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Dear Readers and Contributors,

We are happy the way this issue has shaped up. The English Literature has a host of articles researching various facets, provides the English Literature students, scholars and learners browse with wide eyed wonder. Just reading the host of titles is thrilling; imagine the storehouse of information and author's perspective would add to it. In English Language Teaching, we have writings which explore newer angles in chartered areas on one hand and on the other we have assertive ideas on 'Learner Autonomy' which is the order of the day. The section English & Communication Skills has various writings on various methods to enhance English and simultaneously hone the skills required. The English creative section has five poems, continuing the effect of the special poetry issue released in May 2014 and also hinting at the exclusive short story issue that is coming up soon.

The authors are also very strongly encouraged to write down their thoughts, along with referenced research papers, pertinent to these three prominent areas, necessarily original.

Happy Reading!

Dr. Mrudula Lakkaraju
Founding Editor

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The Amalgamation

Dr. Abhishek Kosta

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About 'twenty creative souls' have embarked the cultural city,
With an ardent desire to exhibit lovely art which look so pretty

Artists from the distant and divergent regions came,
Endeavoured and eager to exhibit their arts for the fame

They came from every nook and corner of their nation,
To pour and present their perfect hues with 'Amalgamation'

Fortunate were the lovers who got each desire fills,
For the stretch of their imagination and discuss artist's skills.

Flowers, shrubs, birds and animals on their canvas drawn,
Depicting the lovely moments, they caught, some of dawn.

Caught in the wings of imagination perhaps they were true to nature,
Oh! Viewers became curious to know how perfectly they wove our culture.

Is this the cultural set of mind were we struggling to find!
Well! They tell us lot more when we look with open mind!!

Their art would be admired; so long the human souls would breadth on earth,
Jabalpur, no doubt, would feel proud and remember for their display of mirth.

Nascent Allergen

S. A. Harish Rajaraman

I

Of a dizzied feel, of deeming 'delay' as gestation
 Of sticking out in the plasma of life,
 Of umbilical thumb-rule in the naval,

Of the ebb and flow within the web of womb,
 Of a miraculous thoracic palpitanacy
 Of how I cannot cardiogram it ,

Of flower whispering a plop sound,
 Of the plant's stem and bud's rhizomes
 Of my limpid eyes' surface tension,-

How may I word my initial cry?

2

Super ordinate flower, labor of aeons, ,
 Time despairs to trek back ! I come
 By stars, from the nebulous to a now,

What a conversion from cell to hell
 Of this world, anima mundi
 By an itch? *Cocoethes scribendi!*

Malpractice. A millionth to be tendered
 To the Compleat Angler-Ovum, let me compete!
 Unborn poem, me a poor prima grvida!

So neonatal on Siva's Night , awake on a break?

Darling Daughters!!!

Dr. Rachna Rastogi

Daughters are pearls and prized possession of parents,
Silent angels! Caring, concerned and compassionate;
Abounding with emotions, filled with passion,

Adored with divine aroma,

Bunch of gaiety,

Bundle of joviality!

When she came to life! In the cradle of joy,
Affection and warmth expressed through toys;

That lovely moment after lot of mammoth,

Showered loveliness around!

Growing day by day,

Walking singing dancing and chirping! Twittering in my doorway;
Swinging like creepers of wild rose, adorning home with beautiful spring ray.

Charming creation of God's precision!

Sheen of moon and jasmine carried in fusion.

Giving perennial bounce to life,

But why cruelty crushed innocence!

Do they have no fear and compassion!

Why despair and desolation, drowning our daughters!

Why darling daughters are doomed to dejection!

Let not go! any daughter cry and killed for any impulsive thrive;
Daughter be the arch-angel of life, may they prosper and perceive pride.

Citizen

Dr. Rizwana Banu

Happiness knew no bounds,
I came to inhabit my destiny;
Eyes peering, Hands cuddling, Feet eagerly racing,
To catch a closer glimpse of my birth.
I grew in the midst of unconditional love,
Fulfilling and satisfying my extended identity;
My family – Dreams and aspirations heaped dearly,
I began to search for myself, figuring out an image in full delight.
Then, struck the invisible wheel of time in full glare!
Replacing crude weapons of yore – lances and swords,
It started raining modern pieces of sophistication.
Choice in sight had I none,
Succumbing in the name of land,
Yet sometimes in the name of collective rights,
Still sometimes in the name language and colour.
Wherefore the eyes of joy turned hawk?
Wherefore the hands of succour turned sour?
Wherefore the advancing feet turned demonic?
'Love for your brother what you love for yourself';
'Do to your brother what you wish to be done to yourself'.
Flooded with axioms in my mind,
I dare to get ready as citizen of the world....

Caught in a Limbo: Analyzing the Colonial Subject under the Pressure to Assimilate

Abida Farooqui

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Tomson Highway's novel 'The Kiss of the Fur Queen' delineates the dark, sombre realities encompassing Natives in the wake of colonization, conquest and settlement. It charts the lives of two generations of Natives – the older one of Christian converts, hopeful of a better future and the younger one of their children, who gets completely lost in between the two cultures – the receding Native culture and the invading White culture. Replete with autobiographical elements, the novel portrays the tortures and traumas of the life of two brothers, Jeremiah and Gabriel Okimasis in a residential school (who can be considered fictional counterparts of Tomson Highway and his brother Rene Highway), the adverse ways in which the new education system impacts upon them, the resulting sense of rootlessness, alienation and lack of identity and their attempts to carve out a niche for themselves amid the changing face of contemporary Native society. Residential schools were the byproducts of the colonial agenda that Natives could be converted, anglicized and thereby assimilated into the mainstream. In the vain hope that English education and conversion would wipe out the last vestiges of a 'dying culture', White bureaucrats were obsessed with wrenching Native boys and girls from their homes and implanting them within the four walls of the residential school. The novel projects the inability of the Natives to free themselves from their culture, the trauma of the loss of their language and the impossibility of assimilating into White culture. This paper studies the impact of White bureaucratic policies on Native identities, the pressure on them to assimilate, the resultant rupture of their identities and consequent feeling of in-between-ness and the possibility of Native agency to thwart the dreams of assimilation of the colonizer.

The colonial administrative policy regarding Natives was a curious paradox of inclusion and exclusion. On one hand they clung to the view that Native culture was a dying culture and that Natives were on the brink of extinction. They were looked upon as savages and misfits in the modern world. Any attempt to interact with them was demeaning and thought to be corruptive and hence the existing Natives (those awaiting extinction) were pushed to reservations. On the reservations, the living conditions were squalid and filthy and offered them little respite. On the other hand, White bureaucrats were carriers of the 'Whiteman's burden' with the moral responsibility to civilize the savages of the world. They advocated assimilation as the key to Native survival in the 20th century and the only means to escape extinction. Residential schools were set up and Native boys were wrenched from their homes and forcibly Christianized. Christianized Natives were encouraged to move away from the Natives, lest their faith be weakened by pagan influences. The irony lies in the fact that though they were encouraged to move from the un-christianized Natives, they were simultaneously segregated from White settlements also and grossly discriminated against. Hence in practice, assimilation distanced Natives from their own culture with the false hope that they would be accepted into the mainstream, but led to their tragic rejection and ostracism time and again.

When Native expertise was required for understanding the new land during the initial stages of colonization, they were treated with some degree of respect. However, with the passage of time, Whites gained the better of the Natives and they were looked upon with scorn and contempt. Later, when the continent was redefined on the basis of nations, Natives became a cause for concern to the White policy makers and bureaucrats. Many policies that were framed and implemented ostensibly for their rehabilitation was in reality done without much forethought and did more harm than good to them. The administrative policy, with its thrust on saving the 'Indians' can be summed up in the words of Lord Glenelg: "to protect and cherish this helpless Race... [and] raise them in the Scale of

Humanity.” (Dickenson, 199) It was an era of utopian experiments. The assimilative tactics of the settlers were ambivalent: on one hand they set up schools to convert and ‘civilize’ them, on the other they believed that Indians could never be civilized and were unfit to live in the modern world. Advocates of assimilation assumed that by changing the outward material life of the Natives, their inward spiritual life could be easily altered.

Tomson Highway explores the impact of assimilation on the psyche of two brothers Jeremiah and Gabriel who are taken away from their homes at a very young age and put in a residential school. The novel touches upon the diverse strategies employed by White administration – the self styled ambassadors of civilization and culture - at the residential schools to work out assimilation, namely the prohibition of Native language, the enforcement of English language, and the incessant lectures on Biblical concepts, making the boys enact mock plays featuring Christ and his sacrifice and the like. The two boys are the sons of Abraham Okimasis and Mariesis, both of whom are first generation converts. Though they are reluctant to send their sons to the faraway school, they do not protest because they have firm faith in the system and they believe that it is done for their good. They unquestioningly accept the law of the Whites and are of the opinion that the “Catholic Church saved our people.” (Fur Queen, 109) They find themselves fortunate at having been ushered into Christianity. They believe that their children are safe in the hands of the priests and that the new education system will liberate them. Page | 13

The first thing that is done at the residential school is robbing the children of their language. Language is integral to ones identity and culture, and hence obliteration of their language has serious ramifications on their identity. The boys are prohibited from using Cree words in the campus. Using Cree is tantamount to paying a fine and the boy who reports maximum cases of flouting the rule is gifted with a toy. The children do not realize that the toy is gifted at the expense of their language and their identity. Alienation from their tongue is coupled with their fascination for the English language. Jeremiah nurses a penchant to be fluent in English, the lack of fluency making him feel inadequate. The boys assume that they have forgotten their language until they reach home where on being annoyed at the dog, Jeremiah bursts into a volley of Cree expletives. However gradual acquaintance with the English language creates a gulf between the boys and their heritage which widens and overwhelms them very gradually. The “humourless tongue” (Fur Queen, 273) which appears to them initially as monotonous as the “putt-putt-putt of Happy Doll Magipom’s pathetic three-horsepower outboard motor” begins to fascinate them as time passes. (Fur Queen, 52)

The novel is read as a fictional account of the residential school experiences of Highway and his brother. In spite of being tutored in Christianity, the boys are unable to take Christian precepts to heart. The manner in which the author looks at Christianity and its teachings reveals their inherent dislike of and disdain for the religion. Though they are enlightened on Christ and his supreme sacrifice and suffering, they are unable to relate themselves to the significance of Christ’s suffering. This betrays the very purpose of assimilation. To them Christ is nothing more than “a naked bleeding man” hanging from a wooden beam. (Fur Queen, 36) At another point Christ is described as a “thrice punctured man.” (Fur Queen, 57) The prayers that the boys are required to learn by heart hold no meaning for the boys. The parroting of the prayer without understanding its meaning is comic: “Hello merry, mutter of cod... awmen” (Fur Queen, 71)

Christianity has been represented as the Weetigo waiting to devour the indigenous cultures. Highway’s ascribing similar set of images to describe the priest, the crucifix, Christ, the Jubilee Concert Hall and the Fur Queen is deliberate. Sitting in the plane, Jeremiah catches sight of Christ looming “silvery white.” (Fur Queen, 186) The Jubilee Concert Hall twinkles like the queen’s tiara. The crucifix is silver. When Father Lafleur comes to molest the boys at night, he is caught in the silver light of the moon. The abuse always happens in the silver light of the moon.

The boys also make a very pertinent observation on the hypocrisy of Christians that the churchgoers are not so devout. If Christians followed what they preached, the Native boys would be treated with much more benevolence. They point out the wide disparity between what is sermonized in Church and what is practiced by Christians. The whole of the time they spent at the residential school, they learn to abhor and detest Christianity. When Gabriel is molested by the priest, he does not make a move of resistance because he silently believed that it was the right of the holy men to do so. The imagery used to describe the event is that of a beast feasting on human flesh. Though the boys are unable to articulate this dark childhood episode to anybody else at any point of their lives, it undoubtedly leaves an indelible scar on their psyche. Jeremiah becomes unable to have a meaningful sexual intercourse and Gabriel becomes a homosexual.

The responses of the brothers to the Christian notion of heaven and hell highlight their aversion towards the invading culture and the impossibility of being assimilated. Heaven looks boring and monotonous with its exclusively blond population. Hell looks much more engaging and mysterious with its tunnels and underground passages. Hell fires their imagination and they are enamoured of the skinny, shiny creatures laughing gleefully and the riveting Devil who strikes them as kingly and majestic. However they are disappointed that Natives are not found in Heaven and that neither in Hell nor Heaven there is an 'accordion player' to fulfil Jeremiah's appetite for music. Even when they copy down the word 'GOD', they do not fathom the significance of the concept. To them, God is an old, bearded man, "sitting large and naked in his black, leather armchair, smoking a long, fat cigar", callous to what is happening down on earth. (Fur Queen, 85) Highway draws a conspicuous distinction between the frustrated, male God and the trickster who exudes happiness and exists above moral codes. The novel also takes a dig at the Christian practice of doing penance. The priest, who insidiously tortures them at night, asks them to do penance during daytime. The boys utter 'mea culpa' and learn to accept blame for something they have not done.

The residential system seeks a complete erasure of their previous identities (which is proved as whimsical fancy during the course of the novel) by renaming the students. Champion Okimasis becomes Jeremiah. His sister Chugweesees is also stripped of her illustrious name by renaming her Jane. Another token of their Native identity was their long hair which was cut off mercilessly. Jeremiah describes it as a 'slaughter' and feels that he is "skinned alive" in public. (Fur Queen, 53) The humiliation that Jeremiah experiences as his treasured locks are trimmed by the intimidating 'silver clippers' is described at length in the novel.

At the outset of the novel, Highway presents the first generation converts as highly enthusiastic and hopeful of the new religion. They are apparently eager to shed their traditional culture in favour of the more advanced and cultured tenets of Christianity. A question that Mariesis frequently asks her sons when they are back home is whether they pray or not. She firmly believes that the Fur Queen will serve as a guiding light in the lives of her sons. However the strangest twist happens when Abraham is on his death bed. He rejects the last communion offered by the priest and invokes the Native legend of the Son of Ayash conquering evil through his magic weapons. He exhorts his sons to take the lesson of Ayash, who was thrust into the evil world, but who could counter the evil forces with the magic weapons handed to him by his mother, and make a new world, indicating the possibility of Native agency in dispelling evil. His recalling the Native myth is a sharp indicator that his embracing of Christian values was superficial and bogus. He insinuates that true salvation lies in embracing their own cultural values. After his death, the boys have no doubt that their father is going to meet the trickster and not Jesus.

Divided into six parts, each part subtitled with Italian musical notations, the novel spans thirty six years in the lives of the Okimasis family. Part one charts their childhood life till they being sent to a residential school, Part two is devoted to their residential school experiences, Part three to their initiation into the hustle and bustle of city life and their attempts to gain a sense of place in the non- Native world by succumbing to non- Native notions of success and fame, Part four the realization that the calls of the non-Native culture were spurious and do not offer redemption to

the Natives, Part five with their attempts to carve out a niche for themselves by turning to their culture and Part six to their recognition of their role and responsibility to their own community and their redemption through art. The residential school experiences have tremendous influence on their identities. Though they detest Christianity due to the traumatic sexual molestation at the hands of the priests, they also learn to look at their own culture as inferior, primitive and even satanic. The feather-tufted dancers set for a Native performance look repulsive to them. They try to cast away their Cree identity and embrace whiteness, but time and again they are confronted with their own Indian-ness in various forms. They are reminded that they are perennial outsiders within the non-Native culture. The assimilative attempts leave them in a precarious position where they are not sure who they are or what direction to take, the consequence of which is a fractured, dilapidated identity. Contemporary Natives can exist only as a product of the two worlds – Native and non-Native. This duality of their predicament finds a true reflection in the Fur Queen that is Weesageechak, the Weetigo and the fairy godmother simultaneously. The boys have double identity – both Cree and White; so does the Fur Queen. Through the characters of Jeremiah and Gabriel, Highway dramatizes the real confusion Natives experienced over their identities. The imposition of English language renders them incapacitated to convey the distressing agony of their residential school experiences. Silence looms large in Jeremiah's life after he is abused and a witness to the abuse of his brother by the priest. However the boys overcome their trauma towards the end of the novel by turning to Native art and the final theatrical performance sets them free of their past. Jeremiah becomes an ardent Cree language revivalist and liberates himself through language. The novel ends on a positive note with Jeremiah achieving liberation by reviving Native art and language.

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Double Colonization: A treatment over African women in Ngugi's Petals of Blood

Afroza Akhter Tina

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Petals of Blood sketches a lively portrayal of the condition and position of women in Kenya before and after independence. The feminist literary criticism of today is the direct product of the 'women's movement of the 1960's. This movement being literary from the start, realized the significance of the images of women promulgated by literature, and saw it as vital to combat them and question their authority and their coherence. In this sense the women's movement has always been crucially concerned with books and literature. The masterpiece novel, *Petals of Blood* (1977) by Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Kenyan novelist and playwright, is a story discussing the poor quality of life in East Africa, particularly of Kenya's lower classes, even after independence from the United Kingdom in 1963 which is also a very successful documentation of 'double colonization of women', a term crucially important in feminist literary criticism and feminism. 'Double colonization' illustrates how both patriarchy and imperialism can be seen to exert analogous form of domination over those they render subordinate, to them which are Women. Simply stated, in colonial and post colonial period, women were dominated and colonized by the patriarchal society, their husbands inside their house and by the colonial power and its influences outside their house. This process of being doubly colonized is termed as double colonization of women. The feminist's suggestion is, to establish women's national identity is much more important than personal identity.

“Colonialism is not satisfied merely with holding a people in its grip and emptying the native's brain of all form and content . By a kind of perverted logic, it turns to the past of the oppressed people, and distorts, disfigures and destroys it ...” (Fanon, 169)

Ngugi's *Petals of Blood* seeks to survey the unpleasant events of the neo-colonial scenario of Kenya between 1963 and 1975. One of the protagonists of the novel is Wanja who struggles throughout her life with her surroundings. Other female characters are Nyakinyua, Mariamu, Mukami, Wanja's mother and aunt, Waujira, Lilian, Amina, and the other barmaids who do their struggle with their surroundings where the society does not give them the space to do any respectable job. All the female characters are more or less abused by their father, husband, landlord, customer, friend, who are the reminders of the male domination. Ngugi tries to bring back women from these dark mazes of male oppression. He speaks about equality of men and women, father and mother from a communist point of view. Ngugi's women characters remain pioneers in the field of Anglophone African fiction written by man.

Wanja is invested with a fiercely feminine and aggressively individualistic personality. According to Chidi Amuta, "Wanja is a typical Ngugi woman clan vital combining great adaptive skill with dynamism, enterprise and forbearance." (p. 150) Commenting on the place and role of women in Ngugi's fiction, Jennifer Evans observes: "In Ngugi's novels women are shown to have a fundamental role in the struggle against oppression and exploitation, and often courage and hope are ultimately found in their hands" (p.57). Wanja attracted a long list of feminist writers as Judith Cochrane who argues that it is the Gikuyu women "rather than their men folk who seem to have the better understanding of the needs of their own people and of the new Kenya, and who seem better able to reconcile those needs with traditional values and customs" (90). Deirdre LaPin writes that Wanja is an "admirable, indeed heroic character" (116).

Wanja, an aspiring school girl, at the time of Mau Mau is seduced by her father's friend gets into pregnancy and flees to her cousin's house, eventually gets involved to the job of barmaid cum prostitute. Hoping to start a new life in Ilmorog she escapes from the city. In the course of time, she disdainfully comes back to prostitution, again raped by Kimeria to free Karega and Njuguna. The

last time she takes to big-time prostitution as though to seek her “burial in property and degradation”, mistaking the same for a glorious achievement (p. 328). Her brothel ‘Sunshine Lodge’, acquires the prominence of Reve Jerrod’s ‘All Saints Church’ Nyakinyua, whose husband (Njambe Nene) died in the war of Mau Mau, had struggled a lot to establish herself. Mukami could not survive in this world of discrimination and injustice. Her father does not give her the scope to continue relationship with Karega. So she had to show her final protest to the earth, to the male domination and rules by sacrificing her life.

“She had jumped of a quarry cliff overlooking mangus meshes must have been an act of saying a final ‘no’ to a ‘society’”.

The protagonists of the novel are the losers under the new order : Munira, dismissed in colonial days from an elite boarding school for his involvement in a strike against the authoritarian British Headmaster; Karega , dismissed from the very school for the same reason; Wanja, whose brilliant studies were aborted when she became pregnant by the industrialist who had seduced her; Abdullah, who lost a leg in the Mau Mau revolt only to find others reaping the fruits of independence. *Petals* represent Ngugi’s anti – imperialist consciousness, which is a part of his dialectical design. New order brings only hunger, pauperization and violence disguised as capitalist development. Ngugi remarks:

“Imperialism can never develop a country or a people. This was what I was trying to show in Petals of Blood; that imperialism can never develop us, Kenyans.”(Writers in Politics, 37)

Women are economically underpowered: hard work cannot give them better fortune in male dominated social framework. In pre-independence society a man would sell her daughter for a goat (p. 25), but after independence we see no better situation. In the fact of Mariamu what we see, “it was an Elbergon that his father and mother quarreled. She complained about the triple duties to her child Ndinguri, her husband in turn gave her only enough to buy salt” (p. 58). Next she rebelled: she would not work on the settler’s farm for nothing and she demanded a say in the scale of her produce (p.58). Wife beating, scolding, threatening are the compulsory of an African man. In case of Mariamu, who rebelled against her husband, “He bit her in frustration. She took Nduguri and ran back to Limura where she begged for cultivation rights from Munira’s father. At first Brother Ezekiel had refused. But looking at her eyes, he had felt a sudden weakness and her refusal became a kind of bond between them, a shared secret. He feared that she might expose him to the world.” (p. 58)

Leopold Sedar Senghor, the famous African writer, in presenting Negritude in his poetry frequently employs a ‘trope’ which is the embodiment of Africa in the figure of woman. Across the colonial spectrum, the nation-state or its guiding principles are often imagined literally as a woman like Mother India, the Black Woman; the Earth Mother. As national emblems, women are usually cast as mothers or wives who are called upon to literally reproduce the nation. Actually these images are given to women so that along with the stereotypical presentation of women being a symbol of sensuality, these Nation-as-Mother images will add the privilege to limit and control the activity of women within the community and it also degrades women to only a medium of reproduction and sexuality.

In *Petals of Blood* this treatment of women is also evident. This Mother Africa Trope is mostly manifested by Wanja. To Munira, Wanja is only a symbol of sexuality, to Abdullah association of African landscape and Wanja’s body also shows sensuality and reproduction. Here women are used as the driving force behind but they are never shown to join any active movement like the Ole Masai. Most insidious, is the ‘trope’s’ exploitation of female sexuality which in its replication of men’s exploitation of women’s bodies in patriarchal societies, reinforces and justifies that exploitation. In this text Wanja is made to bed down with nearly every man. Women are shown

in such humiliating position also in this text. Prostitution is their easiest occupation, working girls are equated with goats, women are deprived of proper share of money let alone property, discrimination is usual in the payments of male-female labors, women are mostly treated as everyday bed partners and quite close to animals. They are described here to be victim of 'social castration' or lack of social power.

