retreat. 'Hey, Gnasher! Hey, dog! Hey Wolf, holld him, holld him!'

On opening the little door, two hairy monsters flew at my throat, bearing me down, and extinguishing the light; while a mingled guffaw from Heathcliff and Hareton put the copestone on my rage and humiliation. Fortunately, the beasts seemed more bent on stretching their paws, and yawning, and flourishing their tails, than devouring me alive; but they would suffer no resurrection, and I was forced to lie till their malignant masters pleased to deliver me: then, hatless and trembling with wrath, I ordered the miscreants to let me out--on their peril to keep me one minute longer--with several incoherent threats of retaliation that, in their indefinite depth of virulence, smacked of King Lear.

The vehemence of my agitation brought on a copious bleeding at the nose, and still Heathcliff laughed, and still I scolded. I don't know what would have concluded the scene, had there not been one person at hand rather more rational than myself, and more benevolent than my entertainer. This was Zillah, the stout housewife; who at length issued forth to inquire into the nature of the uproar. She thought that some of them had been laying violent hands on me; and, not daring to attack her master, she turned her vocal artillery against the younger scoundrel.

'Well, Mr. Earnshaw,' she cried, 'I wonder what you'll have agait next? Are we going to murder folk on our very door-stones? I see this house will never do for me--look at t' poor lad, he's fair choking! Wisht, wisht; you mun'n't go on so. Come in, and I'll cure that: there now, hold ye still.'

With these words she suddenly splashed a pint of icy water down my neck, and pulled me into the kitchen. Mr. Heathcliff followed, his accidental merriment expiring quickly in his habitual moroseness.
I was sick exceedingly, and dizzy, and faint; and thus compelled perforce to accept lodgings under his roof. He told Zillah to give me a glass of brandy, and then passed on to the inner room; while she consoled with me on my sorry predicament, and having obeyed his orders, whereby I was somewhat revived, ushered me to bed.