Again, we find that Karega's mother Mariamu had her son Ndinguri who was splendid in his self-confidence but it was he who in fact had suggested reconciliation with her husband. "She had felt ashamed this coming from a son, and she had briefly returned to her husband in Elburgon who had now added a Naudi bride to his others. "The reconciliation was good for only one month and the same pattern of quarrels emerged, she ran away again but Karega was the product of that brief reunion." (p. 58) Here we find that Mariamu is humiliated by her own husband first and later by her son. In her own family, she is not in a better position as she is oppressed outside her family.

Wanja's mother, who had a glorious vision, and hope of an independent Kenya, had to silent down by her husband, "woman...her father shouts and lifts her mother ones, twice then he loses his head and beats her". Wanja's aunt had to burn alive in fire by her son-in law because of her daughter's self dependency. Wanja's cousin was beaten by her ill-tempered husband all time. "If she had money through working on the land, he would take it away from her and he would drink it all and come home to beat her" (p. 64). Less important character like Waujiru changes her pagan identity and becomes Julia, quits her dancing and singing for Munira, "an escape into sensuality", while vanished on the marriage bed. Ngugi speaks of some barmaids including Wanja, who wanted to get out of prostitution. They tried hard as housemaid or pitching tea leaves and coffee beans only with the result of 70 shilling a month, Wanja does not get her father's allowance as he does not "want prostitute in my house"(p. 130). Independence means nothing to the woman's life, they have to go to back to their kitchen and bed room. Wanja's bitter experience connected with a white man she expressed. "I had grown roots to the bed of terror. Strength was ebbing out of merit was as if green-red glow of the dogs eyes was sapping my energy and strength to resist. I was hanging in space.....nothing" (p. 133).

Wanja performs a leading role in the society to educate Joseph and to unite the villagers. Mariamu, Nyakinyua, Wanja's mother, aunt all these women are pioneers to help constructing a new Kenya. Ngugi believes that a man cannot have a child without a woman. "A woman cannot bear a child without a man. And was it not a man and a woman who fought to redeem this country?" (p. 161). Though women have also the contribution to get independence, they are not safe in their country. Karega said to himself: "A black man is not safe abroad" (p. 165). It is more appropriate for expressing the condition of African women as they are oppressed in family, communities and humiliated by the white colonizers.

Though Ngugi presents some positive approaches of women, women are always the secondary approach of him to the national struggle against neo-colonialism. He doesn't first suggest inner change of a patriarchal or male dominated framework. He marks the problem related to women but diligently tries to include women only in the 'People's struggle'. A 'trope' invented earlier in negritude movement by Seughor and Okot, continues to occur frequently in African male literary tradition. In contemporary period, this trope works in two ways: one analogizes women to the heritage of African values and unchanging African essence, the other serves as an index of the state of the nation; its hope, degradation and gain. Wanja means 'spirit of earth', or 'mother earth'. She is the embodiment of the nation both as it has been tainted, degraded, corrupted and prostituted. When she disposes her child, it marks the end of the period of national optimism. Eventually she acquiesces in her complete degradation by adopting the "eat or you are eaten" ideology of her oppressor; she becomes a whore house madam. Ngugi conflates in one body the figures of Africa as mother and as whore, at the same time Wanja is always beautiful and sensuous. Wanja is made to bed down with nearly everyman in the novel to compare their potency of his own ideology with that of his competitors; with Kimeria, Mziego with Munira's liberalism and later Christian

fundamentalism, Karega's nationalist and at last Abdullah's socialism, capitalism wins the competition.

According to Simone de Beauvoir; "One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman." Ngugi, through his very proficient, vivid and successful illustration of Double Colonization has established it in his invaluable, versatile masterpiece *Petals of Blood*.

Ngugi has commitment to gender reform. He describes women as the most exploited and oppressed section of the entire working class. Women are exploited in home and abroad both physically and mentally. While Achebe presents the masculine Igbo culture and Soyinka articulates a theory of the relationship between man's creativity and woman's body, Ngugi is partly successful in dismantling the literary code of African literary tradition. Still it does not match with the African women's reality to control the effect of double colonization.

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Transcending the Stereotypes of Gender: A Portrayal of Emotional Violence experienced by Males in Select Novels

Dr. Anil Verma & Dr. Anshu Raina

The World report on violence and health (WRVH) defines Violence as:

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"The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal-development, or deprivation." (VPA 1)

To speak in simple terms, Violence and Emotional abuse are behaviors used by one partner in a relationship to dominate the other. It is not necessary that the other partner has to be a passive partner in order to be abused. Domination can be based on the following factors to name a few: name-calling or putdowns , hitting, pushing, shoving, keeping a partner from contacting their family or friends ,withholding money, stopping a partner from getting or keeping a job, actual or threatened physical harm, sexual assault, sexual abuse (unwanted or forced sexual activity),stalking and intimidation. Even though emotional, psychological and financial abuses are not listed as criminal behaviors, they are particular forms of abuse and can eventually lead to criminal violence, if not controlled/reported. It is also not necessary that all these types of violence happen at once, albeit it can take "many forms and can happen all the time or once in a while." (Domestic violence 1)

The stereotype of an abusive relationship is that of a man physically beating/abusing a woman/female partner. Society has yet to acknowledge/come to the terms with the fact that there are a vast number of women who emotionally abuse men. In fact, the men who are being abused often don't realize/know that their wife's or girlfriend's behavior is abusive. Men are socially conditioned into believing that it's normal for women to be sometimes irrational, moody, emotional, and demanding. Most men accept these behaviors under the impression that a woman is just expressing her feelings through her emotional and verbal outbursts and the reason men are uncomfortable with all this behavior is because men aren't as good as women at expressing their feelings or emotions.

Violence against men can take varied forms which include emotional, sexual and physical threats and abuse. It can happen both in heterosexual or same sex relationships. It is not particularly easy to recognize domestic violence against men because early in the relationship the partner (females in this case) might seem attentive, generous and protective in ways that later turn out to be controlling and frightening. Initially, the abuse might also appear/take place as isolated incidents and the partner might apologize and promise not to abuse. But gradually it becomes a "Cycle of Violence". (Violence 1)

The theory of the Cycle of Violence as propagated and developed by Dr. Lenore Walker states three distinct phases which are generally present in violent relationships. The theory was originally propounded for women but in the contemporary times it seems equally applicable for men also. The first phase is the Tension Building Phase in which the person (in this case male) feels angry, unfairly treated, hopeless, tense, afraid, embarrassed, humiliated, disgusted and depressed and his behavior is nurturing, submissive, "walking on eggshells," afraid to express feelings, may use alcohol and/or drugs to avoid the situation. The second phase is called as Violent Episode Phase in which the partner feels frightened, trapped, helpless or numb and his behavior pattern is that he may try to protect self, hit back, submit helplessly, get away or seek help. In the third and last phase which is called as Remorseful/Honeymoon Phase the person feels relieved, angry over the incident, resentful, guilty, hopeful, in denial over the seriousness of the incident and

his behavior pattern is that he offers excuses for the batterer, may be withdrawn, tries to solve or prevent future incidents and hopes/believes that the changes in his partner will last.

In some relationships, domestic violence against men might include both partners slapping or shoving each other when they are angry — and neither partner sees himself or herself as being abused or controlled. These types of violence, however, can still “devastate a relationship, causing both physical and emotional damage” (mayoclinic-1) to both the partners. Many a times the partner can also be threatened with a weapon, can be forced to have sex or engage in sexual acts against his will and also be blamed for the violent behavior being told that the partner actual deserves it and is asking for it.

Studies reveal that men in different parts of the world are increasingly experiencing domestic violence and it is constantly on the rise. A newspaper report in *The Belfast Telegraph*, ‘Domestic violence against men at its highest level in Northern Ireland since police began recording statistics’ on Oct29th 2013 says:

Domestic violence against men in Northern Ireland has increased by more than 40% in nine years – and that's just reported incidents. But this may be only a fraction of the true figure due to the reluctance of many men to come forward because of embarrassment and shame (1)

Men's Aid NI chairman Peter Morris says in this report that “ it was time to dispel the perception that in cases of domestic violence that men are the aggressors and women the victims....Domestic violence against men can take many forms..... and, as with domestic abuse against females, can go largely unreported....there are many men in Northern Ireland who are living in fear of their partners....” (1)

An article on Dr Jennifer J. Freyd, PhD of the University of Oregon identified as DARVO,(for the acronym- Deny, Attack, Reverse Victim and Offender) titled ‘Presto, Change-o, DARVO: Deny, Attack, and Reverse Victim and Offender’ written by Dr Tara J. Palmatier on January 19, 2011 begins with:

Have you ever marveled at how your abusive wife, girlfriend or ex is able to do and say the most hurtful, underhanded and contemptible things and then portray herself as the innocent victim? Have you ever wondered how she is able to convincingly accuse others, usually her victims, of the abusive behaviors and attitudes of which she is actually guilty?

Quoting Dr Jennifer J. Freyd on this web page Dr Tara writes:

“DARVO refers to a reaction that perpetrators of wrong doing, particularly sexual offenders, may display in response to being held accountable for their behavior. The perpetrator or offender may Deny the behavior, Attack the individual doing the confronting, and Reverse the roles of Victim and Offender such that the perpetrator assumes the victim role and turns the true victim into an alleged offender. This occurs, for instance, when an actually guilty perpetrator assumes the role of “falsely accused” and attacks the accuser’s credibility or even blames the accuser of being the perpetrator of a false accusation.” (1)

In an Article in Australian Domestic and Family Violence Clearinghouse Journal, ‘Men as Victims of Domestic Violence’ (2005) Jane Mulrone and Carrie Chan talk about the large number of men who are experiencing domestic violence (physical, emotional, psychological and sexual inclusive) in Australia. The study reveals that:

... men’s experiences are broad and not primarily limited to forms of physical abuse. This is understandable, as men’s physical size and strength is often greater than that of their female

partners. This may also explain why men often report that they do not generally live in fear of their partners. Men's descriptions about their abuse... centre on issues such as financial dependence on a partner, limiting access to resources, tactics of isolation, preventing access to children, and being exposed to irrational and threatening behavior....

... a range of physical abuse including direct assaults, being spat at, scratched, hair pulled, pots thrown, being rushed at, kicked, choked and threatened with a knife. They did not report sexual assaults from their partner but, rather, emotional taunts that had an effect on their sexual performance. Further verbal and emotional abuse included putdowns, accusations of infidelity, 'bitchy' comments, and name-calling. (6)....

Criticism has been levelled at feminist and other critiques of violence as being unable to adequately explain men's victimisation, at the hands of a female partner. (12)....

Clearly, men's experiences as victims of domestic violence, either in heterosexual or gay relationships, are quite different from the experiences of women. Analysis needs to focus on the experiences of men in their own right and to not fall into the trap of asserting that men are just as likely to experience violence and abuse as women. (14)

Another newspaper article titled 'In Mumbai, man leaves 44-minute 'suicide note' on video' reported by The Times of India newspaper daily on 25th November 2013 states the tragic death of businessman Jayesh Raut who committed suicide after leaving behind a 44 minute video because he was emotionally tormented by his wife Trupti who was residing with her paramour Rajesh Verma and did not pay any heed to his emotional appeals to return back to him. This shows the emotional and psychological anxiety this man was going through and how much he suffered before he took the extreme step.

Katie Lambert in her research dissertation titled "'Broken Men Break the Silence'-Male Domestic Violence Victims and their Struggle to be Heard' writes that:

'Domestic violence towards men perpetrated by their female partners is a widely under researched area of violence which is currently coming to the forefront of societal debates.... the Government and the majority of society focus only on men as perpetrators of violence towards women and do not believe or want to recognise that men can suffer from domestic violence in the same way as women.'(7)

She further says that, 'The feminist philosophy is that men are primarily the offender and their female partner is the victim' and 'Feminists do not believe that women have the potential to be perpetrators of domestic violence.'(9)

Moving on to the field of literature attention can be paid to some novels in which some evidences can be found in relation to violence experience by the male characters. This does not appear as a prominent theme in any of the novels but an attempt is being made in the current research to bring the condition/ experiences of these male characters into prominence.

Alice Walker's *The Color Purple* is generally reviewed in the light of the ill treatment metted out to Celie by her step—father and her husband Albert but we fail to notice the plight of Harpo who endure all kinds of verbal and emotional abuse through his wife Sofia Butler. Harpo is the son of Mr. Albert and as his mother had died early, so he did not have a happy childhood .So when he meets his wife Sofia he is "Always busy and rather happy.He chop, he hammer, he plow. He sing ,he whistle" (33). Gradually with the passage of years he comes to understand that Sofia is nowhere like his step mother Celie who would be bothered about every whim and fancy of Mr. Albert. Sofia was not inferior to him instead she was more than his equal. Whenever Harpo tried to tame her, she would hit back, "She do what she want, don't pay me no mind at all. I try to beat her,

she black my eyes.” (61) She also deprives him of any kind of sexual contact for she says, “I don’t like to go to bed with him no more, she say, used to be when he touch me I’d go all out my head. Now when he touch me I just don’t want to be bothered.”(63) Harpo also starts overeating as if he is trying to match his size with that of his wife .Meanwhile, Sofia takes over the role of the male of the house as she mends, chops and does all other odd jobs which should have been done by Harpo and all that Harpo does is eat.

“Harpo eat, watch herNo matter what happening now. No matter who come. No matter what they say or do, Harpo eat through it. Food on his mind morning, noon and night. (59)

Now when Harpo tries to whistle, “his little whistle sound it lost way down in a jar, and the jar in the bottom of the creek.”(64)

Another character who suffers some amount of emotional and psychological violence due to his lover is Adam. The turmoil that begins in this novel is portrayed in full in the ‘can be said’ sequel of *Color Purple* by the name *Possessing the secret of Joy*. Adam, the son of Nettie who is brought up by his foster parents in the interiors of Africa falls desperately in love with Tashi, an African tribal girl, belonging to the Olinka tribe. He suffers a lot when she disappears one day. He goes through great pains to bring her back, not realizing / knowing that the real suffering was yet to begin. Tashi’s tribe believed in genital mutilation at a very tender age. Tashi had not undergone this ancient rite of her tribe, so she experiences full sexual pleasures in her premarital relationship with Adam. The narrative continues in the novel *Possessing the secret of Joy* where Tashi in bits and pieces talks about the strangeness that comes in her and her behavior after she undergoes the genital mutilation rite, after a momentary influence, due to which consummation of a sexual relation becomes unbearable and impossible for her. She is so much engrossed in her own sadness which eventually leads to a partial hallucinatory- madness kind of state, that she fails to notice the mental anguish that she causes to her once loved Adam, now her husband. Adam tries his level best to be of help to her throughout Tashi-Evelyn’s life but she rejects any intrusion from outside. She moves deeper and deeper within herself gradually becoming oblivious of her duties and roles of a wife and a mother. Adam eventually finds emotional sympathy in a French woman Lisette who eventually gives birth to his another son, Pierre. His relation eventually with this woman also becomes a cause of emotional disturbance for him because he is torn between his love for his crazy wife and the warmth and serenity which is offered by Lisette. Both women in the novel are so much involved in their self satisfaction/ deprivation that the medium or cause of their satisfaction/ dissatisfaction i.e. Adam is put in a corner. No one notices the emotional pain that he undergoes when he has to bear with his crazy wife due to her psychological circumcision or lover Lisette. He suffers as much as does his wife.

“ It had never occurred to me to think of Tashi’s suffering as being on a continuum of pain. I had thought of what was there to her as something singular and absolute.” (159)

In the novel *Surfacing* by Margaret Atwood, the lover of the unnamed narrator is always at the receiving end. The narrator of the novel had come to a secluded Island in the interior of Canada to search for her missing father. She was returning to her place after many years so she brought along with her, her lover Joe and her two friends. She lives with Joe not because that she loves him but because it is a relationship of convenience. The narrator herself knows that he is a very “Sensitive” (5) fellow but throughout the novel the writer is trying to decide “Whether or not I love him.”(49) When he proposes marriage to her she rejects him ignoring the fact that he had always been at her side when she needed him the most. She rejects him because she had been rejected by her Art Professor who was a married man already. After an argument with him she treats him like an object, “I curled up, concentrating on excluding him; he was merely an object in the bed, like a sack or a lump.”(117)

Later on when she wants to have her revenge on the world in a trance like, crazy psychological state she uses Joe as a medium for procreation. It is she who seduces him into love making where as earlier it was she herself who had denied it when Joe wanted to make love to her. 'I press my arms around him, smoothing his back; I'm grateful to him, he's given me the part of himself I needed.' (210)

In her own selfish quest in order to take revenge from the world because she had been jilted by a lover, an already married art professor, she uses Joe. Joe (if we can forgive him for his one – time stand with Anna, who also had used him to get back at David) is always loyal to her and when she goes fully crazy he is the one who comes back to search for her as he loves her and wants to marry her, but she feels that it is a means to entrap her again, neglecting all the emotional feelings of Joe. Joe in this case is emotionally and psychologically abused by the unnamed protagonist for the entire duration of their relationship. Page | 24

In the novel *The Book Thief* written by Markus Zusak, the male protagonist, Hans Hubermann faces all kinds of verbal abuse by his wife Rosa Hubermarmann. Hans is a very gentle and loving human being but his wife always refer to him as SAUKERL (38) which in German is a very vulgar word used to describe a man, the English equivalent for the word can be bastard. She would continuously berate her husband whenever she could get a chance.

When she'd finished berating the people she worked for, Rosa Huberman would usually move on to her other favourite theme of abuse. Her husband. Looking at the bay of washing and the hunched houses she would talk and talk and talk. 'If your papa was any good,' she informed Liesel every time they walked through Molching, 'I wouldn't have to do this.' She sniffed with derision. 'A painter'! Why marry that Arschloch? That's what they told me --- my famil, that is,' 'And here I am, walking the streets and slaving in my kitchen because that Saukerl never has any work. No real work, anyway. Just that pathetic accordion, in those dirt holes every night.' (44)

Mrs. Morel's character in D.H. Lawrence's novel *Sons and Lovers* has always been read with the view point that Mr. Morel was the one who doomed her fate. He was a drinker but the fact goes unacknowledged that he was a very jovial, happy go lucky man before he married Gertrude. It was she who through her upper class mentality tormented his free soul so much that he eventually became what we find him at the time of his wife's death, a shameless, stoic character.

Mrs. Morel throughout derides him about something or the other. She tries to acculturate him realizing little that she was eventually killing the real him by doing all this.

'Nevertheless, she still continued to strive with him. She still had her high moral sense, inherited from generations of Puritans. It was now a religious instinct and she was almost a fanatic with him, because she loved him or had loved him. If he sinned, she tortured him. If he drank, and lied, was often a poltroon, sometimes a knave, she wielded the lash unmercifully.' (25)

After finishing off her husband psychologically and deteriorating his image in front of his children, Mrs. Morel moves on to her sons, William and Paul. Both of them try their level best to fill the void in her life, not realizing how she was emotionally abusing them under the pretext of loving them. She wanted to control their lives to the fullest. 'From her the feeling was transmitted to the other children. She never suffered alone any more. The children suffered with her. (79)

When William moves out of the house, he falls in love with Gyp. Gyp is a beautiful girl with an average intellect but Mrs. Morel does not approve of her which eventually begins a conflict in the boy's soul who is not able to choose from among the both i.e. the mother and the beloved. 'He was pale, and his rugged face, that used to be so perfectly careless and laughing, was stamped with conflict and despair.' (164) He also knows that his beloved would not miss him if he died for he says to his mother, 'She's very much in love with me now, but if I died she'd have forgotten me in three months' (166).

He eventually dies of this emotional violence.

After his death Mrs. Morel tries to cling to the soul of Paul. Paul in the meantime (though fully attached to his mother) has got into a relation with Miriam. Consider here the plight of Paul who experiences 'Double emotional and psychological violence', because on one hand is his mother and on the other Miriam and both of them are vying for his soul. With Miriam the complexity is more because she is emotionally abusing Paul in two ways, she wants him to be altogether hers but when it comes to giving back to him in terms of sexual gratification she is unable to perform.

Due to all these psychological issues Paul drifts towards Clara Dawes. Now his mother feels somewhat pacified because Miriam wanted his soul whereas Clara wants only his body, so the mother can still get her share.

But the problem remains the same and eventually becomes a triangle with Paul in the centre and all the three women namely Mrs. Morel, Miriam and Clara at the three corners. Eventually at the end of the novel Mrs. Morel dies tormenting him further, Clara had already left Paul and gone back to her husband Baxter, so Paul goes back to Miriam who also refuses to take him back unless he is willing to submit himself more and eventually finish himself forever. In the end Paul is left with nothing. Who is wrong here? Paul or the three women in his life? Who is to be blamed for his emotional wreck like condition? These women used him according to their convenience in order to fulfill their selfish motives and left him either after their motive was fulfilled or when Paul was unable to perform.

In the novel *The Rainbow* what is the role of Anton Skrebensky in the novel? He moves as a temporary love interest of Ursula Brangwen, one of the leading protagonists of the novel. The novel shows the internal search, growth and final emancipation of the female. What is Anton Skrebensky doing all this while? He is waiting for the moment in which the lady may find him worthy of her attention. Doesn't he have any emotions? Look at the way he is treated by Ursula. He just keeps on following her and does whatever she wants him to do. But still she is not happy. She eventually wishes to leave him because she doesn't want to marry (eventually doesn't she marry Birkin in *Women in Love*). Anton despite being an army man even weeps for her but she leaves. If a man is weeping for a lady what would be his emotional state. Doesn't the lady come into question here, in this case Ursula?

Same is the case with Gudrun, Ursula's sister in the novel *Women in Love*. A handsome rich young man Gerald falls in love with her but she makes an emotional wreck out of him by not responding to any of his physical or emotional needs. Eventually he dies because of his turbulent emotions. What does Gudrun do here? She moves on.

In the novel, *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, Clifford Chatterley was a normal young man before he met with an accident, which left, the lower portion of his body paralyzed. The readers have sympathized with Lady Chatterley throughout the past decades because everyone felt that her life was ruined at such a tender age. She has all the wealth and richness but not the pleasure which is the "most" essential in a marital relationship. One also felt right when she used to go for her clandestine meetings with Mellors, the gatekeeper and Clifford Chatterley was almost considered as the villain the novel. It felt right that Lady Chatterley's youth was satisfied by the love of Mellors and it was right on her part to leave Clifford Chatterley. Did anyone ever even for a moment look at or think about the condition of Clifford Chatterley. He is also a human being that too living with feelings and emotions. He was a through gentleman when we had met him at the time of his marriage with Connie. One can understand that the sexual desire or the capacity to act has died in him because of paralysis but isn't he able to understand things emotionally? How would he have felt when he saw his wife gradually slipping away from him? And the final moment when Connie tells him that she is leaving. The sexual aspect is a vital component, but is it everything? So essential that a person can leave her chosen partner due to this? Isn't this emotional violence?

To conclude, violence against men exists even if the ratio is less in comparison to that of women and some writers have tried to touch upon this topic even if in hidden undertones. This problem needs immediate attention from all arenas of society or else one day the condition of the men would be the same as that of the women or maybe even worse.

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Contrary Obsessions: Revenge and Unflinching love in Emile Bronte's Wuthering Heights

Asma Arshi

We are introduced to Heathcliff in the very beginning paragraph of the novel when Lockwood, the narrator of the novel, describes him as, "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 withdrew so suspiciously under their brows". Page | 27

An orphan child picked up on the Liverpool streets, Heathcliff in the words of Nelly Dean, the housekeeper is, "a dirty, ragged, black haired child; big enough both to walk and talk". He is not welcome in the Wuthering Heights, except Mr Earnshaw. His presence in the family creates a kind of tension. Earnshaw's son, Hindley never accepts him and is jealous of the way his father treats an outsider, in the words of Nelly Dean; "So, from the very beginning, he bred bad feelings in the house". This feeling of hatred in Hindley against Heathcliff shows itself after Earnshaw's death. Hindley being in the capacity of the master of the house takes charge of the house. He ill treats Heathcliff, beats him severely, like animals and almost reduces Heathcliff to the status of the servants or worse than that. He is being continuously tyrannized by Hindley Earnshaw. In Catherine's speech; "Hindley calls him a vagabond, and won't let him sit with us anymore; and he says, "He and I should not play together, and threatens to turn him out of the house if we break his orders". It is this treatment of Hindley that breeds in Heathcliff the feelings of hatred, revenge and animosity. It is at this stage in the novel that the seeds of Catherine and Heathcliff's love relationship are sown. They become friends and Hindley becomes one of their enemies. However Bronte had other plans for the hero, and the course of their love relationship does not run smooth. The mates get separated from each other and Catherine herself confesses to Nelly Dean, "It would degrade me to marry Heathcliff now".

It is at this transformation in Cathy that breaks Heathcliff's heart and he leaves Wuthering Heights for a period of three years. He does not go alone but takes with himself deep hatred and feelings of revenge and a will to return wealthier, prosperous, and educated. Heathcliff says; " I am trying to settle down how I shall pay Hindley back. I don't care how long I wait, If I can only do it at last, I hope he will not die before I do!". Heathcliff never forgets a single injury and humiliation inflicted on him in his childhood and deep impulse to revenge upon those who denied him chances in life is very strong. After his return to Wuthering Heights, Heathcliff is almost re-born and emerges stronger. He is no longer the "black", "beaten down", "gypsy". In the words of Nelly Dean; "I was amazed than ever, to behold the transformation of Heathcliff, he had grown a tall athletic, well-formed-man; besides whom my master seemed quite slender and youth like".

He encourages Hindley's excessive drinking. As a result, his determination to own, the mastership of Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange is even stronger than before. He contrives several schemes to take his revenge. He pretends to be in love with Linton's sister Isabella. Isabella falls deeply in love with Heathcliff and is trapped into marriage with him. His act of marrying Isabelle is truly hypocritical. It helps Heathcliff to execute his plans against Linton and inherit her brother's property. Isabell's letter to Nelly Dean at this stage of novel, further throws light on Heathcliff being a rough, hardened, diabolical man. "Is Mr. Heathcliff a man, if so, is he mad? And if not, is he a devil?" The letter informs both reader and us that Heathcliff's revenge has started taking its form and it terrifies us equally as it does the reader of the letter. In vengeance, Heathcliff treats Hindley's son Hareton like a savage beast. He treats him with excessive cruelty and sternness in the same way Heathcliff was treated by Hindley in Wuthering Heights. '

Heathcliff is often referred to as, 'devil', 'ghoulish', 'Judas' by other characters in the novel. But, in spite of all the hatred, his love for Catherine has not changed, rather it has become more intense and passionate with each passing day. He is desperate to see a glimpse of her. He knows she loves him with the same intensity. They might have been physically apart, but they always have a spiritual connection. Catherine says to Nelly Dean, the house keeper and the narrator; "Nelly, but because he's more myself than I am. Whatever our souls are made of, his and mine are the same; and Linton is different as a moonbeam from lightning or frost from fire". At no point in the novel we doubt Heathcliff's love for Catherine. He never means to harm her. His faithfulness towards Catherine is unmoved even after Catherine's rejection. After hearing of her illness, he says, "Existence after losing her would be hell".

Catherine Heathcliff relationship reaches its peak in an encounter between Heathcliff and Catherine, where Catherine is almost pushed to frantic madness. She reaches a stage where she is to choose between her husband and Heathcliff. In Nelly Dean's words, "He neither spoke, nor loosed his hold; for some five minutes, during which period he bestowed more kisses than ever he gave in his life before, I dare say; but then my mistress had kissed him first, and I plainly saw that he could hardly bare, downright agony, to look into her face. The same conviction had stricken him as me, from the instant he held her, that there was no prospect of ultimate recovery there-she was fated, sure to die". As readers we understand Heathcliff's anger, knowing the fact that Catherine loves him more than she loves her husband Edgar Linton. He doesn't even consider Catherine another individual, For him she is a part of his own being. In Heathcliff's words, "It is hard to forgive, and to look at those eyes, and feel those wasted hands," he answered. "Kiss me again; and don't let me see your eyes! I forgive what you have done to me. I love my murderer-but yours! How can I?"

The novel *Wuthering Heights* has inspired many movies, films and adaptations. The famous poet Dante Gabriel Rossetti says about the novel, "A fiend, of a book-an incredible monster. The action is laid in Hell, only it seems places and people have English names there".

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Between Tradition and Modernity: A Search for Alternatives in U. R. Ananthamurthy's Stallion of the Sun

T. Avinash

It is a well known fact that the discourse on tradition and modernity has gripped and shaped Indian debate of last one hundred and fifty years. It is also a well known fact that even in the so called era of post modernity; our negotiation with modernity has not yet ended. The evolving traditional Indian society is still grappling to come to terms with the discourse of modernity. As Jorgen Habermas long back argued, the project of modernity is incomplete and its grand universal values of rationality, technology and empirical science are still shaping our evolving society. Enlightenment modernity which was used by colonialists as a tool of domination was complexly negotiated by Indian creative writes, intellectuals, political thinkers etc. If we look at the negotiation with modernity, it was neither rejected completely, nor accepted entirely. The negotiation is marked by a fair degree of ambivalence. This is because as Partha Chatterjee correctly argues ours is a modernity of the once colonized. The same historical process that has taught us the value of modernity has also made us the victims of modernity. Hence our negotiation is but be ambiguous. On the one hand modernity acted as a catalyst in India's search for self identity. It gave a voice to the voiceless and the marginalized. It can be said that the so called Bengali reformers of the early nineteenth century were the products of this phenomenon of modernity. Thus it has a liberal dimension. On the other hand modernity also acted as destroyer as it was responsible for large scale displacements in Indian societies. It led to alienation, rootlessness, cultural inferiority and disappearance of many native worlds. In this sense it is a destroyer.

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Amith Chaudhuri argues that articulations of modernity and a secular identity of the middle class involve a trajectory of disowning and selectivity recovering its "Indianess". He further argues that this struggle is also the paradigm around which a substantial part of modern Indian literatures and cultures are structured. Chaudhuri gives us the example of the life of Michael Madhusudan Dutt to substantiate his argument about the conceptual framework of rejection and recovery to understand our negotiation with modernity. Madhusudan Dutt was born in 1824 into a well-to-do middle class family who wanted to be canonical English writes. Therefore he consciously rejected his Hindu identity and converted as Christian. This rejection of one's own identity and tradition was a result of the influence of the kind of modernity that that he was exposed of. But this rejection was a temporary rejection where in later he tries to recover his Indianess by choosing to write in his mother tongue Bengali. Thus this kind of rejection and recovery are the two goal posts where in between these poles our articulations about modernity are structured.

This kind of ambivalence marks U R Ananthamurthy's articulation on both tradition and modernity. Ananthamurthy is considered to be the most articulate and influential Kannada writer in post independent India. His works have a representative value in Kannada cultural context and show an intense engagement with cultural transactions. Again, throughout his literary career Ananthamurthy has intensely interrogated and scrutinized the contemporary society and its values. Therefore Ashish Nandy is right in calling him 'a critical insider'. I have chosen a Kannada writer not because he writes in my mother tongue but because there is a need to reassess a privileged writer like him to understand cultural transactions with the backdrop of colonial onslaught and modernity. An important thinker in Kannada G. Rajashekara has correctly called him 'a public intellectual'.

The story *Suryana Kudure* (Stallion of the Sun) must be read in contrast to his early works like *Ghatashradha* and *Samskara*. In these celebrated texts the novelist tries to interrogate and re-examine the values of hegemonic Agrahara. The conscious attempt of the narrator was to scrutinize one's own tradition with the tools of rationality and modernity. Agrahara is seen as a centre of exploitation and its internal contradictions and paradoxes are ruthlessly exposed. The identities are

re-negotiated and re-established. In other words, Ananathamurthy's early works, exhibit what Amith Chaudhuri has called 'a process of disowning of one's own native tradition'. The writer felt that contemporary society was sick and there was an urgent need to initiate a cure. To do this, the writer has employed the tools of rationality.

However *Suryana Kudure* (Stallion of the Sun) is a story which interrogates the very notion of western style development, progress, rationality, technical know-how, industrialization, market capitalism etc. It is a complex story which re-presents the tensions between two value systems of life without trying to give an easy simplistic solution. The narrative tries to re-create a lost, forgotten world of native knowledge system and tries to gain a balance between the roots of one's own tradition and the onslaught of colonial modernity. The dismissed world of Agrahara is revisited again. In other words *Suryana Kudure* becomes a 'site' in which different ideologies operate.

The story is narrated from three different angles and hence represents three different possibilities. The narrator Ananthu represents a life system which is a product of colonial contacts. He is "London returned, urban based, English educated, rational and has success" in his life. Even his children are well settled. His view point is essentially to judge and value everything with the tools of rationality. He looks like *Amaldara* to Hade Venkata. In contrast to this, Hade Venkata has an "archaic" outlook with kumkum, wears *panche*, looks like a village bumpkin-an example for Marxian concept of village idiocy. He has 'failure' in his life, and has a spoilt son Subbu. The external society calls him Hade (irresponsible) because he still has unmarried daughters. He looks irrational to the narrator Ananthu. But, he is also cool, eco friendly, has a helping nature and he is an expert in Abhyanjana snana (oil massage). His world is essentially one of belief because he is a worshipper of Kali and believes in Panjurli and Jettiga spirits. He is also a product of native knowledge system.

Now, by juxtaposing these two opposite characters, what does the narrative do here? The narrative in fact juxtaposes not just two characters, but two value systems of life and interrogates both of them. As D.R.Nagaraj correctly argues, in *Suryan Kudure* the battle lines are clearly drawn at the outset; the two conflicting characters Venkata and Ananthu have understood each other too well to begin on any false moves. It must be noted that the narration does not dismiss Hade Venkata's life style as 'irrelevant' and 'hollow'. Rather, the attempt is to 'see' and 'discover' the strength of the forgotten world of Hade Venkata and thereby trying to bridge the gap of the so-called 'Epistemological break' that the colonial experience has given us. Like Poornachandra Tejaswi's Mandanna in his celebrated novel *Carvalo*, Hade Venkata is not just a metaphor or a memory of the narrator's childhood. He is a living person, a contemporary of Ananthu, but has a different dimension altogether. As the story develops, Venkata becomes a challenge for a modern man like Ananthu which is symbolic. Ananthu's rationality and scientific outlook proves inadequate to comprehend Venkata's world completely. Hence he says "is he an idiot, or an intellectual or a saint?"

Thus this dramatic encounter, with highly stylized language gains political and historical dimensions. As D.R. Nagaraj argues the strong point of *Suryana Kudure* is that Ananthu's view point does not succeed in annihilating Venkata. One of the pioneers of European enlightenment Rene Descartes described the phenomenon as "I think, therefore, i am." This enlightenment created a kind of ego in human beings. Those life worlds which are not in the framework of modernity are treated as "irrelevant" and "useless" Ananthamurthy's narrative interrogates such a model of evaluation. The narrative forcefully tells us that the borrowed yardsticks are inadequate to understand the local life systems. There is an urgent need for alternative conceptual framework to negotiate with native cultures. Therefore in the story in sharp contrast to Ananthu's anxiety, Venkata is quite relaxed. It seems as though he is shaped by different cultural mould. By interrogating both the life systems, the story becomes open-ended and here Ananthamurthy employs ambivalence as a critical tool for exploration. The narrative does not privilege Venkata by default. The ritual of oil massage is the fulcrum of the text. The narrator has accused Venkata of passivity.

But in the concrete context of the story, Hade Venkata is far from that. He moves from victory to victory in an unobtrusive way. In *Abhyanjana snana* what gets ripped up is the rationalist mechanism of the narrator. One of the ambitions of Hade Venkata was to bring around a tiger and pacify it with oil massage. The great irony of the story is the art of presenting Ananthu himself as a tiger. Venkata succeeds in grabbing Ananthu-the tiger and begins oil massage with his forehead. D R Nagaraj further argues that this ritual becomes the sacred act of washing several layers of ideological dust that have gathered Ananthu. Here the story also escapes from the chain of realistic narration. In the process Hade Venkata celebrates and Ananthu loses his power to describe, to evaluate and to dominate Venkata. His chief virtue of rationality and logic fails him.

When this story was written during later part of 1980es, there was so much debate about cultural amnesia.- the kind proposed by thinkers like G N Devi, Ashish Nandy and D R Nagaraj. A close scrutiny makes us think that the story is a creative negotiation of a native writer to intellectual debate .At the end of the story a sort of amnesia takes over Ananthu completely. He realizes that Hade Venkata has his own philosophy of life and existence. His ego-a product of modernity, is broken. Right at the end of the story Hade Venkata takes him to a dense forest to reach those forgotten realms of existence and in a symbolic gesture Ananthu follows him. He who has failed to recognize Venkata has at last re-cognized him. The narrative in a brilliant manner interrogates Ananthu's value system of life without dismissing it altogether. The very notion of modernity and progress is questioned. This shows the shifting perspective of Ananthamurthy over a period of time (six decades of writing). Now the most important question that begs to be asked is whether the life style of Hade Venkata has the power and strength to construct an alternative to the life style of Ananthu? The narrative does not give a one sided simplistic answer to this question. The attempt is to search for a viable alternative to the onslaught of colonial modernity. It is important to note that it does not take a revivalist stance. Thus, this dramatic encounter has an existentialistic dilemma imbibed its narrative. As G.N. Devi argues, texts like *suryana kudure* examine west's role as a catalyst in India's process of self scrutiny and search for cultural identities.

I conclude this essay with Amith Chaudhuri's comment on writers writing in regional languages. Amith Chaudhari argues that articulations of modernity and secular identity of the middle class involve a trajectory of disowning and selectively recovering its Indianess. *Suryana Kudure* essentially attempts to 'recover' selectively the 'lost' self under colonialism. For a writer who has written *Gatashradha* and *Samskara*, writing *Suryana Kudure* has become a necessity.

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The Individual, Racial, Social Conflicts And Synergies In John Alfred Williams' Works

Azam Ataeiniya

Introduction

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The themes of conflict, resolution and synergy are present in a number of different works by John Alfred Williams. This paper will explore the way in which these concepts are represented and the relationship between them. It will evaluate techniques that Williams utilized in order to explore these phenomena and shed light upon his motivation for doing so. Williams sought to illuminate race-based issues by focusing upon racial conflicts within his works. However he also explored possible solutions to these problems and the way in which synergy is required in order to implement these resolutions.

Conflicts And Synergies In Individuality, Raciality And Society

It is arguable that conflicts involving racism are such a dominant theme in Williams' work on account of the fact that he is a black man who lived in the south of America during the segregation era (University of Mississippi, 2001) and is likely to have endured numerous different acts of racism. He has previously stated that he believes that his work has not received the level of acceptance and support that it deserves and that this is possibly due to his race. There is also speculation that he had a literary grant rescinded on account of rumors that he was set to participate in an interracial marriage (University of Mississippi, 2001). With these points in mind, it is little wonder he has penned so many works in which conflicts involving white society and black people are central to the plot.

The nature of the racial conflicts that Williams portrays differs from book to book. *Clifford's Blues* depicts the treatment of black Germans during World War II (Williams, 1999), whereas *Sons of Darkness, Sons of Light: A Novel of Some Probability* deals with ethnic tension and police brutality in the United States (Williams, 1999). Other works that he has penned deal with conflict on a psychological and institutional level. They do not feature acts of war but depict the mental warfare that Williams believes white society to be waging upon black Americans. This is the case in *The Angry Ones*, which portrays an educated black man being discriminated against by his white peers (Williams, 1996).

However Williams does not just portray ethnic conflict with no chance of resolution: in many of his novels, he also hints at solutions. Synergy within the black community and within wider society is often at the heart of the methods that he puts forward for solving racially based problems. In *Sons of Darkness, Sons of Light: A Novel of Some Probability*, synergy between a number of different minorities is utilized in order to attempt to bring about justice. Jewish, Italian and black characters work together in order to attempt to bring retribution to a racist police officer who got away with killing a young, black male. They whip up even more racial tension by doing so (Williams, 1999) but at least Williams acknowledges that synergy between numerous different groups can be a tool to fight oppression even if it causes problems by doing so. Williams has spoken in interviews about his disappointment at the lack of co-operation between Jews and black people (Horner, 1993). The events depicted in *Sons of Darkness, Sons of Light: A Novel of Some Probability* suggest that racism could be fought more effectively if the two minorities worked together. Williams put across the notion that these elements of society could potentially enact a change that would benefit the wider community as opposed to merely acting as individuals.

In *Sons of Darkness, Sons of Light: A Novel of Some Probability*, Williams also suggests that group consciousness amongst black people was required in order to fight racism. This highlights a synergy of individuals in the community as a potential solution. However this novel questions whether or not the black population coming together in protest could be successful and implies that force might be a better solution (Williams, 1999). Williams has previously drawn attention to the fact that numerous black activists have been assassinated for trying to bring about change (Williams, 1988). It could be argued that in *Sons of Darkness, Sons of Light*, he put across the idea that a racial conflict cannot be resolved via pacifism when one side is willing to engage in violent acts.

In *The Man Who Cried I Am*, a black character kills and eats white men as a reaction to the fact that white society already views black males as being perverted. When quizzed about his crime, he states that he believes that some good might come of them because it might make humanity strive harder to improve itself (Williams, 2004). Here the idea of violence as a means of resolving conflicts is being explored. The notion that brutal acts are sometimes justifiable on account of the fact that they bring about a positive result is one that has a direct connection to the black civil rights movement, as Malcolm X stated that he wished to achieve his goal by any means that were necessary. Williams used an extreme example in order to put across the notion that black people have been forced to adopt this attitude and behave in an extreme manner on account of the fact that they have been dehumanized by white society.

The Man Who Cried I Am also includes a scene in which the main character is killed by black CIA agents (Williams, 2004). This detail is used to suggest that there will never be a resolution to the racial conflict that exists in the world if black people fail to come together and some members of the black community continue to fight against their fellow African Americans. It suggests that synergy is required within the black population in order to present a solution to this problem. This is another instance of Williams suggesting a means of resolving conflict, although at the same time he is admitting that this resolution is unlikely to come along any time soon.

Williams has previously stated that if enough black people came together in a revolutionary movement, they could solve the problems that their race faces in contemporary America (Himes & Williams, 2008). This suggests that he believes that one of the main issues faced by the black community is a lack of unity. It explains why he focuses upon the issue of synergy within the African American population as a resolution to racial conflict. He appears to hold the view that a major factor that is holding back a solution being provided to this issue is the division that exists within black America. *The Man Who Cried I Am* contains a character that is based upon Chester Himes (O'Brien & Williams, 1973), another African American author who was best known for his detective novels (The State University of New York, n.d.). Himes was a strong advocate of the fact that black people coming together en masse to commit acts of physical force was the only way of ending the oppression of the black population in America (Himes & Williams, 2008). It is possible that Williams included this character in order to emphasize the notion of black militancy as a feasible resolution to white supremacy.

The plot against black people in *The Man Who Cried I Am* confirmed the suspicions of the central character that white people were willing to come together in spite of their differences in order to unite against black people if they felt their power was being seriously threatened (Johnson, 1988). This puts across the idea that Williams believes that doing so could help to bring a swift end to racial conflict. It is likely that this detail was included in order to touch upon the notion that the black community is less unified than other demographics and that this is holding it back.

The notion that synergy within the black community is required in order to solve racial conflict is also present in *Captain Blackman*. This novel presents a situation in which tension exists between a black soldier called Captain Blackman and his white superior Major Ishmael Whittman.

Blackman feels a sense of injustice on account of the fact that he is a better class of soldier than Whittman but yet Whittman has still managed to occupy a more senior position than him due to his racial origin (Williams, 1972). The story deals with the negative way in which black troops were often treated by their own side during conflict situations (James, 2001). It ends with Blackman dreaming about black soldiers banding together and taking over the military (Williams, 1972). Once again, the idea is put forward that black people could put an end to certain types of racial conflict by grouping together in order to force a stop to it. However the fact that this is portrayed a dream as opposed to reality implies that Williams has doubts as to whether this situation would ever actually come about.

Williams has previously stated that he believes that the greatest works of art are those that are of a socio-political nature (Glocke, 2011). It is therefore likely that the point that he was making is that appealing to white oppressors cannot solve the conflict between black Americans and white Americans; it needs to be addressed through a show of unified force. The notion that the only way of resolving conflicts is by black people teaming up with members of the same race and standing up to the aggressors is a running theme throughout Williams' works. It is present in *Jacob's Ladder*, which tells the story of a black man who travels to a fictional African country when asked to do so by the United States government in order to dismantle the nation's nuclear power plant. At first he is compliant but then he comes to the conclusion that he has more in common with the Africans than he does with the Americans and sides with the people of the country that he was sent to (Williams, 1989). This puts across the notion that black people can only resolve the issue of racial conflict by unifying as one.

Conclusion

Williams' works are heavily focused upon the theme of racial conflict and suggest that individuals can strive to resolve this conflict but that synergy within communities and within certain aspects of society is required in order to stand a strong chance of doing so successfully. He emphasizes the importance of unity within the black community and different minority groups working together for a common goal. Williams appears to truly believe that the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. He holds the view that collaboration is the key to overthrowing white oppressors.

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Praise of Mankind in John Steinbeck's The Grapes of Wrath

Dr. S. C. Bama Rani

The Grapes of Wrath, one of John Steinbeck's great experiments, explodes upon the American conscience in 1939, picturing the intimate reality of the Joads' suffering and the plight of the dust bowl, Oklahoma Migrants. The readers vicariously move with the hungry caravan to California and thereby they get exposed to the humane and the spiritual experiences. When the work was published in 1939, it proved to be an outburst of Steinbeck's anger at the farm workers' situation. Literary critics pointed this work to be a rebirth of optimistic and inspirational literature. It is an earnest appeal to the landowners to understand the poor condition of the working class. Louis Kronenberger remarks the novel as "the most moving and disturbing social novel of our time" (1).

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The novel is a detailed exposure of dreadful economic conditions and a declaration of love to the Masses. Walter Stein has remarked,

The Grapes of Wrath was primarily a novel, but more than Steinbeck's other works, it was informed by hard reality in which Steinbeck had immersed himself. Drawing upon the technique used by Herman Melville a century before Steinbeck punctuated his tale with... factual accounts, which supply a splendid account to California's migrant crisis. (202)

Steinbeck forcefully delineates the state of powerless tenant farmers who struggle for a new life and new self. It is the story of homeless migrants who are placed amidst bewildering mazes. But they don't fall a prey to crude misery. Instead they shake off their bewilderment, grow angry and fight for survival. They get ready to face a new development with hope and determination as the instruments. The novel is decked with ideal messages such as universal compassion, forgiveness, unity and a serene outlook. It also reflects the concept of Emersonian Transcendentalism, the essential goodness of man.

The Grapes of Wrath deals with a number of sociological, political, economic and agrarian aspects of an American family of Oklahoma in a particular time, the Great Depression of the thirties. It also deals with the inner life of the Joad family, their emotional, intellectual, ethical and spiritual state and its growth. But Steinbeck doesn't limit himself to just one family in a particular place and time. In the journey of the Joads the writer visions the various phases of life which is operated by various forces of nature. The society of Joads is given a thematic extension which embraces the whole of mankind.

It is the road 66 that helps them to find their hidden strength and courage. The bitter experiences teach them to face the strange things which make them beautiful. They were pain-stricken when they moved out of their lands. Ma Joad cries with a 'hardened face', "I never had my house pushed over.... I never had my family stuck out on the road. I never had to sell-everything-there they come now" (GW 89). They have sold everything they had. They find hard to forget their past. With a 'dreadful pain' they have burned their past into their memories. They didn't know of how to live without their past. But they regained faith and got into the truck which 'was the active thing, the living principle' (GW 115). The family of Joad held their peace and started to move. They undertake a sad long journey – a sort of a pilgrimage. The characters maintain identities. Keith Ferrell writes that the novelist has put in "a great deal of love in the book and a great deal of insight" (107).

Jim Casy, an ex-preacher, though fails in his part, successfully frees himself from physical and material urges. He is a pragmatist and an idealist. His motive is simple as he tries to improve

the poor farmers. Stoddard Martin has quoted the lines of Christopher Isherwood on Casy as “a new – Tolstoy figure, agnostic and perplexed, whose provisional creed is” “You gotta do what you gotta do” (GW 71). It is Casy who enlightens Tom Joad. Casy makes Joad realise the power of an individual and how each individual is a part of the Universal entity. His action taught Tom the duty of an individual in a group. Tom’s moral development has germinated from Casy. Casy is a simple character, he can express moral concern easily. Dougherty’s image of Casy as in Stoddard Martin’s work goes as “Casy is a John-the-Baptist figure, operating as a precursor to Tom” (GW 71). He enlightens Tom with the ideal principle: I to We. Warren French calls this transformation ‘education of the heart’. He writes:

What ‘education?’ – the education of the heart, one that results in change from their jealousy regarding themselves as an isolated and self-important family unit to their regarding themselves as part of a vast human family that, in Casy’s words, shares “one big soul everybody’s a part of.” (101)

Ma Joad, a strong character, shows positive attitude and echoes love and humanity. Her family regards her as the ‘power’ and she is always firm that her family should never break. She becomes larger than life. ‘Larger’ because nothing can alter her humanity and strength. Her soul is a celebrated soul and her family feels her strength and majesty. She remains the priest of her vision – a vision as broad as the ocean. Her trait of simplicity and humanity, indicate her ability to lend a helping hand to those who are in need and rightly helps the Wilsons family.

The house, the Joads are assigned, contains a single room for eight people. It is a room that smells of sweat and grease. The facilities will not be changed, if so they are worse. Migrant housing is grotesque and ‘nightmarish’ where they are subjected to inhuman, harsh treatment. Doomed to face inhuman and natural calamities, the immigrant families get destroyed by death, desertion or flood. The Joads act compassionately and charitably. Though they have few resources, they give a part what they have to, the helpless, who are neither related nor friends. The families traveled as a unit. Steinbeck portrays it as,

Two days the families were in flight, but on the third the land was too huge for them and they settled into a new technique of living; the highway became their home and movement their medium of expression. Little by little they settled into the new life. (GW 190)

Steinbeck calls them as ‘the best American stock’. The poor whites’ only wish is to survive amidst atrocities. When they start the flight, it becomes their primary motive. Just before they cross into California, Granma passes away and the detection of her dead body by officers of Agricultural Inspection would cause them immense difficulties. Ma Joad acts with courage and fortitude and pleads with the officers with great dignity. She sleeps next to the dead body under the tarpaulin cover during the night. When she discloses this the rest of the family can only look at her with ‘a little terror at her strength.’ She just wanted her whole family to get across and so she acted brave. Tom says, “Jesus Christ! You layin’ there with her all night long!” “The family hadda get across,” Ma said miserably (GW 269). The influence of Ma extends beyond her immediate family to other members of the camping community. She is outraged when the storekeeper at the cottonpickers camp charges her excessively for food. Again she did not stay shocked. Her calm dignity and sense of outrage kindles in the storekeeper (a hired man), a sense of decency and fellow-feeling and shame at the role he has been forced to. It impels him to pay the extra ten cents for sugar from his own pocket. The family of Joads faces innumerable predicaments and falls into a larger social organization.

The actions of Tom and Casy symbolise the spirit of unity and tolerance. The same principle is expounded by Emerson that love is the demand which can unite man. Jim casy preaches the religion of love. Emerson in “Hamatreya” has written “Tis mine, my children’s and my name’s... their avarice cooled like dust in the chill of the grave “. It shows that possessive

egotism is the unpardonable sin. Steinbeck writes, “The quality of owning freezes you forever into ‘I’ and cuts you off forever from the ‘we’ (GW 117).

As the Joads decline economically, they seem to enlarge their view of humanity. At the first camp in California, they do not have enough to feed their own family, but Ma leaves ‘a little something’ in the bottom of the pot for strange children, who has been standing around. Thus, the more the decline in economic condition, the more the vision for humanity grows. Despite the fact that the Joads family members are in great financial problems, they have a compassionate and enduring attachment for others.

The concept and power of Oneness has found an indispensable place throughout the novel. It shows that every person has the sense of divinity which becomes prominent when one understands the concept of unity. This has its base in universal compassion and forgiveness. Steinbeck has conceived it as, “The baby has a cold. Here, take this blanket. It’s wool. It was my mother’s blanket – take it for the baby. This is the thing to bomb. This is the beginning – from “I” to “we” (GW 177). The poor whites, ‘the eternal immigrants,’ know that all misfortunes can be destroyed if they stand united.

Steinbeck’s portrayal of Casy is the influence of the concept of the Brahman or the ‘Over-soul’ as the perceived by Emerson. Casy identifies himself in the wilderness. From the feeling of identification between man and nature, Casy arrives at the ultimate conception of one big soul of which everybody is a part.

His words are

“I ain’t saying I’m like Jesus, ...” “But I got tired like Him, and I went into the wilderness like Him.... Only I couldn’t figure what I was praying to or for: There was the hills, and there was me, and we wasn’t separate no more. We was one thing and that one thing was holy. (GW 94)

Tom Joad, through his association with the preacher Casy and Ma Joad with her ability to kindle the spirit of duty and fellow-feeling, contribute to the re-organization of the community itself. The Joads are not mere parasites, just one more family in the camp drawing sustenance from the camp. They are an active moral force whose presence reinforces the structure of unity. Their relationship within the family and with others is dynamic. The dreadful, incredible poverty mercilessly beats the Joads family. Even the very basic essentials of life seem to be a dream hard to achieve for them. Rose of Sharon gets pregnant and dreams to give her child all she can. It is the dream of every poor mother. Rose of Sharon shares her dream with her mother,

An’ connie says I’m gonna have a ‘doctor’ when the baby’s born...and the baby’ll have all new stuff.... We don’t want nothing fancy, but we want it nice for the baby—. (GW 192)

Her eyes glowed with excitement. But everything very firmly stays only as a dream.

Rose of Sharon’s gestures in the closing lines of the novel are considered to be a completion of the life cycle, an act that reaffirms the themes of re-birth and survival. A loss of immediate family seems to be a requirement to understanding one’s place as part of a community where all people are one great soul, the Oversoul. In giving a part of herself to a stranger, she experiences a spiritual movement that extends beyond herself and joins her with the enormous human family, the concept of an Oversoul. Rose of Sharon’s gesture, expressed to a man, who reminds us of Granpa, unifies the Joad family as they initiate their membership in the vast human family. Rose of Sharon is the representation of the Oversoul’s existence, also unifying all the people together as one. Just as the truck, symbol of the vitality of the family, is flooded and turned into useless existence, by the end of the novel, there is virtually nothing left of the Joad family except for the fact that the family remained as one, “We”

Frederick I. Carpenter maintains that the ideas about the individual's sacrifice in the interest of the community are shown through the characters. He writes,

The Grapes of Wrath brings together and makes real three great skins of American thought. It begins with the transcendental over soul, Emerson's faith in the common man, and his protestant self-reliance. To this it joins Whitman's religion of the love of all man and his mass democracy. And it combines these mystical and poetic ideas with the realistic philosophy of pragmatism and its emphasis on effective action. (89)

Steinbeck has handled the story with deep compassion. The novelist has not only exposed the suffering but also the pattern of thought, the mindset that transform them. Louis Owens says "The Joads including even the ultimately heroic and Christ like Casy, are no better, no greater, no less human than they should be" (*The Grapes of Wrath- Trouble in the Promised Land* 111).

The worth of man is celebrated and the story exposes poverty and its predicaments as tyrannical force which is challenged by man. The men of *The Grapes of Wrath* succeed by their innate strength. The strength in a man is the outcome of the compassion and love he has got for his neighbours. The novelist has made a thorough peep in life and his art achieves yet another dimension in the assertion that life is beautiful and worth-living, how – so - ever trying and challenging. He has emphasized that only good souls with basic morals of love and affection can survive. The underlying principle of this is self-realization – man is conceived as the micro cosmic representation of the macrocosm. His characters are rare as they are non-attached and turn their eyes away from worldly desires and see the individual self. The characters rediscover their lost harmony and transcend their aloneness by realizing their identity with mankind. They allow the currents of universal being to circulate through them and become part and parcel of the Supreme Being.

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Negotiating Female Characters Desolation, Angst and Issues of Assimilation In Jhumpa Lahiri's Mrs. Sen's and This Blessed House

P. Bindhu

Diasporic writings negotiate the trauma of the immigrants experience in the host land. The dilemma of the immigrants is painful, because it is excruciating for them to stay as well as complex to return to their native place. The colonization of the mind is a focal point in the diasporic experience. The 'otherness', 'dichotomy', 'hybridity', 'marginalization' and 'acculturation' of post colonialism are the key factors of Diaspora. The connotations of 'Diaspora' keep on shifting at various points of time. The history of 'Diaspora' clearly shows us several changes that occurred in the semantic of the 'Diaspora'. It is well known that 'Diaspora' is a Greek term, Khachig Tololian writes,

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The term that once described Jewish, Greek and Armeinian dispersion now shares meanings with the larger semantic domain that includes words like immigrants, expatriate, refugee, guest worker, exile community, overseas community, ethnic community (Clifford 303).

Now the term 'Diaspora' is applicable for expatriates, refugees and immigrants. Diaspora theoretician like Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin define 'Diasproa' as "the voluntary or forcible movement of people from their homeland into new region"(qtd in Naikar 192).

Diasporan writers explore the question of uprootedness, problem of identity, marginalization and transplantation. Immigrants always caught between double vision – 'looking forward' and 'yearning backward'. Their uncertainty, yearning for the past and complexities extends to the next generation, but these entire problems become less intense as they get influenced by their host land culture and assimilate themselves to it. Stuart Hall defines the experience of diaspora as, "not by essence or purity but by the recognition of a necessary heterogeneity and diversity – by a conception of identity which lives with and through not despite difference, by hybridity" (qtd in Naikar 194)

The diasporic Indian writing has attained a significant place in the world literature in all its genres like Poetry, Prose, drama, history and criticism. The diasporic writers are aware of culturally inflected attitudes though they are not the part of it, they can reproduce new perspective on the culture and country in which they live as well as to the country where they await to return. With the arrival of Salman Rusdie's *Midnight Children* (1981), Diasporic Indian writings, has acquired a requisite place in the literary field.

Indian diasporic women writers have more responsibility in representing two worlds, in which they live. Writers like Jhumpa Lahiri and Bharati Mukherjee write from their personal experiences as an immigrant. Their themes are connected to dual and fractured identity, ennui characters, accepting the host land and adopting its lifestyle.

The aim of this paper is to explore immigrant women characters in Jhumpa Lahiri's 'Mrs.Sen's' and 'This Blessed House' from her short stories collection of 'Interpreter of Maladies'. In the diasporic set up, Mrs.Sen in 'Mrs.Sen's' and Twinkle in 'The Blessed House' are oxymoronic. The former keeps up her stead unable and unwilling to be attuned to the American Societal and environmental atmosphere and the later spontaneous and willing to be one with the alien atmosphere and both the characters conform to Jhumpa Lahiri's affirmation that those that flex in the diasporic atmosphere can survive and those that cannot have to shrink and crumble into insignificance with their psyche disintegrated.

Mrs. Sen's seclusion in the host land

Mrs. Sen's is the story about the uprootedness and isolation of an Indian married immigrant woman and ennui of an American boy in his native place. Mrs. Sen is an Indian Woman, whose husband is a Professor of Mathematics in a University. Mrs. Sen is a baby sitter in this story. For the sake of her job, she is forced to learn car driving, in order to look after an eleven year old American boy named Eliot. She has to fetch him from his school in the evening. She engages herself in buying fish and cooking in her new world. The small boy is keen observer of Mrs. Sen. Actually this story is seen through the eyes of an American boy and he really enjoyed watching Mrs. Sen's work which is something different for him. Mrs. Sen interacts with Eliot without any age difference. Even she shares her loneliness with the foreign boy as, "Here, in this place where Mr. Sen has brought me, I cannot something sleep in so much silence." (115) Eliot soon understood whenever she mentioned, 'home' she meant 'India' and not her apartment, where she is now.

Eliot becomes very close to her and the small boy perceives the existence of an Indian Woman. He learns about two things which made Mrs. Sen happy. The first thing was the arrival of a letter from her family. "it was her custom to check the mailbox after driving practice" (121) she is happy when she find, "a blue aerogram, grainy to the touch, crammed with stamps showing a bald man at a spinning wheel and blackened by post marks"(121). Another thing that made her happy was fish from the seaside.

The story comes to end when, Mrs. Sen drives the car alone with Eliot, dashed against the telephone pole, but they escape with minor injuries. After this incident, Eliot's mother stops sending him to Mrs. Sen. She gives him a key and tells him that he has grown up and could stay alone. The first day when the small boy was alone, his mother calls him from her office and told him, "You're a big boy now" and asked him "you Okay?" He 'looked out the kitchen window, at gray waves, receding from the shore and said that he was fine.' (135).

This Blessed House – Clash between Sanjeev and his wife Twinkle in the host land

This Blessed house is the seventh story in the short stories collection of Interpreter of Maladies. It is a story of a young couple Sanjeev and Twinkle. They have met only four months before their marriage. Since both their parents are old friends, they arrange for their marriage. Sanjeev's parents still live in Calcutta, Twinkle's parents in California. Sanjeev and Twinkle moved to their new house at Connecticut.

The story begins with the discovery of white porcelain effigy by Twinkle. It fills her with joy and adventures. Her treasure finding continues with the wooden Cross Key chain, 3-D post card of Saint Francis, a painting of three men, against a black velvet background, unbearded Jesus and number of other images and objects. The previous owners had left sundry images and busts in different corners of the house. Twinkle is thrilled to hunt these busts, but Sanjeev's reaction towards it is different, he wholly resents seeing these images in his own house. "These objects meant something to Twinkle, but they meant nothing to him" (138)

The house is blessed one to Twinkle, whereas to Sanjeev it is a cursed one. They invited his friends for the house warming party. All are Sanjeev's acquaintances from the office and number of Indian couples form the Connecticut area. His friends appreciate his wife's sense of taste and charm. In the end when he sees her hands are wrapped around a solid silver bust of Christ, he helps her to reach the ground, but this time unlike other treasures, he realizes, "dignity, solemnity, beauty" in the treasure. Finally the story ends with point that Twinkle's taste will persistently prevail in their home.

Mrs. Sen and Twinkle: Disparity between Immigrant Indian Wives

The terms isolation, assimilation and cultural class are the key issues encountered by immigrants in the alien country. Jhumpa Lahiri through her created characters like Mrs.Sen, Eliot, Sanjeev and Twinkle registered how both immigrants and non-immigrants suffer and clash with their world where they belong. Lahiri delineates how the immigrants resist the dominant control when it is imposed on them. In order to surmount the seclusion in an alien country, Mrs.Sen engages herself by taking up the job of baby sitter. Mrs.Sen is displaced from her motherland. Her yearning and exhilaration for letter from her family members in Bengal, her Indian dishes especially fish curry, reflects her pathetic state as an immigrant. She shared her emotional conflict with the American boy Eliot. Here Rajinder Kumar Dhawan Says, "The American Child is gradually exposed to the life of an Indian woman in her kitchen" (113).

If this is the condition of immigrant wife, in contrast with Mrs.Sen, Twinkle in *This Blessed House*, is also an immigrant wife, unlike the former Twinkle has brought up in America, so she its easy for her to adopts and assimilate with her host land. Lahiri brilliantly differentiated these who women characters the way they dressed, their interest, their life style and how they want to retain their individuality in the alien country.

Jhumpa Lahiri through the characterization of Mrs.Sen she has brought out a typical Bengali married Woman's experience in a host land. Mrs.Sen wears sari and her closet filled with saris of different shade and 'brocaded with gold and silver threads' (125). Even though she has a variety of saris, she could not wear it in her host land, it makes her dejected, fidgety and sense of displacement surrounds her. But twinkle in contrast wears western dress; she smokes and drinks alcohol whereas Mrs.Sen is far away from this new culture. Twinkle is careless and content with what she discovered, but Mrs.Sen is a typical Indian wife she takes care of her household works circumspectly and discontent from her present life, she is longing for the past and says to Eliot that, "They think I live the life of Queen, They think I press button and the house is clean. They think I live in a palace" (125). Here 'They' refers to her relatives in India.

Mrs.Sen does all her household things but Twinkle never cared about cleanliness, the scattered unsettled matters in their new house. All this doesn't bother her. She is cheerful and curious only about the treasures in their new house.

Like Mrs.Sen, Sanjeev in 'This Blessed House' longs for the past. His college books remains him, ".....he would walk each evening across the Mass...order Mughlai Chicken with Sphinach from his favourite Indian Restaurant" (138). Both Mrs.Sen and Sanjeev respects and love their culture, food and they strive to retain it in their host land. Lahiri uses food as a metaphor in almost all her stories. In 'Mrs.Sen's' and 'This Blessed House' food is the most indispensable ingredient as the characters in the story, Mrs.Sen and Sanjeev both are very fond of Bengali (Indian) food. Mrs. Sen, shares about her zeal for fish and Bengali food with the American child. She feels happy in an alien land only when she gets fish. For Mrs.Sen Fish becomes her home, her state, her neighborhood, her friend and family. Fish gives her a sense of immediacy toward her people.

Sanjeev is also fond of Indian Food in contrast with Twinkle. When Twinkle mentioned about her plan to use Vinegar, he asked, "you've never cooked anything with Vinegar" (136), because, he prefers Indian food to western. Indian food bothered Twinkle, "She detested, chopping garlic, and peeling ginger and could not operate a blender," (144). So during weekend Sanjeev takes the role of cook. Even for their house warming party he arranged 'Samosas from an Indian Restaurant', and he himself prepared, 'big trays of rice with chicken and almonds and orange peels', (150).

Food obtains conspicuous role in all Lahiri's stories. When the taste buds are not placated during hunger, then food become a stipulation to endure and not anything to be enjoyed. The preoccupation of her stories with food and food habits of people is testimony of Lahiri's elaborate portrayal of diasporic life.

Sense of loneliness and cultural clash

Jhumpa Lahiri vibrantly brings out the cultural clash through Mrs. Sen and Eliot's Mother. Mrs. Sen always insist Eliot's mother to have something to eat, as it is her culture to give something to eat to the guest, but it is not Western culture. Eliot's mother does not like to have food in Sen's house, "she refused a biscuit each time Mrs. Sen extended the plate in her direction," (113). Mrs. Sen's behavior is always disdained by Eliot's mother, while she serves her Indian dishes to her. Eliot is well aware of his mother's derides Indian food.

Eliot is a fervent observer of both Mrs. Sen and his mother's activities. He knew that his mother after reaching their beach house, "she pour herself a glass of wine and eat bread and cheese" (118). In reality the American boy enjoyed the company of Indian woman. He never felt sense of seclusion when he was with Mrs. Sen, but the story ends with his loneliness in his native soil. He is stuck with ennui when his mother separated him from an Indian Woman. Through this story Lahiri registered that sense of loneliness and yearning for their beloved one are encountered both by the immigrant and non-immigrant in the land where they be/long.

If there is clash between immigrant (Mrs. Sen) and non-immigrant (Eliot's mother), in the case of Sanjeev and Twinkle in 'This Blessed House', it is entirely different, both are Indian immigrants, though Sanjeev assimilates with the American life style, still he wants to retain his own culture in his host land, but Twinkle out rightly adopted and assimilated with the host land culture. She even detested Indian food. She is thrilled with her treasure hunt, charm and a kind of excitement surrounds her whenever she finds out new treasure of Jesus it actually irritates Sanjeev and he hates that because Twinkle loves it. Twinkle's sudden obsession for iconography irks Sanjeev. This results in verbal dispute between them. She is excited about the 'treasure hunt' but for Sanjeev these images and bust are sheer debris. He is very much concerned about how these images reflect about his religion to his co-workers. But for Twinkle all these issues have no significance. Though Sanjeev starts leading an Indian American style in the host land, he comes across the question of his religion during his house warming party, when one of his co-worker after seeing the Christian images in his new house he enquired, "...are you guys Christian? I thought you were Indian" (151). This made him to explain about his religion that, "there are Christians in India, but we're not" (151).

Though both Sanjeev and Twinkle belong to same religion and country, the disparity between them in the host land reveals the conflicts of belonging to 'Two World' and issue of assimilating with a new-fangled culture.

Conclusion

Thus through these characters Lahiri differentiates how both Mrs. Sen and Twinkle encounters the issue of assimilation in their own way. Women characters in Jhumpa Lahiri's short stories negotiate their individual identity in the alien land. Lahiri brilliantly stressed that the issue of assimilation is wholly depends on an individual whether to accept or not. Lahiri projects two sides of immigrants' life in the alien land. On one side immigrants are influenced by westernization and they easily adopts its culture and life style whereas on other area immigrants like Mrs. Sen, struggle with the diverse culture in order to lead a normal life in a land where they are no one. They tussle with 'Two World' and long for their past in the present.

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The Historical Play in India: An Ongoing Dialogue between the Past and the Present

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...in colonial and postcolonial contexts, legitimized histories co-exist and often collide with non-historiographic, overtly fictional forms of historical writing that perform complex epistemological and cultural functions and intervene significantly in the discourse of history. The two kinds of narratives are fundamentally intertextual, since a serious historical "fiction" both emerges from and returns to "history"; indeed, at one level they can be regarded as alternative forms of figural representation.

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—Aparna Dharwadkar (1995)

It is admirable that Dharwadkar has successfully attempted to define the essence of historical play in such a precise manner as in the statement quoted above. She has explored two significant trajectories: first, that of 'fiction' emerging from 'history' and secondly, returning thereto. What is crucial for a polemical engagement with the genre of historical play is to explore the interface zone between the two movements so stated. It is so because the representation of significant events of the past through dramatic forms such as theatre involves a reworking of the characteristics attributed to the former in an endeavour to examine their topical relevance. At the same time, the dramatic performance is applauded significantly for its ability or rather necessity to invoke the past thereby in order to excavate the characteristic associations embedded in the psyche of the audience.

It is with this twin objective in mind that an attempt has been made in this essay to undertake a comparative analysis of three Indian plays, namely, *Kichaka-Vadha* (Killing of Kichaka, 1907) by Krishnaji Prabhakar Khadilkar), *Mahavidroh* (The Great Rebellion, 1973) by Utpal Dutt and *Tughlaq* (1964) by Girish Karnad. These three plays capture significant moments in pre-historical (end notes 1) and historical India. They 'emerge' out of those moments as historical allegories and in the process, exact tremendous pertinence in their fictional re-enactment in the socio-political context of colonial and postcolonial India. And it is understandable that depicting as they did, problematic issues culled out of the archives of the past and their relationship with the present, no less than two of these playwrights had to face the censorship regulations and severe admonitions from the ruling authorities.

Rakesh Solomon aptly sums up this problematic situation in the following words:

Because of this birth and nurture at the colonial intersections of British and Indian cultures, the modern Indian theatre embodied collisions as well as strategic collusions between different cultural traditions. Given the realities of the colonial project and of the patriotic resistance to it, the modern Indian theatre also became a potent site of contestation between imperialist and nationalist ideas, ideologies, and agendas. Parallel features survive in a postcolonial Indian theatre whose defining characteristics include a widespread interest in intercultural experimentation and political engagement. (Solomon, 1994: 324)

The Dramatic Performances Control Act XIX, enacted in the Supreme Legislative Council in Calcutta (now Kolkata) as early as 1876, empowered the government to "prohibit public dramatic performances which are scandalous, defamatory, seditious, or obscene" (India, 1958: 2:74; quoted in Solomon, 1994: 325).

Kichaka-Vadha: Reenacting the Mahabharata

Khadilkar was one of the several Marathi playwrights who were prosecuted between 1898 and 1910 in the then Bombay Presidency. His play *Kichaka-Vadha* was a reworking of the Mahabharata's *Virata-Parvan* or the 'Book of Virata' which delineates the final part of the Pandavas' sojourn at the court of King Virata as a part of their *agyatavasa*, the thirteenth year of exile to be spent in disguise. The play focuses on their confrontation with Kichaka, the Marshal of Virata's army, his pursuit of Draupadi (disguised as Sairandhri) and ends with his eventual death in the hands of Ballaba who was none other than Bhima. Khadilkar draws interesting parallels with the contemporary reign of Viceroy Curzon who, like Kichaka, aimed to covet someone else's possession by pursuing Draupadi who might very well represent Mother India.

However, what is more important is Khadilkar's representation of the ensuing debate between the liberals and the nationalists within the Congress party. Kankabhata (the disguised Yudhisthira) symbolized the liberals in their attempt to approach the Government through constitutional means. As against him, Ballaba adopted the nationalist stance to emancipate Draupadi from the stranglehold of the tyrant Kichaka through the use of force and violence rather than pleading before the king Virata to intervene in this matter. Ballaba symbolized the contemporary influential figure of the nationalist leader Bal Gangadhar Tilak who "[in order] to rally mass support for anti-colonial resistance ... had strategically fused patriotism with recently reformulated ideals of a resurgent Hinduism" (Solomon, 1994: 331). This covert political message was gradually decoded and Khadilkar had to bear the brunt of Viceroy's wrath, but not before the authorial objective of political awakening was sufficiently put across the stage to the audience.

Mahavidroh: A Reinterpretation of the 1857 Mutiny

The other two plays are more contemporary in their engagement with the socio-political atmosphere of postcolonial India. Of key importance to this genre of historical drama in the period following Independence is the theatre of Utpal Dutt, a prominent Marxist playwright, theatre practitioner, theorist, critic and actor in Bengali, English and Hindi cinema and theatre, who also made a significant contribution to political theatre in post-Independence India through his Little Theatre Group, which, formed in 1947 in Bengal, became a central site for staging the struggles of oppressed groups against repressive forces. According to Bhatia (1999: 169):

Unlike the national theatres of earlier decades which deployed historical themes to spread the message of Indian unity and anticolonial solidarity, Dutt's return to historical events is marked by the need to comment on the profound divisions in post-colonial India which challenge the myth of Indian unity sustained by both alternative and official versions of nationalism. In so doing, Dutt's theatre engages a dialectic that examines history in all its complexities and contradictions and demands to explore its implications for official narratives of nationalism in post-colonial India.

In *Mahavidroh*, Dutt re-enacts the 1857 rebellion at the high point of the Naxalite movement in 1973 in an attempt to examine the resurfacing of economic exploitation which had, in the earlier movement, was the underlying factor behind the greased cartridge incident which is generally attributed as the immediate cause of the uprising. Through unfair systems of rural land-ownership and forced cultivation of cash crops, (end Notes 2) the British had crippled the agrarian economy of rural India. The indigenous textile industries too suffered because of the heavy duties imposed on Indian imports into England. The Naxalite movement was a similar fight against economic exploitation of the landless and tribal labourers at the hands of the feudal elite powered by governmental support.

The play is set in the year 1840 and traces the trials and tribulations of three generations of a family of weavers. Budhan is punished by the East India Company for selling his hand-woven cloth

at a lower price than that of the imported British cloth. His son, Bishen Singh runs away from home and returns seventeen years later as Risaaldar Heera Singh, a soldier fighting against the colonizers. His son Kalu too runs away and, changing his identity to Lachman Singh, returns to the Meerut Barracks as an orderly of General Nicholson, just before the outbreak of the mutiny. Soon, Heera Singh is wrongly charged for treason followed by a death sentence which is unknowingly approved by Lachman Singh, a mistake which he realizes too late to save his father even though their relationship is revealed by his mother at the precise moment of the hanging. The family is ruined and so are the chances of the rebels when the emperor of Delhi is imprisoned at the end of the play. The play basically depicts a family drama of changing fortunes with the 1857 rebellion at the backdrop. What is significant in terms of its connection with the Naxalite movement is the issue of economic importance. In an important conversation between Budhan Singh and another character named Panjakush, the matter of the destruction of muslin industries and the vast export of cotton into England is discussed. This conversation draws adequate force by being quite pertinent to the present postcolonial context where the emergence of state nationalism, with its apathy towards the minority sections of the society, denies them the requisite autonomy of operation. The Naxalite movement, with its first uprising in 1967, fought for the rights of the peasants and landless labourers and was later carried on by the Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist). The United Front Government in West Bengal took severe action against the movement, which Dutt equates with the measures adopted by the British Government in the suppression of the 1857 rebellion. However, Dutt leaves a positive message in his emphasis on the participation of the community in a collective struggle against the oppressive power regimes.

***Tughlaq* and the Utopian Edifice of Nehruvian India**

The third play under discussion, *Tughlaq*, written by Girish Karnad, is a historical fiction revolving around the eponymous fourteenth-century Islamic sultan of Delhi. As a primary historical source, Karnad refers to *Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi* (1357) written by Zia-ud-din Barani who was in Tughlaq's court for seventeen years and is also a character in his own right within the play itself. Karnad draws upon his chronicling to delineate, in a sequence of thirteen scenes, the real-life narrative of Mohammad-bin-Tughlaq, whose numerous well-intentioned political decisions are subsequently brought to naught or misappropriated in the course of the play. His desire to initiate a new system of dispensing justice is misused by Aziz to secure a position in the court. He then takes advantage of Tughlaq's decision to shift the capital to Deogir (which he renamed Daulatabad) by robbing the travellers on their way to the new capital. When Tughlaq introduces copper coins as having token value as gold and silver, Aziz punctures his attempt to revive the imperial economy by making counterfeit coins. Finally, when the emperor invites Ghiyas-ud-din Abbasid to spread the message of peace and joy in his kingdom, Aziz murders him only to impersonate him and presents himself before Tughlaq. Though his plans are ultimately foiled, he nevertheless is extenuated by the emperor because the latter, in a state of utter dejection, realizes that only Aziz could understand his motives, and consequently becomes his 'true and loyal disciple'. This realization of the emperor of the inherent impossibility in materializing his idealistic ambitions bears the crux of the political implications embedded in the play.

And this realization has immediate contemporary relevance in the context of the beginning of the dissolution of the utopian edifice of Nehruvian India, which gets its first jolt of reality with the outbreak and outcome of the Indo-China War in 1962. If the failure of Tughlaq's idealistic project finds contemporary equivalence in the impracticalities of the visionary idealism of Gandhi and Nehru, then his subsequent adoption of violent and repressive means to further his ends aligns him with the authoritarian regime of Indira Gandhi in the later years and her manipulative nature of leadership. Tughlaq's secular vision of establishing a kingdom wherein the religious diversity would no more act as a stumbling block is debunked throughout the play.

Very few plays in India have been so politically topical as to be able to represent dramatically, through historical associations, the current political situation of the country which is severely affected by religious fundamentalism and widespread secessionist movements. And unlike the two plays discussed before, this play can actually move beyond even from its direct historical parallel in the present and possibly forebode happenings that threaten every now and then to alter the political map of the country.

Implications

Re-iterating Dharwadkar's notion of 'fiction' returning to 'history', these three plays can also be seen as illuminating a historical past which is either glossed over, or misinterpreted by historians, or even overshadowed by subsequent historical periods. This re-enactment of history on the stage takes it out of history textbooks and places it on the present platform wherefrom a constant interaction between the two temporal contexts can take place thereby enriching both; one by re-contextualizing history which testifies to its continuing relevance in the present and the other, by understanding the present not as discontinuous but always engaged in a continuous dialogue with the past, however less apparent it might be. And the theatre as an art-form provides the best medium for carrying forward this dialogue between the past and the present, especially in the Indian context, where one is constantly mediated by the other.

End Notes

1. According to the Western demarcations of history as recorded time. However, in the opinion of Irawati Karve: "According to English literary usage, both the Mahabharata and the Ramayana are called epics. Indian tradition, however, distinguishes between the two by calling the Mahabharata a history and the Ramayana a poem. Unlike the Ramayana, the main purpose of the Mahabharata is to record events." (Yuganta, Disha Books, 1991)

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2. This forced cultivation of cash crops was dramatized in the play *Nildarpana* (The Mirror to Indigo Planters) by Dinabandhu Mitra, published in 1860 and first staged in Dacca (now Dhaka) in 1861.

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Gender of Choice and Support Spaces in ‘Bombay Talkies’

Gurmangeet Kaur Baath

Introduction

Gender has been a widely debated topic since the time it has come into focus. It is a field marked by potholes, mires, fog and a lot of ambiguity. However, interestingly enough, though the field itself is marked by ambiguity, sometimes there is a stress placed on maintaining the gender boundaries, even if this stress is placed due to certain assumptions. So today, even as issues like gender inequality and oppression remain a cause of concern, gender seems to be limited to a gender binary for most people, though alternate gender expression and genders beyond the gender binary have been acknowledged due to the efforts of the transgender community, the LGB community as well as many others. The wide acceptance of gender binary can be seen in the United Nations’ definition of gender as –

“...the social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female and the relationships between women and men and girls and boys, as well as the relations between women and those between men. These attributes, opportunities and relationships are socially constructed and are learned through socialization processes. Gender [also] determines what is expected, allowed and valued in a woman or a man in a given context” (UN Women).

In concurrence with this definition, gender equality is defined as “...the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys” (UN Women).

Thus, while the effort of accomplishing gender equality has made some progress, the goal is still far from achieved (United Nations) and this endeavour has missed a vital area since even here the gender binary is re-established and reaffirmed. Though transgender people – transgender women and transgender men – are not always explicitly excluded from these spaces, they often end up being ignored – consciously or unconsciously – and there is often no space for crossdressers, intersexuals, bigenders, genderqueers, third gender and many other people falling under the transgender umbrella, who in their gender expression or chosen gender do not conform to the norms of the society and resultant gender binary. This exclusion, when deliberate can be vitriolic and debasing as in the case of Beth Elliott, who was excluded on the basis of the argument that she was a male transvestite and not really a woman (Stryker 102-105), and Sandy Stone who was attacked by Janice Raymond in her book *The Transsexual Empire: The Making of the She-Male* where she asserted –

“All transsexuals rape women’s bodies by reducing the real female form to an artefact, appropriating this body for themselves” (Stryker 106)

More recently, these assertions remain prevalent in certain places where transgender women and men are not seen as being ‘real’ women or men and there is again no space for the transgender community in the dominance of the gender binary.

This does not imply that there is no concern or effort made to address the problems faced by the transgender people. Indeed, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has repeatedly asked for an end to gender and sexual identity based violence and discrimination –

“Let me say this loud and clear: lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people are entitled to the same rights as everyone else. They, too, are born free and equal ... All human beings – not some,

not most, but all [are born free and equal in dignity and rights]. No one gets to decide who is entitled to human rights and who is not” (UN News Centre).

Organisations such as the UNDP also fund programmes such as the ‘Regional Transgender and Hijra Issues Consultation in Eastern India’ which make an effort to uplift the transgender community.

However, the classification of transgender people with the LGB community is not without its own problems. One needs to be aware that gender identity is not equivalent to sexual orientation. So being a transgender person is not always dependent upon sexuality, a fact which many people are often unaware of and which leads to mistaken assumptions when the transgender community is classified with the LGB community. There can also be a certain hesitation and prejudice in the LGB circles as well where some people either do not see them as being woman or man enough or accuse them of being opportunistic (Sukthankar 93-94). Another problem is that many times being a transgender person is defined as not a choice but as a disability or “a difficult, uninvited challenge” (Sukthankar 96).

The transgender community however, defines gender as –

“A cultural distinction of maleness, femaleness, or other-ness. (It) Can label behaviours, colors, jobs, haircuts, people, and more!” (Bostian, Hill & Mays).

They also criticise the view that gender is only binary and stable. They see gender to be a choice, and as “multiple and fluid”, pointing out that “...gender identity, even within the reality of one person, can shift all the time within a lifetime” (Sukthankar 96-97).

Transgender community in India

In India, depending upon the region, there are many names and categories for the people under the transgender umbrella, such as Kothi, Chakka, Dhurani, Boudi, Sitang Sitang, Sada Suhagan to name a few. Due to the historicity of the Hijra culture, some people do not include them under this umbrella term while others do (“Report of the Regional Transgender / Hijra Consultation” 17; Sukthankar 92).

The community as a whole faces a two-fold problem. One, they face problems of discrimination, violence, prejudice, lack of respect, social security and many times even basic healthcare (“Report of the Regional Transgender / Hijra Consultation”). Second, as stated previously, the often predominant view that assumes gender to be binary and stable, excludes them from the struggle for gender equality. The fact that often they are times not even seen as a part of the ‘normal’ society makes their struggle for a life of dignity and respect an even more uphill task. This exclusion from the mainstream society often also causes them to resort to prostitution, further pushing them into a dangerous area where they lose even the minimal protection offered by law. Many times the law enforcers themselves become the perpetrators (Unite 13).

The transgender community in India has made some progress over the years. In 1994, The All India Hijra Kalyan Sabha got the voting rights for transgender people after a decade long fight. Transgender people like Asha Devi [Mayor of Gorakhpur] and Shabnam Mausi [Legislative Assembly in 2002] have been able to hold public offices. Rose Venkatesan has successfully hosted India’s first transgender talk show. Tamil Nadu now allows transgender people to identify as a third gender. Tamil Nadu also formed a Transgender Welfare Board in 2008 and offers free sexual reassignment surgery in its hospitals (“Making the Invisible Visible”). Since 2012, the Election Commission of India has allowed transgender people to enroll as ‘Others’. Currently 28, 314

electors are enrolled as ‘Others’ (6). This is likely not the entire number as some people may hide their identity and lead a double-life (UN Web TV 3).

However, this promising picture also has a flip side. Asha Devi was unseated in 2003 because a local court declared that she was ineligible for this post as it was reserved for a woman (PTI). In 2002, Kamla Jaan, the former mayor of Katni, Madhya Pradesh, and the first eunuch mayor of India, was unseated on the same grounds (Haviland). Kamla Kinnar suffered the same fate in 2011 (Gupta). While the law of the country keeps them hanging, transgender people still face prejudice and violence not only from the country at large but also from their families. In 2002, in Bangalore, a hijra named Chandini burned to death. Her husband maintained that it was a suicide due to his ‘discovery’ that Chandini was genetically male and the subsequent rejection. However, activists maintain that it was a murder perpetrated by her husband (Famila et al.; Sukthankar 93). Aunt Noori, an Aravani, recalls when she was –

“...thirteen years old, her parents, upset by her behaviour, stripped her, then poured sugar syrup on her, and left her tied to a tree with an army of ants on her body. A neighbour took pity on her, gave her clothes and told her to leave the village. That was the last time she saw her family” (UN Web TV 2).

Unfortunately, many such perpetrators escape using ‘gay panic’ or ‘trans panic’ as a seemingly valid excuse (Sukthankar 93).

These are just a tiny proportion of the daily distresses faced by transgender people in India. The historic 2009 judgement by Delhi High Court which overturned Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code was a ray of hope to many, including the transgender people. However, the Supreme Court judgment in 2013, added another nail in the stifling closet of LGBT people, with apparently “so-called rights of LGBT” or even the registered 28, 314 Other voters not being vital enough (Singhvi 93). Though the judgment maintains that it does not condone the misuse of this section by anyone (Singhvi 91-92), it has arguably still left the door of violence and discrimination once again wide open.

Most recently, the Indian Supreme Court has recognised the third gender and acknowledged the right of the transgender people to self-identify their gender as male, female or the third gender and their right for the chosen gender to be legally recognised. The judgment has the best intentions at heart and instructs the government to start certain reforms which address the various problems faced by the transgender community – social stigma, social pressure, health, education, jobs, safeguarding of their rights and so on – to restore the lost status of the transgender community (K.S. Radhakrishnan). However, as seen through above accounts, this is not an easy task and one of the most important steps is the creation of public awareness, another direct of the Supreme Court judgment, to expand the gender binary, change social attitudes regarding the transgender community and move towards their inclusion instead of exclusion from the society.

As such the judgement is a much welcomed balm but the existing and entrenched see-sawing attitudes and constant vagueness coupled with attacks – both physical and mental – have driven the transgender people to form their own networked communities and areas that provide them with a support system away from the stigmatisation and marginalisation. Hijras have an entire hierarchical system in their community, complete with households, nayaks [senior leader], gurus [teacher/leader] and celas [disciples] (Reddy 58). Others like zenanas and kada-catla kotis have their own communities in a spatial and temporal space or even outside a spatial sense (Reddy 62 & 66). Seen as societal outcasts, it is in these communities and areas that the transgender people can, to an extent, declare and live in their gender of choice.

Gender of choice and support systems in ‘Bombay Talkies’

Gender is not only about the declaration of gender identity but also about the attached actions. Along with the entrenched gender binary, there are already existing, gendered assumptions about the ‘correct’ behaviour of a girl or a boy and ensuing expectations about the whole lifestyle. Thus, the lifestyle becomes not an individual choice but another area marked by society. One of the first steps to identifying one’s own gender, at times, might be certain actions which in turn might lead one to their gender of choice. The 2013 Bollywood movie *Bombay Talkies* is an anthology of four stories. This paper explores the gender of choice and the support system in the story of the little boy, Vicky, who makes initial forays into identifying his gender of choice.

The story opens with short statements by different kids about their dreams regarding what they want to be when they grow up. The dreams recounted range from fairly expected to a little out of the box, from a Miss India to a Jockey. This story is about a dream that is just a little different – a dream of being a dancer like ‘Sheila’. Vicky is a young boy of probably 10 - 12 years old and a part of an average, middle-class Indian family made up of a father, a mother and an older sister. However, there is one undisclosed difference, the difference of Vicky’s dream. Vicky’s father shares the fairly common view that boys should be tough, masculine and interested in ‘manly’ activities like sports. As a result of this expectation, Vicky has been made to enroll in football classes despite his protests professing his disinterest. However, according to his father –

‘What does not appeal is not important. What is good is important. If you play football then you will become tough.’

Good here becomes synonymous with ‘right’ or more specifically ‘right’ according to the society. On the other hand, Vicky’s sister, Kavya, wants to go on a school trip but their father states a lack of funds due to the money being spent on Vicky’s coaching. The irony, of course, is that the money is unavailable because it has been spent on something not even remotely desirable to the recipient. Later revelations disclose that Kavya also harbours a dream that is a little unconventional; the dream of being a traveller. Vicky’s dream, on the other hand, is revealed in thought-provoking bits and pieces. He appears indifferent, confused and out of place while playing football; looks on longingly while dance classes, apparently only for girls, are held in his school; is enthralled by the song *Sheila ki Jawaani* and perhaps most tellingly, focuses on his mother’s lipstick application while he talks to her.

A glimpse of his dream is seen when he wears a dress in the seclusion of his room and an innocent smile appears on his face. The full-blown version, however, is seen when he dresses up in full regalia along with jewellery, heels, the much coveted lipstick and comes out dancing to *Shaam hai jaam hai*. His sister, though surprised, is also excited. However, his father’s reaction, upon the unexpected return of their parents is much more brutal. The blows and the speech once again reaffirm what the society sees as the ‘correct’ gender-specific behaviour for little Vicky –

‘What are you? What are you becoming? What do you want to be? What will you be when you grow up? Do you have any answer?’

This reaffirms that in the eyes of the patriarchal and heteronormative society there is no space for behaviour that crosses the rigid gender boundaries. However, as Vicky innocently asks Kavya after she has told him the cause of their father’s anger, ‘What’s wrong with girls?’ Indeed, after all if there is nothing wrong with girls then there should be nothing wrong in behaving like one.

Vicky's dream, however, is saved and nurtured in unexpected ways – by his idol, Katrina Kaif, and then by his sister, Kavya. Unbeknownst to Katrina, her words in an interview become a panacea and a motivation for Vicky –

'People don't always understand you; so they will discourage you. But you know what your dream is. So you have to take care of it. You have to nurture it. You have to protect it. And anyway it is not necessary that everything every time has to be told to others. There is a right time for telling everything.'

She becomes a literal, if imagined, fairy godmother to Vicky as his own inspired mind supplies more words for this magical manifestation –

'You know, you can do whatever you want, become anything you want. Follow your heart for there is magic in your dreams ... If you believe them, they will come true. Just believe that this will happen. No one can stop you.'

Thus comes Vicky's realisation that to protect himself and his dream he has to remain hidden for now, at least from his father. At the same time, he finds an unexpected confidante in his sister. This is the beginning of his exclusion from the heteronormative society and the formation of his own support system as he starts to express his gender of choice.

While Vicky's father is placated with the 'appropriate' male dream of becoming a pilot, Vicky is firmly aware of Katrina's words that have told him that while he may have to hide momentarily but suffocating his dream can kill it so he also has to let it bloom. This opportunity to let his dream blossom comes through his sister's own initial foray into realising her dream. Kavya's desire of going on the aforementioned school trip gives Vicky an opportunity for his self-expression. To gather the funds required for the trip, Vicky and Kavya hold a fundraising show in the absence of their parents. This show is Vicky's first formation of a small support system where he can express himself and move towards his gender of choice. The show is as grand an affair as they can manage and a shimmering manifestation of his dream. Not only does he get to dress up according to his desire, he also gets to pick a stage-name which reiterates his dream. The name is 'Sheila Sharma.' The audience may be small and there may be a couple of initial sniggers but they are soon silent as the audience is spell-bound while Vicky dances his heart out to *Sheila ki Jawaani*. The show's audience is not indifferent or merely accepting but rather a loud, thrilled, cheering, clapping and arm-waving affirmation for Vicky aka Sheila Sharma. Thus, Vicky's first foray into gathering his own support system, after the cruel realisation that his parents, usually seen by a child as unwavering source of support, are only a source of distress, is a resounding success. Within this support system he has successfully managed to blur the boundaries of gender, moved towards his gender of choice and been lauded for it.

Conclusion

It is the early reactions like that of Vicky's father, compounded and aggravated by lack of support in the larger structures of the country that drive transgender people and people with alternate gender expressions to either remain closeted or to form their own support systems – formal or informal. These spaces in turn become exclusive in the face of a world that excludes and shuns them. One should acknowledge that stereotypes may always be there and be perfectly good expression for some but they are not always enough and they need to be challenged. Gender expression is not static and neither is gender. Both of them are fluid, multiple and ever-changing. Areas of support and acceptance are important to most people and similarly, these small areas of acceptance and support mean the world to the transgender people. Here where boundaries are blurred, equality is more likely to find a better foothold. There is a need, now, to translate these small, secret spaces and open them into a wider world instead of seeing them as a threat to

masculinity or femininity. There is a need to dismiss the perpetuation of stereotypes and the attached binary and instead make gender a choice in place of an assigned assumption. One of the most crucial steps to doing this, as reiterated in the Supreme Court judgment, is the increase in public awareness about the possible world beyond the gender binary and thus, hopefully, a reduction in the attached disparaging and/or violent attitudes stopped from forming. The analysis of Vicky's story highlights that two key figures in this effort are the family and the school. They can provide initial and even later support systems to any individual while a lack there can lead to resultant support systems. Though, here the relief in the new support system was palpable and positive, it might not always be the case. As recounted in the initial portion of the essay, the exclusion might lead to a shoving of individuals to the fringes of the society and to a closeted life, violence and/or sex work. To counter this, awareness should be created from the ground level i.e. in the family and the school where there should be a conscious effort to check the perpetuation of the gender binary and instead there should be an encouragement of self-identification of the gender of choice. A spread of the education and awareness from here may be a beacon of hope that may stop the exclusion and seclusion of transgender people and may encourage bigger support systems that are located within the society rather than on its fringes.

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Rohinton Mistry: A Prestigious Member of Indian Diaspora

Dr. Hareshwar Roy

Rohinton Mistry, an incomparable writer, is a prestigious member of Indian diaspora. He has received acclaim worldwide. His work deals with Indian sensibilities. His realism and transparent style are always appreciated. According to Nandini Bhautoo- Dewnarain, 'Rohinton Mistry is a writer with great honesty of imagination. He does not attempt to follow fads and fashions. His writing suggests sensitivity to the beauty and the fragmentations, the failings and the cruelties of his world. Much of Mistry's fiction works with the humanistic premise that the universal lies in the ordinary. This is the trajectory he has chalked out for himself in the course of his brief but meteoric literary career.'¹ Mistry has enjoyed acclaim from critics both at home and abroad. Many put him on a par with Salman Rushdie, Vikram Seth, Anita Desai, Charles Dickens, Victor Hugo, Joyce, Thomas Hardy and Chekhov.

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'Rohinton has emerged as a significant literary figure during the 20th century. He is a socio-political novelist who has emerged as a formidable writer on world literary scene.'² Mistry, a great novelist and short-storywriter, was born into a Parsi family on July 3, 1952 in Bombay (now Mumbai), India's biggest city and heavily populated place in the world. Now as a naturalized citizen of Canada, Mistry lives in Brampton, Ontario. He grew up as a member of middle class Parsi community of Bombay. His father, Behram Mistry, worked in advertising and his mother, Freny Jhaveri Mistry, was a housewife. Cyrus Mistry, his younger brother, is a well known dramatist and short story writer.

Mistry earned a B. A. in Mathematics and Economics at the University of Bombay. In his late teens he joined a music school to learn music theory and composition. Music was the link that led him to meet his future wife Freny Elevia. In 1975, at the age of 23, he immigrated to Canada. Soon after going there he married Freny who had moved there a year before. 'Mistry Chose this self exile because he felt that there was not much of a future in India, for persons like him, who were poor in economy and also an alien by culture and community. Soon after his arrival in Toronto, he started working as a clerk at the Imperial Bank of Commerce'³, but, after three years, he and his wife, joined studies at the University of Toronto, and earned his graduation in English and Philosophy.

In 1983 he began his literary career. Encouraged by his wife, he set out to win a university literary contest by writing his first short story *One Sunday*. He devoted several days to the story, entered it in the University of Toronto's Hart House Literary Contest and earned first prize. The same prestigious award he also won the following year for his short story *Auspicious Occasion*. He became the first person to win two such prizes. He still worked at the bank. Despite his status as a relative novice, his literary stature continued to rise when he won The Canadian Fiction Magazine's Annual Contributor's Prize for 1985. Afterwards, with the aid of a Canada Council grant, he left his job to become a full-time writer. Two years later, his collection of eleven short stories, *Tales from Firozsha Baag* was published by Penguin Books Canada in 1987. Later on it was published as *Swimming Lessons and Other Stories from Firozsha Baag* in the United States. This work was short listed for Canada's Governor General's Award for best fiction.

Mistry's contributions to literature include *Tales from Firozsha Baag* (1987) or *Swimming Lessons and Other Stories from Firozsha Baag*, *Such a Long Journey* (1991), *A Fine Balance* (1995), *Family Matters* (2002) and *The Scream* (2006). His novels and short stories have been widely appreciated and are bestowed with numerous awards and recognition. His debut novel, *Such a Long Journey*, is the story of a Bombay bank clerk who unwittingly becomes involved in a

fraud committed by the government. It won the Commonwealth Writers Prize for Best Book and the Governor General's Award, and was short listed for the Booker Prize. His second novel, *A Fine Balance* deals with the State of Emergency in India in the 1970s. It also won many prestigious awards, including the Commonwealth Writers Prize for Best Book, the Los Angeles Times Book Prize for Fiction and the Giller Prize, as well as being short listed for the Booker Prize, the International IMPAC Dublin Literary Award and the Irish Times International Fiction Prize. In fact this novel is considered to be the best work of Mistry.

Mistry's Third novel *Family Matters* tells the story of an elderly Parsi widower living in Bombay with his step-children. It was short listed for the 2002 Man Booker Prize for Fiction. His work received its broadest exposure, however, when Oprah Winfrey selected *Family Matters* as her Book Club selection in December 2001. Mistry was a finalist for the 2011 Man Booker International Prize, which recognizes an author's entire body of work. In October 2011, he was awarded the 2012 Neustadt International Prize for Literature. He has a rare achievement to his credit. He is the only author, all of whose novels have been short listed for the Man Booker Prize. 'With just only four works Mistry has gained immense recognition as a literary figure.'

Mistry practices Zoroastrianism and belongs to the Parsi community. The Parsis are a petite religious community in India. They are descended from the religious followers of Zoroastrianism who fled from Iran to avoid forced conversion to Islam. The unpopular position of the Parsis at the end of British rule in 1947 influenced another Parsi Diaspora, this time to the West. Mistry's literature reflects his position as a member of a twice-displaced people. His Parsi roots have had a strong influence on his growth and development as a writer and his works mostly deal with the pathos and culture of the Parsis in India. His writings give a glimpse into the life of the people of his community and their experiences as a minority in a highly diverse society.

Mistry's writings are markedly nostalgic. They deal with the streets of Bombay, the Parsi way of life, the people of the city and even the politics of India. They depict the diverse facets of Indian socio-economic life and culture as well as the life, customs, and religion of the Parsis. They start with a family and gradually widen into the social, cultural, and political backdrop. The characters change and develop subtly. They have a remarkable capacity to survive. The details of their experience are chronicled with a painter's sensibility. Their interweaving narratives are totally engrossing. A Parsi himself, Mistry for the most part has set his fiction in India, and has focused on the aspirations, heroism, weaknesses, and marginality of the Parsi community with sympathy, humour, and love. Critics have praised Mistry's ability to present a fresh perspective on his native land. Jagdish Batra is of the view that 'while choosing the time-tested method of conventional story-telling, Mistry could very effectively communicate his point of view on the intractable complexities of life in India.'⁵

Tales from Firozsha Baag is Mistry's first collection of eleven interrelated short stories. It was warmly greeted by critics and general readers alike for its insights into the complex lives of the Parsi inhabitants of Firozsha Baag, an apartment building in Mumbai. This collection examines the nature of communal and personal identity from a Parsi perspective. A narrator presents the events and details of the characters' struggles to find their identities in the postcolonial India, as well as immigrants' attempts to adapt to their new worlds in places like Canada. These stories cover a broad range of subjects and tones: from poignant to surreal; ghostly to hilarious. Nandini Bhautoo-Dewnarain observes: 'Most of the stories in this volume are marked by the use of dialogic narrative modes as they introduce the voices, tones and rhythms of the community's language and its social practices. These multi-voiced and dialogic narrative modes enable multiple perspectives within each of the stories, thus effecting a potentially post modernist explosion.'⁶ Here 'Mistry uses the narrative technique of memory and remembering.'⁷ In short, this fantastic collection is 'a study in human relationships. Although the community living within the precincts of the building is Parsi,

yet this fact does not deprive the stories of their universal character. Besides, there are also inter-faith and inter-race dealings.’⁸

Mumbai is the background of Rohinton Mistry’s debut novel *Such a Long Journey*. The citizen and the nation, the public and the private spaces of identity, the family and the political corruption are the major themes of this novel. It is loosely based upon a series of real events that took place in India during the Indira Gandhi administration in 1971. It deals with basic and serious issues of life. It gives extremely detailed description of the lives of Gustad and his family in their apartment in Bombay. It is an intricate tale of ‘a few middle class characters in the contemporary India.’⁹

In *Such a Long Journey* Mistry narrates a pathetic and rather gloomy story of the protagonist, Gustad, who is a bank employee. ‘Though he has to confront hardships in life, he has some dreams about the future prosperity of his family’¹⁰. He has three children. Sohrab and Darius are his sons. Roshan is his daughter. The name of his wife is Dilnavaz. This bank clerk with the members of his family lives happily at Khodadad Building. Gustad’s happiness does not last long. A series of tragic events take place in his life. The sudden disappearance of his bosom friend, Major Jimmy Bilimoria from Khodadad Building, Sohrab’s refusal to enroll himself as an IIT student and Roshan’s illness upset him. He has to face problems at every stage of life. His dreams are shattered. The end of the novel is symbolic. It symbolizes a new beginning: ‘Much of the noise from the road was shut out, save the persistent crunch of gravel. He stood upon the chair and pulled at the paper covering the ventilators. As the first sheet tore away, a frightened moth flew out and circled the room.’¹¹

A Fine Balance is Mistry's masterpiece. It explores the effects of the state of emergency on the lives of ordinary people in 1970s India. Set in Mumbai, this novel is a powerful and painful examination of a humanity beset by social and political repression. It poses the question of the possibility of the existence of atrocious acts and beliefs in the face of the world’s beauty. In *A Fine Balance* India's social injustice appear as the villain.

This fantastic composition is the tale of four strangers forced into sharing an apartment in 1975 Bombay. It shows how these four main characters, Dina Dalal, Ishvar Darji, Omprakash Darji and the young student Maneck Kohlah, come together. Despite the social, religious and many other types of barriers, they develop their relationships. The story of the novel revolves around Dina. She is a widow who refuses to return to the home of her domineering brother after the death of her husband. She allows two tailors, Ishvar and Omprakash Darji, to share her apartment. Their homes have been burnt by the government because of their attempts to rise out of the caste of leather workers. Maneck is a Parsi student. He suffers from alienation from his family. His family has lost its property during the partition of India in 1947. He also joins the apartment as paying guest of Dina Dalal. The narrative deals with their background and the hardships they endure. One critic called the novel India's version of *Les Miserables*. It seems apt enough. The opening of the novel is interesting: ‘The morning express bloated with passengers slowed to a crawl, then lurched forward suddenly, as though to resume full speed. The train’s brief deception jolted its riders. The bulge of humans hanging out of the doorway distended perilously, like a soap bubble at its limit.’¹²

In 2002, he published his third novel *Family Matters*. It again has Mumbai as its background. This new novel takes us to Bombay in the mid-1990s. In this wise and compassionate novel, Mistry has once again created a beautifully realized world. As his unforgettable characters confront situations over which they have no control, their tragedies and their triumphs ultimately become our own. *Family Matters* has all the richness, the gentle humor, and the narrative sweep that have earned Rohinton Mistry the highest of accolades around the world. It focuses on the past and present life of a retired professor, Nariman Vakeel, and his difficult, complicated familial relationships.

At the centre of the book is Nariman Vakeel. He is a seventy-nine-year-old Parsi widower and the patriarch of a small discordant family. He suffers from Parkinson's disease and haunted by memories of the past. He lives with his two middle-aged step-children, Jal and Coomy. They are children of his wife's first marriage. Coomy is bitter and domineering and her brother, Jal, mild-mannered and acquiescent. Coomy hates Nariman whom she considers the cause of her mother's suffering and death. When Nariman's illness is compounded by a broken ankle, Coomy plots to turn his round-the-clock care over to Roxana. She succeeds. Now Nariman begins to live with Roxana, her husband, Yezad, and their two young sons, Murad and Jehangir. Roxana, Murad and Jehangir love and take care of Nariman. It is only Yezad who feels that Nariman is an additional burden on his family. 'By the time Nariman dies, his death appears 'natural' and timely, both in terms of the people around him and the narrative. His is a life lived fully, having traversed love, rejection, grief, guilt, generosity, disease, desertion and redemption.'¹³

The Scream is the most recent offering by Mistry. It is a novella. It is narrated by an aging, isolated resident of a Mumbai apartment building. The story plumbs its protagonist's struggle with aging and isolation. The 48 pages cover an old protagonist's sometimes touching and at times comic whine on his neglect and repulsion by his own family.

There are some controversies related to Mistry. In 2002, Mistry cancelled his United States book tour for his novel *Family Matters* because he and his wife were targeted by security agents at every airport he visited. They thought that he is a Muslim. The humiliation was unbearable to him. Another controversy is that his novel *Such a Long Journey* was allegedly against the Mumbai University. The Shiv Sena's student wing lodged complaint against this book to the Vice-Chancellor of Mumbai University and burnt copies of this book at the university gate. The book was eventually withdrawn by the Mumbai University owing to the vigorous protest.

Critics have frequently focused on the similarities and differences in the writings of Mistry and Rushdie. Both are part of the Indian Diaspora, a term used to describe the growing number of Indian-born authors who write about their native land from abroad. Whereas Rushdie's work is often surreal and cast in fantastic tones, Mistry's writing is characteristically grounded in firm, sometimes glaringly harsh realities. Rushdie's magic realism is Realism with a capital 'R' in the works of Mistry

Rohinton Mistry, no doubt, is an exceptional writer. His ability to present a fresh perspective on his native land has been appreciated. His work examines a side of India not often seen elsewhere in literature. His style of writing is simple, direct, refined and conventional.

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Confronting the Mainstream Literature: African American Literature – An Overview

Insha Siraj

African American literature refers to the category of literature produced by the writers of African descent in the United States of America. The genesis of African American literature was in the form of autobiographical spiritual narratives followed by slave narratives of the nineteenth century. A minority literature though, yet it succeeded in gaining full recognition so much so, that the writers have been awarded various awards including Nobel Prize for Toni Morrison. African American literature explores African American culture and people with complete emphasis on racism, slavery and equality. African American tradition finds its beginning through an oral tradition – spirituals, gospel music, blues and rap. Christian sermons were adopted for poetry with the deliberate use of repetition, cadence, and alliteration. However, some written narratives still have the traces of this oral tradition.

The oldest known piece of African American literature is “Bars Fight” written by Lucy Terry who was enslaved in Deerfield. “Bars Fight” is a ballad, written in 1746 and published in 1854 with an additional couplet in *The Springfield Republican* and in 1855 in Josiah Holland’s *History of Western Massachusetts*. Phillis Wheatley (1753 – 84) published her book *Poems on Various Subjects* in 1773. She was the first African American to publish a book that gained her an international reputation as a writer. Captured and sold in slavery at the age of seven, she had mastered her new language of English. Her poetry was acclaimed throughout so much so that she had to defend herself in court for its originality and authenticity. The first published Black writer in America is considered to be Jupiter Hammon. His poem, “An Evening Thought: Salvation by Christ with Penitential Cries” was published in early 1761. He is believed to have remained a slave until his death and he propagated the idea of gradual emancipation so as to end slavery.

In regard to the fictional works of African American literature, William Wells Brown (1814 – 84) and Victor Sejour (1817 – 74) produced the earliest works. Brown a prolific writer, was born into slavery in South but later escaped to North and worked for abolitionist causes. His *Clotel; or The President’s Daughter* (1853) – the first novel written by an African American but published first in England. The first African American novel published in America was Harriet Wilson’s *Our Nig* (1859). This work has been argued for Wilson’s autobiographical overtones. It speaks about the difficulties of the indentured servants in the North. Another work that could be located between slave narratives and the sentimental narratives, is the novel *The Bondwoman’s Narrative* by Hannah Crafts written between 1853 and 1860. Many critics are still trying to decipher its literary importance and its contribution to the study of an early African American literature.

Spiritual autobiographies were published in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. They have also been deemed as historical or sociological documents. African American women who wrote spiritual narratives, had to negotiate the precarious positions of being black and women in early America. They had a clear understanding of literary genres and biblical narratives. So the dominant racist and sexist discourse of early American society was countered. Zilpha Elaw’s *Memoirs of the Life, Religious Experience, Ministerial Travel and Labours of Mrs. Zilpha Elaw, an American Female of Colour* provide an account of her spiritual experience.

Maria W. Stewart published her collection of religious writings, *Meditations from the Pen of Mrs. Maria Stewart*. She is known for her public speeches about the role of black women and race relations. Jerena Lee’s publications have been regarded as a disobedience to the patriarchal church system and her assertion of women’s rights within the Methodist Church. Sojourner Truth (1797 – 1883) was a leading advocate in both Abolitionist and feminist movements in 19th century. She

adopted this name after forty years of struggle so as to attain her freedom and her mission that she believed God intended for her.

Slave narratives would refer to the accounts of life under slavery and the path of justice and redemption to freedom. It could further be divided into the narratives written by free blacks of North and freed slaves. Both the categories faced different oppressions; free blacks would write against slavery and racial discrimination through spiritual narratives. Slave narratives would include the accounts written by fugitive slaves about their lives in the South and, often, escaping to freedom. This genre of African American literature was developed in the middle of 19th century. They depicted the cruelties inflicted upon slaves and the consistent humanity of the slaves as persons. Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852) Edenton and was the first woman to author slave narrative in America under the pseudonym "Linda Brent". Douglass too was born into slavery in Maryland whose best-known work is his autobiography, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave* (1845) which was later revised and republished as *My Bondage and My Freedom* (1855).

The era after end of slavery and American Civil war was marked by various nonfiction works portraying the condition of African Americans in the United States. W. E. B. Du Bois (1868 – 1963), one of the original founders of NAACP in 1910, published a highly influential collection of essays entitled *The Souls of Black Folk*. He wrote; "The problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color-line". He believed that African Americans should work in unanimity to battle prejudice and inequality. This period witnessed another prominent figure Booker T. Washington (1856 – 1915), however, he opined for opposite views. According to him, he believed that blacks should first lift themselves up and prove themselves the equal of whites before asking for an end to racism. Among the women nonfiction writers, Elizabeth Keckley and Josephine Brown, both would propagate programs for racial improvement and help women and children.

The flowering of African American literature and art from 1920 – 1940 has been referred as Harlem Renaissance. Based in the African-American community of Harlem in New York City, it was a part of a larger flowering of social thought and culture. Langston Hughes, the most renowned poet of the renaissance, received attention in 1922 publication *The Book of American Negro Poetry*, this anthology, edited by James Weldon Johnson, featured the work of the period's most talented poets including Claude McKay who published three novels, *Home to Harlem*, *Banjo and Banana Bottom* and a collection of short stories. Until Hughes' death in 1967, Hughes published nine volumes of poetry, eight books of short stories, two novels and a number of plays, children's books and translations. Zora Neale Hurston, another known writer of renaissance, wrote a classic novel *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937). Her work was later recognized by Alice Walker in "In search of Zora Neale Hurston", published in Ms. magazine. Walker found in Hurston a role model for all female African-American writers. Other writers that were well known during this period include, Jean Toomer, author of *Cane*; a collection of stories, poems, and sketches about rural and urban Black life. Dorothy West's novel *The Living is Easy* examined life of an upper class Black family.

The Harlem renaissance was a watershed in African American literature as the African American works began to be absorbed in the mainstream American culture. Harlem renaissance was followed by Civil Rights Movement era that witnessed the migration of African Americans from Southern America to northern cities like Chicago where they found better opportunities. The writings too proliferated at the end of segregation and racism so as to create a new sense of Black Nationalism. James Baldwin, one of the first writers of this era, addressed the issues of race and sexuality in his personal stories, essays and his famous novel *Go Tell It on the Mountain*. Baldwin's friend Richard Wright whom the former called "the greatest Black writer in the world for me" is known for his novel *Native Son* (1940). It tells a story of Bigger Thomas, a Black man struggling for acceptance in Chicago. Another great novelist of this period is Ralph Ellison, best known for his

novel *Invisible Man* (1952) which won the National Book Award in 1953. After his death in 1994, his second novel, *Juneteenth* (1999), was pieced together from the 2,000-plus pages he had written over 40 years.

The Civil Rights period also paved the way for female Black poets, most prominent being, Gwendolyn Brooks; the first African American to win the Pulitzer Prize awarded for her 1949 book of poetry, *Annie Allen*. Nikki Giovanni and Sonia Sanchez, the female poets, became popular during 1950s and 60s. As far as the world of theatre is concerned, African American playwrights, during this period, gained national attention. Lorraine Hansberry's play *A Raisin in the Sun* focuses on a poor Black family living in Chicago and it was awarded New York Drama Critics' Circle in 1959. Another playwright Amiri Baraka, gained attention by writing controversial off-Broadway plays.

It was in the early 1970s that African American literature reached its zenith and began to be accepted as a legitimate genre of American literature. The works by Black writers persistently acquired best-selling and award-winning status. Black women writers also flourished in this era delineating the issues of inter-sectionality in their works. Toni Morrison, Alice Walker, Toni Cade Bambara, Paule Marshall, Jamaica Kincaid have garnered attention through their literary works. As the Harvard Literary scholar Henry Louis Gates, Jr. has remarked, "My desire has been to allow the black tradition to speak for itself about its nature and various functions, rather than to read it, or analyze it, in terms of literary theories borrowed whole from other traditions, appropriated from without" (xix).

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Reflection of Bharati Mukherjee's life in The Tiger's Daughter

Ishita N. Patel & Dr. Namrata Bajaj

Literary work chiefly reflects its author's life and times on the character's life and times. Bharati Mukherjee's works reflect particular experiences and incidents in her writings. Her writings are reflection of her life, first as exile from her homeland West Bengal followed by her experiences as exile in Canada, then after spending one year in India she embraced expatriate stance in Canada and finally her settlement in North America as immigrant. Her writings whether fictional or nonfiction contain highly autobiographical elements. Bharati Mukherjee has changed several citizenship and cultures during her life. Her experiences as an expatriate in Canada and immigrant in North-America are recurring themes in her writings. She wrote in '*Days and Nights*' in Canada about her writing;

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“During my stay in India, the year, I began to see how typical my life had actually been, and given the limited options of a woman from my class and from my city, how predictably I had acted in each crisis. And I see how, even in the West, I have acted predictably. My writing is a satellite of my marriage and profession.”

Her debut novel *The Tiger's Daughter* largely reflects her personal experiences as a woman caught between two different cultures. Tara Cartwright Banerjee (Central Character), a young upper middle class Bengali Brahmin like Bharati Mukherjee, returns to Calcutta after spending seven years in United States to visit her family and discovers the city has changed completely. Bharati Mukherjee and Tara share a common family background. Bharati Mukherjee was born in upper middle class Brahmin family and lived privileged life as daughter of SudhirLal Mukherjee, an owner of pharmaceutical company. Tara Banerjee too, was also born in upper middle class Bengali family and lived luxurious life as daughter of the Bengal tiger; an owner of Banerjee & Thomas [tobacco] Co., Ltd. The Mukherjee family moved to luxurious mansion in the compound of the pharmaceutical factory in Cossipore, on the outskirts of the city in 1951. The house contained swimming pool, a lake, armed guards and a retinue of servants. The house was filled with furniture and artefacts of Victorian era. There would be roll top desks, carved tea tables, Victorian love seats and ornate lamps. The house had archetype of Victorian era, but we could see the touch of Indianness through the framed portraits of ancestors reverently mounted on the walls of drawing room or study room. We can see reflection of Bharati Mukherjee's luxurious life in the novel *The Tiger's Daughter*. In the novel Tara Banerjee lived in the luxurious house situated on Camac street. It had high compound wall and was guarded by durwans. The hall was furnished with Italian marble tables and mahogany tables. Framed photographs of earlier Banerjees were hung on the walls of the hall.

“*The living room was filled with imported furniture- heavy, dark, incongruous, piece whose foreignness had been only slightly mitigated by brilliantly colour Indian upholstery.*” SudhirLal Mukherjee was a very powerful and authoritative man who had overriding influence on his three daughters' life. He became the model for “Bengal tiger” of her first novel, *The Tiger's Daughter*. Clark Blaise wrote about SudhirLal Mukherjee in *Days and Nights in Calcutta*: “*he wanted to build up his company serve his country by eradicating T.B. and win a Nobel prize, all at the same time.*” Tara's father- the Bengal tiger remained just fearless and powerful man during the time of disorder in Calcutta. When Calcutta was on the verge of revolution, the Bengal tiger was busy in improving and expanding tobacco firm. The Bengal tiger ran night classes in the factory for those who could not write or read and working out on medical and disability insurances for his workers. He retained authoritative position in the business world of Calcutta and in the family. SudhirLal Mukherjee supported Bharati Mukherjee's decision to be a writer and sent her to Iowa for Creative Writing program. Tara was also sent by her father, the Bengal tiger at an early age of fifteen to Vassar for her higher study. Here the Bengal tiger sensed that Calcutta may witness revolution and the future

generation of upper middle class would likely face many challenges and threat in Calcutta so he decided to send her daughter Tara to Vassar whereas SudhirLal Mukherjee sent Bharati Mukherjee only for Creative Writing program.

Bharati Mukherjee spent her childhood in traditional Brahmin family. Her parents gave her religious knowledge about Hindu god and goddess. The Bengalis particularly believe in the goddess Kali. Bharati Mukherjee also has deep faith in the goddess Kali, and she has a small altar in her bedroom. Tara also believed in the goddess Kali. When Tara suffered from nightmares and headaches during her stay in hostel, she prayed the goddess Kali for strength. Here Tara and Bharati Mukherjee share common religious background. The Bengalis believe in fortune-teller and palmist. At the age of thirteen Bharati Mukherjee had visited palmist but the Palmist's prophecy about her future never came true. Bharati Mukherjee used to think that she was not the person, what her hand revealed, and she has cheated her fate. Bharati Mukherjee wrote about her visit at palmist in *Days and Nights in Calcutta*:

“That Palmist- a thin man with rotund, hairy nostril- had said that I was destined for a middle class Bengali women's life to please my husbands and elders, to be intelligent without being obnoxiously opinionated, to have two or three children and to run a clean, decent home, to be shrewd about house budget and to prey to the household gods.”

Tara visited a funeral pyre at the river bank with Joyonto Roy Chowdhury, the owner of tea estates in Assam. A tall man in scarlet loincloth who was tantric suddenly appeared there. The tantric asked for Tara's palm to foretell her future but Tara did not show her palm to the tantric and ran away. Here Tara felt that she had cheated her fate by marrying a foreigner. She was also conscious of her sin about marrying David without matching horoscope.

Bharati Mukherjee received Ph.D. in English and Comparative Literature from the University of Iowa. Tara Banerjee had been pursuing her Ph.D. on Katherine Mansfield, the Plight of Women and Racial Minorities. In 1951, Mukherjee family returned to Calcutta from Germany. Mukherjee sisters were admitted in Loreto Convent School on Theatre Road which was run by Irish nuns. Irish nuns taught her to devalue Bengali culture, religion and traditions which created duality and conflict in her life. Every day, Bharati Mukherjee and her sisters were chauffeured to Convent school with two bodyguards who always accompanied them. Like Bharati Mukherjee, Tara was also admitted to Convent missionary school-St. Blaise's for her schooling. Here nuns taught her to despise Bengali culture and religion which created foreignness of spirit in her life from childhood. Tara spent her life in luxurious mansion and was chauffeured to school with bodyguards. Tara's life in Calcutta distanced and alienated her from middle class Bengali life. Bharati Mukherjee and Tara Banerjee lived parallel life from childhood which created split personality. Brinda Bose thought about this situation as:

“Duality and conflict are not merely a feature of immigrant life in America; Mukherjee's women are brought up in a culture that presents them with such ambiguities from childhood. The breaking of identities and the discarding of languages actually begin early, their lives being shaped by the confluence of rich cultural and religious traditions on the one hand, and the “new learning” imposed by British colonialism in India, on the other. These different influences involve them in tortured processes of self-recognition and self-assimilation right from the start; the confusion is doubled upon coming to America.”

Bharati Mukherjee met Clark Blaise at Iowa University during Creative Writers programme. After two weeks of courtship, the couple took bold decision of marriage. In 1963, their marriage took place in civil court during lunch hours sans matching horoscope or any traditional rituals meant for Bengali brides. Bharati Mukherjee's father had planned arranged marriage for her with a nuclear physicist in India but she went against her father's wish and informed him about her marriage through telegram. Like Bharati Mukherjee, Tara Banerjee also married American David

Cartwright against her father's desire. Tara first met David at Greyhound bus station. Tara almost knocked down a young man in anxiety to find a cab. She fell in love with David after sighting him in an elevator and completed her father's business. The Bengal tiger found a suitable boy named Amya Chakravorty, Ph.D. in Chemistry (Heidelberg) earning high salary in Govt. Job. But before everything was finalised, she married against her father's wish. The Bengal tiger gave more importance to caste, class, and province in marriage.

The relationship of Bharati Mukherjee and Clark Blaise faced some difficult moments. Clark Blaise influenced Bharati Mukherjee's academic career and writing. For Clark Blaise concept of arrange marriage was hardest thing to accept. Bharati Mukherjee believed in premonitions and mental telepathy. Clark Blaise did not believe in those as for him it was irrational and intellectually dishonest traits. Clark Blaise could not understand Bharati Mukherjee's love for family and considered it as over dependence. Bharati Mukherjee faced racism and discrimination in Canada. In Canada, Clark Blaise works got easily recognized and published but her works went ignored in the literary world of Canada. This created confusion and frustration in their married life. Clark Blaise wrote in *Days and Nights in Calcutta*: "*Bharati was unknown to me because I had not been able to appreciate the texture of her twenty one years.*" Every year he sent Bharati Mukherjee and children on summer vacation in India so he could write without any disturbance. But in 1973, he took bold decision to go India for a year because it was very necessary to understand their relationship.

Bharati Mukherjee wrote about problems in cross-cultural marriage through relationship between Tara and David Cartwright. Tara's marriage with David was an impulsive act on the part of Tara. Tara tried to assimilate in American society by entering into wedlock with American David. Tara could not share her background and genealogy with David. David was hostile to genealogies and thought of her love for family as dependence. David never praised Tara for cleaning bathroom. Tara confided in David that in India only woman was supposed to clean bathroom. There was nothing heroic about it in New York. He asked naïve questions about religion and traditions. David knew nothing of Calcutta, Camac street, the rows of gods and about her class. Tara could not explain David about the security of a traditional Bengali marriage. After spending some days in luxurious mansion on Camac street, Tara visualized her face in bits and pieces which terrified her. David bought two or three books on India. This innocent information enraged Tara. She felt that he had not understood her country through her so he had not understood her either.

"She felt there was no way she could describe in an aerogramme the endless conversation at the Catelli Continental or the strange old man in the blazer who tried to catch her eyes in the café, or the hatred of aunt Jharna or the bitterness of slogans scrawled on walls of stores and hotels."

David started to read Segal's book on India and he wrote: "*With Segal, I shudder.*" He wanted her to take stand against corruption, poverty, injustice and hunger. Tara could not share her feelings with her relatives and friends because of their superficial interest in her life. In India she felt, she was not married to a person, but to a foreigner and this foreignness was a burden. At the same time she could not share her feelings and express her love to David because she was torn between two different worlds.

Bharati Mukherjee survived by becoming compulsive reader and by inducing sick headaches during the first eight years of her life spent in the crowded house in Ballygunge. Being a neurasthenic child, she suffered from headaches and later developed typical signs of vomiting which she also observed during her childhood. But her childhood memory of headache and vomiting could not be shared by her with friends and Clark Blaise. Bharati Mukherjee wrote about her headache and vomiting in the novel through her alter ego Tara. Tara also suffered from nightmares and fainting spell in the hostel. She suffered from headaches which was just fastening itself to her neck and eyeballs after her return to home.

Bharati Mukherjee wrote about her younger sister Ranu's experiences at Vassar hostel through Tara's experiences at hostel. In 1961, Ranu left for Vassar with Bharati Mukherjee on scholarship. But there she suffered from homesickness and racism and returned home by Christmas. Tara was sent at Vassar at the age of fifteen by her father. The resident girls shared her books, records, and hand lotion unasked. But Tara could not share her Camac street thought and her family background with the pale, dry skinned girls. She found that such innocent information made bad impression and soon she gave up. In Poughkeepsie, she suffered from homesickness. Even if her roommates did not share bottle of mango chutney, she sensed it as discrimination. Vassar had been an unsalvageable mistake for Tara. If she had not been trained by the nuns at St. Blaise's to remain ladylike in all emergency, she would have rushed to India at the end of her first week itself. When all the girls around her prepared to go home at the end of May, she was seized by the vision of terror:

“She saw herself sleeping in a large cartoon on a sidewalk while hatted men made impious remarks to her. Headless monsters winked at her from eyes imbedded in pudgy shoulders.... She suffered fainting spells, headaches, and nightmares.... She complained of homesickness in letters to her mother, who promptly prayed to Kali to save Tara's conscience, chastity, and complexion.”

Bharati Mukherjee during the early days of her visit to Calcutta was very eager to explore the social life of her friends and relatives. Bharati Mukherjee called up her old Loreto House school friends who called others and soon she absorbed herself in other people's lives. Every day she met one or more of these old and new friends in clubs, on their lawns or on terrace. She met first rank people- steel tycoons, tea brokers, tea planters, barrister, and journalist in the club. *“Her Calcutta friends shared attitude towards poverty, upbringing of children, Calcutta and its exploiters, strong government, and Naxal agitator. But there were hairline cracks within the group.”* Her friends' organized sewing workshop for destitute women, worked in adoption agencies for unwanted orphan, and visited slums. She looked upon her life in Montreal with embarrassment. She did not do any charity. Even she had no connection with neighbours, ethnic or professional groups. She had relationship with other writers and English professors. After sometimes the perspective was acquired from easy and smooth life in Montreal, she handled the life of her friends in Calcutta with irony..

“In retrospect I realized that our conversations were meandering and often pointless; or more correctly, our conversations were more “innocent” and more “simple” than the chatter I am used to hearing from my women colleagues and friends in Montreal. In Calcutta there was less dissembling, and little or no irony. But it is important for me to get across the sense of wonder, even envy, I felt for women who could preserve their innocence in the midst of city-wide misery, without any morbid inward-turning. I am aware how reprehensible such sentiments can sound in the West.”

Her friends always complained about poverty, labour unrest, overpopulation, and disease, but whenever she asked them if they would prefer to live in another city or in another country. Their answers were always same. Although Calcutta was fatigued and neglected, they chose to stay rather than to flee.

Bharati Mukherjee poignantly wrote about superficial life of her friends and relatives in the novel. In the beginning Tara looked forward for parties thrown by her friends in honour of her return. Many tea and dinner parties were hosted by her friends. But after sometimes the beliefs and omission of her friends life began to unsettle her. Her friends mainly spoke in English to show their superiority. They talked about important gadgets like transistors, blenders, and percolators to show their familiarity with American lifestyle. Tara's friends discussed about her changed physical appearance and gave more damaging remark about her appearance which made her nervous. Her friends asked about the things she brought back but never asked about her husband. They called her “Americawali” now. The word itself suggested that in the eyes of her friends she was not Indian. They wanted to listen to the stories about America but when she mentioned about her life in

America, ghettos or student demonstration her friends protested. They superficially discussed about Naxalite movement or current events. *“The real Calcutta, the thick laughter of brutal men, open dustbins, warm and dark where carcasses were sometimes discarded did not exist.”* They were racial purist. They liked foreigners in movie magazines and at the British council but for them her marriage with foreigner was imprudent. She realized that her friends were shaving of her personality.

“Her friends let slip their disapproval of her, they suggested her marriage had been imprudent, that the seven years abroad had eroded all that was fine and sensitive in her Bengali nature. They felt she deserved chores like washing her own dishes and putting out the garbage. The best that could be said for David, she sensed, was that he was, nominally at least, a Christian and not a Moslem.”

In *The Tiger’s Daughter* Bharati Mukherjee wrote about her class, society and culture. After independence all old values, beliefs, customs, class hierarchy were destroyed in Calcutta. She depicted the upper middle class Bengali where traditional values and morals had been shattered forever. In an interview she explained:

“I was writing about the passing away of way of life that I and many young Bengali women growing up in the Calcutta of the fifties experienced. Many of the characters are meant to operate both believably and symbolically. There is a nouveau rich class coming in and that is personified by one principal character. There are those who have been prepared by their westernized education for a gracious Calcutta that is on the eve of disappearing and there is a new people with great deal of political vitality with reformist ideas.”

Bharati Mukherjee depicted the problem of political unrest, riots, overpopulation, poverty and disease in Calcutta society. The Bengali society was very rigid and hierarchical. The Bengalis always spoke repulsively about the Marwaris who controlled the economy of their city. P. K. Tuntunwala was Marwari businessman and politician who represented the powerful presence of Marwaris in the business world and politics. Tara’s Bombay aunt would have said all Marwari are ugly, frugal and vulgar. And in the compartment the Marwari gentlemen did not interest her. *“The Marwari was indeed very ugly and tiny and insolent. He reminded her of a circus animal who had gotten the better of his master.”*¹⁵ P.K. Tuntunwala was a very powerful man and in a short time emerged as the strongest conservative candidate. He was very different from the men she admired and knew. Tara thought, *“P.K. Tuntunwala was a dangerous man. He could create whatever situation, whatever catastrophe, he needed. It was no use criticizing him.”* P.K. Tuntunwala was a man, full of energy. During political campaign, Tara thought about him, *“he was a man of such energy, so aggressive, so brittle, and ferocious that next to him businessman like Pronob seemed flabby.”* And even her father, the Bengal tiger was very simple for that changing time. Tara’s father popularly known as the Bengal tiger could not save her from rape by P. K. Tuntunwala at Nayapura cottage.

Bharati Mukherjee overtly depicted the Naxalite movement which influenced the upper middle class of Calcutta. Tara’s visit to home after seven years coincided with Naxalite unrest. The opening page of the novel depicted the decline of the glories of Calcutta. The Catelli Continental, a luxurious hotel of British Raj was “once navel of the Universe” now indicate extent of the city’s decline:

“The entrance is small, almost shabby, the walls are patterned with mold and rust, the sidewalk along the hotel are painted with obscenities and political slogans, in the daytime the beggars roll out their torn mate or rearrange their portable ovens and cardboard boxes under the balcony of the hotel.”

The workers gheraoed mill owners’ houses and factories. Pronob himself had bitter experienced of it. His house was gheraoed by workers for over eighteen hours over certain

demands. When Pronob's family tried to get water, they sent a coke bottle filled with urine. Pronob spoke about Naxalite movement: "*Calcutta going to the dogs. No question about it. It's going to the left of leftist. It's going communist.*" At the Catelli Continental, Tara and her friends listened to the English news describing the violence unleashed by the Naxalites. Tara felt she was in "the presence of history." Rioters were on the way to Catelli continental hotel but her friends took it as just a routine sort of thing. The novel ends with perpetrated violence by Naxalites. Tara decided to go to David and called her friends at Catelli Continental to let them know about her decision. She with her friends got surrounded by the mob. Joyonto Roy Chowdhury was caught in the messy crowd. Pronob tried to save him but he was killed by the mob. Tara still locked in a car surrounded by mob wondered whether she would ever get out of Calcutta or not. The novel ends in the 'media res'.

Though Bharati Mukherjee rejected that the novel is autobiographical, the external similarities between Tara Banerjee and Bharati Mukherjee show that she based much of the book on her own experiences. The city and culture in dissolution are emblematic of the Tara's psychic upheaval. Tara ultimately realizes that she is an expatriate whose re-entry into the old world is barred.

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Rohinton Mistry as a Postcolonial Novelist

Dr. Jagdish Batra

Rohinton Mistry, an Indian Parsi writer who settled in Canada some four decades ago, is a product of postcolonial times. Beginning with *Tales from Ferozsha Baag*, a collection of short stories, Mistry has written till date three major novels, viz., *Such a Long Journey*, *A Fine Balance* and *Family Matters* besides a novella *Scream*. In all these fictional works, the community of Indian Parsis is mainly in focus.

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Postcolonialism, which started with the theorization of the struggles of the colonized people for freedom, has indeed come a long way. India was among those who fought this battle against the erstwhile British rulers. Gandhi, not only led the struggle in the first-ever successful non-violent experiment, but he also formulated ideas for a postcolonial society in India. His innate spirituality enabled him to see all as equal and therefore, the idea of subjugation whether by an alien power or by our own people of fellow subalterns was an anathema to him. He was equally emphatic about the native culture which was reflected in his espousal of village industry and the concept of Ram-rajya. It is a pity that he did not live long enough and moreover, those who claimed to be his heirs so smoothly overlooked his philosophy and indulged in the same kind of politics which the British practised so that the plight of the subalterns in our society today is easily subsumed by the wider postcolonial theory that rocks the world today.

Sometime later in Africa, Aime Cesaire and Leopold Senghor talked of the Black identity that had been suppressed by the colonizers. Franz Fanon theorized that constant negative portrayal of the native by the colonizer led the former to believe in the very lies that the latter propagated about them. The native even tries to mimic western cultural practices and don 'white mask' though he fails in the attempt, but all the same, it points to the cultural domination. It was left to the Arab scholar Edward Said to analyze the skewed Orientalist approach of the colonizer which revealed the imperialist agenda in the garb of documenting knowledge of the native land and its people. In the 1990's, the Indian academic Homi Bhabha, modified the concept of mimicry to incorporate hybridity in it. The mimicry, he said, by the native is not complete even though he tries colonizer's ways, logic etc., rather it is and deep down it is disobedience and mockery. This is hybridity. The hybridized native is between his adopted Englishness and original Indian-ness – a state of in-between-ness. It was left to Gayatri Chakravarti Spivak to raise the fundamental problem of inadequacy of representation of the subaltern because he was not heard, nor did he have the clout or power gained through English language. All representation of the third world is, at present, a Western discourse, she opined. So, the colonizer/colonized relationship got imposed on the majority/minority or the powerful/weak binaries operating in the postcolonial independent countries.

Along the line somewhere, the pre-colonial narrative also fitted in with the postcolonial globalized world where the diasporic community that is pitted in a cultural clash against the host country where it seeks habitation for a longer duration or forever. Bhabha felt that the migrant's double consciousness – of the land left behind and the one adopted now – or hybridity rejects single identity or purity, for it adapts culture to present-day conditions. Home to the Diasporic is forever lost; it is a mythic place of desire. Therefore, the diasporic narratives show nostalgia, exile, loss, rootlessness, in-between-ness etc. It tries to build 'imaginary homelands' as Salman Rushdie put it beautifully.

The identity of Parsis, who were one of the earliest races to be divested of their homeland and led on to establish a diaspora in India, too had to adjust to the new conditions. Theirs is one of the oldest civilizations on this earth. They have had a glorious past, much like and connected with

our own. The people of ancient Iran belonged to the Indo-European branch of the Aryans and their history goes as far back as 2000 B.C., when Zarathustra, the Prophet of ancient Iran is believed to have been born. Some of the heroes of this community whose names are sung with gusto by the Parsis even now are Cyrus the Great, King Khushrau I also called Nowshirwan-i-Adil, King Khushrau II who attacked Jerusalem in 614 AD and captured 50000 Christians and King Darius who introduced banking – a preserve of the Parsis even now. Mistry is not given to gloating over this past; only cursorily does he refer to it. Whereas in his novel *Family Matters*, Mistry makes Nariman Vakeel tell his grandson about the glory of the ancient Iran, in his story ‘Swimming Lessons’, the protagonist is asked to write stories about this glorious past by his parents, but Kersi, Mistry’s alter ego by all accounts, does not heed the advice.

The exodus of the Parsis to India started after the invasion of ancient Persia by the Arab Muslims. It continued from 785 to 1021 A.D. and they settled on the Gujarat coast under an agreement with the local ruler. The Parsis have faithfully kept their word in not hurting the local sentiments and their reputation as peaceful, industrious people contributing to the uplift of their adopted land is well established. Therefore, when the name of one of them – Nagarwala, to be precise, is implicated in a conspiracy hatched by powerful politicians, Mistry feels pained and tries to set the record straight in *Such a Long Journey*.

The issue of identity, therefore, tops the agenda of the Parsi community. This identity based on cultural and religious distinction is delineated but what makes Mistry’s fiction truly post-colonial in treatment is the centering of the peripheral lower-middle section of the Parsis. The conspicuous presence of the Parsis in all areas of life can be marked even though their number is around fifty thousand only in our country. And yet, apart from the rich and the famous, there is the middle-class Parsi whose clout earned during the Raj days has gone down enormously leading to equalization of sorts with the millions in the country but with a more acute sense of loss. Dinshawji’s nostalgic comment, “Those were the days, yaar. Parsis were the kings” (SALJ 87) is symptomatic of the sense of loss. Nilufer Bharucha aptly remarks: “In decolonized India, the exalted position enjoyed by the Parsis during the Raj has been eroded and increasing dominance by the majority Hindu community has marginalized them. Parsis today are trying to reorient themselves to this new much reduced role” (42).

As a postcolonial writer, Mistry’s sympathies lie with Gustad and Yezad. They are the ones who have to support their families with limited income. Gustad has to sell off his camera to get treatment for his daughter; his son’s birthday is celebrated quite frugally with one guest, viz., Dinshawji. Yezad’s wife keeps monthly income apportioned in different envelopes so that she does not exceed the monthly budget allocation for different expenditures. His son considers it his duty to support his father and starts accepting petty bribe from class-mates in return for okaying their homework as monitor of the class. His other son walks home from school to save the bus money.

The decolonized societies were also rendered economically weak, so we have the focus not on the Tatas and the Wadias, the likes of whom are to be found as islands of prosperity in any society, but on the common Parsi who is beset with the problems similar to the ones which ordinary Indian middle-class citizen faces in day-to-day life. Through the life histories of characters like Gustad Noble, Dina Dalal and Yezad, Mistry establishes a hitherto unknown identity of the common Parsi. He takes pains to attract the attention of his erstwhile compatriots as also of the world at large towards these Parsis subsisting at the margins and dreaming of making it big in foreign countries like Canada, if not in India.

The issue of identity assumes another important dimension. The decolonized and ravaged societies do not find strength in piles of gold but in the number of their people. Mistry is aware of the dwindling number of Parsis the world over. The total population of the Parsis in India has gone down from one lac in 1961 to 75000 in 1987 census (Haldar 102) and is estimated to be around

60000 at present. In *Family Matters*, Dr. Fitter and Mr. Masalawala have a lively discussion on the issue of depleting numbers with the latter holding the opinion that in fifty years, there would be no Parsis left, and the former responding with a comic flair that their remains would be christened after the dinosaurs: “You (Jal) will be named Jalosaurus,” said Dr. Fitter. “I will be Shapurjisaurus. If they find my father’s bones, we will have a Pestonjisaurus with a pugree on his head. And our inspector here, who loves his Scotch, will be the powerful Whiskysaurus, a magnum of Blue Label tucked under his arm.” (FM 412) There is no other reason as powerful as the injunction against inter-race marriage that is responsible for it. Mistry points to the need to review this stand through his powerful portrayal of the unsuccessful love affair between Prof. Nariman and his Christian beloved Lucy leading to the tragic death of the latter. Mistry’s credentials in presenting the real picture cannot be questioned, for he is himself a member of this community. It is not an outsider who is representing the small community inhabiting the locality called Ferozsha Baag; it is the child Rohinton re-living his life in India.

It must also be noted that, Mistry’s subjects are not confined to Parsis only. His innate humanity compels him to extend the scope of postcolonial concern for the deprived and the downtrodden to his other compatriots also. In this, he challenges the master narrative of history. History, for Mistry is the history of the quotidian, as a critic points out with regard to his novel *A Fine Balance*: “Mistry, among his contemporaries, stands out as the master of the quotidian in view of his amazing grasp over little details and seemingly trivial incidents. He uses them to create a solid, recognizable India from the mid-40s to the mid-80s...” (Belliappa 210) The sufferings of the families of Om and Ishvar, for example, belonging to the Dalit community, are portrayed with genuine commiseration. How Ishvar’s father is burnt along with other family members for daring to cast his ballot during elections and thus affronting the village politico Dharamsi. In Bombay, Om and Ishvar have to pass nights on pavements and days in a forced labour camp of the dreaded Emergency regime under the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. Mistry was critical of the way the Indira Gandhi government sought to malign Mr. Nagarwala, a Parsi officer working with the RAW, who was made a scapegoat in the infamous episode. He felt it was an effort to silence the voice of the marginal by an imperial centre and in believing this he was not alone. State is seen as replicating the oppressive imperialist structures even though those wielding power have changed. Mistry has castigated the political leadership in his *A Fine Balance* for their macabre acts like the promulgation of Emergency as also in his *Family Matters* for the Shiv Sena’s parochial sons-of-the-soil policy. How such ill-advised steps of the politicians affected the man in the street, has been graphically illustrated in his novels. This type of political bungling hurts the sensitivities of the genteel Parsi population and they cherish dreams of settling abroad as Yezad does.

The postcolonial times have seen the rise of the hitherto suppressed people but the political class which inherited the right to rule hardly changed its imperialist modus operandi. It replicated the institution of a colonial centre in the newly liberated societies. To neutralize the threat of radical agency, the centre of power dispensed freebies/subsidies rather than educating and making the suppressed classes which effectively functioned as opium of the masses, as Marx would put it. This approach was adopted wherever the potential of vote was observed by the rulers holding reins of power in a democratic country. Where a community lacked the vote-power as was the case of the ordinary Parsis, they were simply neglected. True, the Parsi community has a number of rich mascots as also those who have reached the top rungs of administrative or professional careers, but Mistry’s concern is the lower middle class of the Parsis, who do not have any political clout as can be seen from the fall of the boundary wall in *Such a Long Journey* or the divesting of dwellings of Dina Dalal in *A Fine Balance*.

Mistry is concerned about the present plight of the Parsis. He builds the Parsi identity based on race and religion. Identity is the major marker in day-to-day life as also in the long-term philosophy of life. Therefore, the opening scene in *Such a Long Journey* begins with the chief character Gustad Noble offering morning prayers to the tying and untying of *kusti*. *The Tales from*

Ferozsha Baag has snapshots of the life in a Parsi enclave – a version of life captured through the eyes of a teenager and therefore fitting in with the nostalgic view of the writer. In *Family Matters*, the procedure for normal fire worship at an *agiary* is mentioned in detail. Again, the celebration of the *Behram roje*, the Parsi New Year is the theme of the story ‘One Sunday’ in *Tales from the Ferozsha Baag*. While *A Fine Balance* carries brief description of Dina’s wedding, the detailed narration of death rituals occurs almost in each one of these works.

Concerned as he is about the image of his community, Mistry draws the picture of ideal Parsi characters. Most of his leading characters are fighters and strugglers against the imperial centre. If it is Billimoria in *Such a Long Journey* who suffers because of an unscrupulous Prime Minister, in *A Fine Balance*, Om and Ishvar are pitted against the local chieftain and in *Family Matters*, it is Mr. Kapoor with his ideal of a cosmopolitan man fit to lend grace to the city of Bombay. Mistry’s Parsi characters with their Parsi lifestyle, food, rituals, mannerism etc. establish the Parsi identity firmly. Gustad Noble, true to his name, transcends the self and remains unshaken in the face of countless vicissitudes of life – a son turning hostile, an ailing daughter, the pin-pricks of the neighbours and the unsavoury and overmuch risky adventure foisted upon him by his one-time friend Major Bilimoria. In the end, he is seen tearing the black paper off the windowpanes in a symbolic move to let into his home the light from ‘outside’. There is no need for fear hereafter, as he is confident of the indestructibility of his distinct identity even in the midst of this sea of multitudes. There is another sensitive youth Percy in *Tales from Ferozsha Baag*. He is moved by the plight of poor village dwellers in India. So, he devotes his life to serving the poor. Focus on the subaltern is a prominent characteristic of postcolonial literature.

Similarly, Dina Dalal of *A Fine Balance* is a picture of a Parsi woman. She is rendered a widow at an early age and her snobbish brother tries to lord over her. But she chooses to lead an independent life and braves the odds as a courageous woman till she enters a dead alley. Rebuffed by her own brother, she finds security in her Hindu employees – Om and Ishvar. They had to go to village to get a bride for Om but as ill luck would have it, on the way they were accosted by Dharamsi, a shrewd politico from their own village who had unleashed havoc on their family. He was now in charge of a family planning camp, a euphemism for the forcible vasectomy camps of the emergency days. Om offended him by spitting in his face and the former, like a typical colonial master that he was, only took vengeance on him and bobbitized Om, putting to rest forever his dreams of fathering a child. We see the duo as beggars towards the end of the novel. Their plight betokens the battered bruised and brutalized nations brought to this state by the colonial masters before they had to grant independence in the face of long, drawn-out nationalist movements. But they do struggle even if they do not win, they put up a brave fight all along.

Essentializing and homogenizing has always been suspect in the eyes of the postcolonial writers and thinkers. It was with regard to the Western colonialists that the people living in colonies were poorly defined. Their identity, and indeed their history were determined by the colonial master with a view to gaining control over them. The different identity markers based upon various parameters were sought to be glossed over and they were stereotyped in an effort to make knowledge of the subject easy. Postcolonialism, quite naturally, would look for removing this imbalance. The total emphasis now is on differences and particularities.

In presenting a scheming Yezad with the noble Gustad, Mistry situates his Parsi characters in the liminal space and refrains from viewing the world as totally black or white. In the *Tales*, we do meet a number of characters who evoke aversion -- like Rustomji or Khorshedbai. Yezad, in *Family Matters*, is not such a one who could take his place with the sublime figures talked about in the preceding paragraphs. He has yielded to the temptation and taken the devil’s path. And though he realizes his mistake after it is too late, poetic justice lands him in a limbo where even constant praying does not bring peace of mind, either to him or to his near and dear ones. The reaction from his son is not totally unwarranted when he fails to find the father that Yezad used to be. In

comparison, the Hindu businessman Mr. Kapoor, Yezad's employer, appears to be an ideal character. He is a true cosmopolitan figure and in picking him Mistry too has transcended his restricted choice of characters, for goodness knows no such bounds.

During the period of colonization, a number of societies in the world lost their cultural moorings – their language, their lifestyle, their religions etc. It happened in several African nations where the colonizers so dominated the natives that the latter forgot many constituents of their own culture. The post-colonial Mozambique or Guinea speak not their native tongues but Portuguese and French respectively. Creole developed in several constituents of the West Indies. During the British rule in India, the western influence cast its shadow on the Parsis, who, as businessmen, felt obliged to befriend the rulers by mimicking their lifestyle. The proximity also spilled over to the political field. Some prominent Parsi merchants helped British rulers but the British merely used them. Apart from the British, there were also the French and the Portuguese, ruling the coastal areas. The Parsi entrepreneurs often acted as mediators between different parties. This also helped the Parsis in securing government jobs. The Christian missionaries were greatly facilitated in their work by the ruling class at that time. With the rise of the national sentiment in India, the Hindus preferred not to send their children to educational institutions run by the missionaries but the Parsis did not have any such scruples with the result that their children became more proficient in English than others. There were occasions for social interaction also. The British and the Parsis enjoyed games like cricket and golf in 'Only Whites' gymkhanas. The continued proximity of the Parsis to the Englishmen impacted the daily lifestyle of the Parsis. While the Parsis mimicked the Europeans to the extent that they alienated the other communities in India, ambivalence was reflected in a section of them like Dadabhai Nauroji, Kamagatamaru et al who fought alongside the nationalists for the freedom of the country. It also created a chasm between the Parsis and other communities in India which continues till now despite significant contribution made to the freedom struggle as also to the current nation building by a number of Parsis.

The Parsis in colonial India imbibed the English language and lifestyle due to their proximity to the rulers. Mistry takes note of the western impact to complete the identity portrayal of the Parsis. "Whether it is the surfeit of English rhymes and song-lines in *Such a Long Journey*, the birthday celebrations in *pucca* English style in *Family Matters*; the handling of love-sick Lucy by a married Professor or the way of addressing his father-in-law as 'chief' by Yezad in *Family Matters*, English culture seems to have permeated the Parsi lifestyle to a great extent" (Batra 119). Alcohol consumption by women and young boys at home is not frowned upon, which is contrary to the norms practised in traditional Indian families. Thus, on the occasion of Roshan's birthday, Dilnavaz takes a few sips from her son Darius' beer glass (SALJ 46). The elderly lady Tehmina is hooked on to her evening scotch and soda and the Boyce family keeps its weekly supply of beef in Najamai's refrigerator (TFFB 26).

It is here that in a mirror-image of Bhabha's concept of ambivalent mimicry, the Parsis are seen interacting with their Hindu compatriots. The Parsis' equation with other Indians, as portrayed in Mistry's fiction, appears problematized. The Parsis consider themselves a cut above the 'ghatis' (stereotypical term used for the subalterns among 'others' by a Parsi character in *Family Matters*). The writer "transforms the discourse of power and hegemony from the selective organization of postcolonial nationhood, such as exposed in *A Fine Balance*, to the circumscribed and private world of the family group. As a consequence he depicts the dark side of the nostalgic return to tradition and cultural (or religious) heritage" (Monti 18). It may not be seen as colonial hangover because class distinctions are a common feature in other countries too. So, the Parsis continue to view themselves as educated, cultured and advanced professionals, different from 'other' Indians.

It is not only the message but the medium also that partakes of the postcolonial mindset of the author. The use of language is an example, in which numerous Gujarati and Hindi words find place. Words denoting food, dress, race, even abuse are used with abandon as the following list

would show: *dhansak, bhaiya, choti, choola-vaati, arre, goover-ni-gaan* etc. There are also Hindi expressions like ‘chaalo, time for drinks’ (SALJ 58), ‘Theek hai, theek hai’ (SALJ 59) and verbatim representation of use of English phrases by semi-literate people, as for example, ‘woman trouble’ (36) in *Such a Long Journey*. In fact, Mistry has nativized English in a big way in this novel. Look at the sentences like ‘In every gully-gootchy, *yaar*, in the dark, or under the stairs, what, what went on’ (99)! We also find Indianism, as for example, the phrase ‘What to do?’ used very often by Ishvar in *A Fine Balance*. None of Mistry’s fictional works lags behind in this respect.

It may be pointed out here that when *Such a Long Journey* appeared in Canada and the readers there went through it, they felt difficulty in following Hindi/Gujarati words and usages and there was demand for a glossary of such words explaining meanings as an addendum to the novel, but Mistry did not oblige them. Probably, he felt it would be compromising the dignity of the erstwhile colonized to use ‘pure’ English of the colonizer. So, these words not only have an aesthetic role to play in the text, but also indicate the writer’s right to freedom in using English the way he deems fit. Through this gesture, Mistry seems to approve of the postcolonial view that the Indianized English language is not the colonizer’s language but one of the several ‘englishes’ used in these times to subvert the privileging of the colonial discourse, as Bill Ashcroft et al would say¹. It would be wrong to assume that Mistry’s use of English is meant to create a comic effect; it is to assert the identity of the postcolonial subject and to fine-tune the postcolonial mode of resistance whereby the hegemony of the master narratives of the West has been challenged.

To conclude, it can be stated that Rohinton Mistry’s representation of the Parsi race in the contemporary context, reflects his postcolonial leanings. The issue of identity has been taken up by a member of the race which has experienced dislocation and exile over a long period in history. Mistry’s call upon his co-religionists to shed some of their taboos like refraining from inter-race matrimonial alliances and to let in fresh air of other culture is a forward-looking step that deals a blow to the purist view of identity. As the developing genre of critical race studies shows, no race in the world can claim to be absolutely free from mixing up with the blood/DNA of other races.

Mistry stresses the need for the Parsis to transcend the ghetto mentality and to open up to the wider Indian social influence in his novel *Such a Long Journey* through the symbolic act of Gustad when he tears off the black paper pasted on the window panes of his house. However, he wishes to locate the meeting ground between the two communities in the current socio-economic reality rather than in the past cultural complex. He does not talk of the cultural links which existed even during pre-historic times between the two ancient civilizations of Persia and India, both of which have the common Aryan life-blood. There are many common points in the Parsi and Vedic rituals based upon the common Aryan lineage. Even now at the time of Parsi weddings, Sanskrit verses are recited. The harmony can be achieved through a fair understanding and relationship built on common ground in culture and not on socio-economic imperatives because the integration is largely an emotional affair. Further, history is witness to the fact that no minority has ever lost its distinct identity on this land by interacting with the mainstream Indian culture. From that standpoint, Mistry is barking up the wrong tree.

Notes

¹. ‘By appropriating the imperial language, its discursive forms and its modes of representation, post-colonial societies are able, as things stand, to intervene more readily in the dominant discourse, to interpolate their own cultural realities, or use that dominant language to describe those realities to a wide audience of readers’ (Ashcroft et al 20).

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The Realistic American Short Fiction of 1950-1960s: Portraying Life and Nation

Dr. Jayshree Singh

The study of the selected realistic short fictions according to Albert J. Mills “forms a talk which endorsed liberal values of egalitarianism, freedom of choice for the individual, equally shared responsibilities, and the relationship between individual and organisation consisting of the gendered and the racial self” (Postmodernism and Organisation, 1993: 143).

The theme of my paper attempts to analyse the following factors in the four selected Realistic American Short Fictions of 1950-1960s. They are -

1. The psychological, social, racial, gender, sexual, economic and conventional aspects of American life and society.
2. The sense of authorial involvement in new paradigms of social-gendered analysis, representation of self and identity.
3. The aesthetics of resistance in ugliness and injustice to position the sense of morality in the society.
4. The contemporary local and human phenomena of manifest destiny, common sense, inner and frontier expansion.

Joyce Carol Oates – “Bodies”

In this story the women protagonist named as Pauline suffers as a result of the conditions of social milieu and due to her emotional weaknesses is unable to locate her ‘self’ and innocence in correct social terms and relations. In this context it is apt to quote Foucault who argues that “human subjectivity is constricted within and as result of given discursive practices constituted as discourse and in the modern era social institutions influence discursive practices” (Hassard, 1993: 132). The story “Bodies” depicts the dichotomy of physical weaknesses and the metaphysical unity of mind and body. Pauline’s expression of sexuality results in fantasies and surrealistic visions. These imaginations mirror her psychological and social convulsion. As a result her private experience turns into dream – “a procession of mules, garlands of flowers, a bare chested victim in a wagon” (Realistic American Short Fiction, 400-16). Then in next dream she sees.....”bodies in a field embracing violently, aware of nothing around them”. These images attack her feminine innocence and her intense agony of femaleness. They make her vulnerable to the male-oriented society and worldly experiences.

Anthony Drayer who admires her and wishes to talk to her, but when she tries to neglect him, he stabs his throat with a butcher knife in front of her and leaves her soaked with his blood. Pauline felt that, “the living cells of the blood, insatiably hungry for more life.....will unite with these cells and form new life”. Under this hallucination she remained so disturb that she as a sculptor-artist and a teacher could not reason for the fact and feeling. She faced tremendous shock and became hysteric with the idea that she is pregnant, but in reality and horror manifest her sentimental anxiety and she checks all human heads that she has designed so long. When she is told by her mother that the man who had stabbed his throat, finally killed himself in the hospital, she retreats into trance state and unconsciously driven into another surreal image. The writer critically justifies the element of dreamlike-state to express the harshness of reality that liberates her ‘Self’ at the unconscious and subconscious level and it taps Pauline’s imagination and vision to escape the truth of being separate. The writer describes her desire for union “a body is being cremated. A top the movement is a statue, two figures.....and the other figure is an angel of death. She holds out her hand to the young man.....We kneel together....we press our faces together.....”

She exposes darker aspects of the human condition i.e. violence, anxiety, paranoia, psychological terror and the conflict between id and ego due to the instinctual deprivation of

sexuality that is bound by societal conventions. The story bespeaks conscious and unconscious regression, repression and suppression of inner gratification. It enunciates discourse on the manifestation of femininity and femaleness in context of gendered organisation. The author uses surreal images to draw parallelism in the interior expression of consciousness and exterior expression of reality. From the point of the spirit of nationalism in America, she focuses on women's right to life, liberty, dignity, self-independence, identity and sexuality, because women is citizen of the country, the counterpart of male dominated society, the caretaker of the family, society and culture of America.

Bernard Malamund – “The Death of Me”

This story is relevant in context of the theme of nationalism in America because the rationality wins over irrationality. It is apt to quote Jacques Derrida who argues: ‘social action is validated by the metaphysical structure - mind, soul, reason etc.’ (Hassard, 1993: 49). The character Marcus, a clothier, who is old, fragile, unable to carry on in the competitive market, yet act as a human agent who assimilates the resilient Jew and Pole in the subjective core of awareness for parish and parity. Their actions and emotions illustrate the image of ‘The Death of me’. The reader's self is coordinated with them to understand the difference between assimilation and isolation. The reader is made to understand that the human potential can thrive on social relationships and new possibilities. The end of the story is an ironic parable. Both Jew and Pole when nearly killed each other, they locked themselves due to their fear of employer but when they read Marcus' eyes, they read “what did I tell you? You see?” (Realistic American Short Fiction, 363-68). He made them realised the worth of love and humaneness even in pain and in adversity it is the only salvation of their soul and saves man for salvation, grief, fury, violence, cultural past truths and degradation.

The author is one of the famous Jewish American writer lived in New York City. He is the traditional novelist of social and psychological behaviour. His short fiction “The Death of Me” deals with the poignant aftermaths of holocaust befallen upon Jews during the World War Second and the consequent Jews exodus and other persecuted Europeans to U.S. for economic, social and cultural reasons. It also exposes the constraints upon immigrants as regards the rigid U.S. vigilance for Visa and the strict immigration doctors. The story delineates the resistance, alienation, assimilation of Jewish people in multi-ethnic culture of America and their ethical dichotomy viz-a-viz their immortality and morality. There is illustration of man's struggle in the modern world post world wars and the reflections of memories, sadness and hatred sometimes segregate their ‘essence’ and fill in them the sense of ‘other’ or sometimes escalates their dilemma to question their cultural identity in the multi-cultural America. As a result the author espouses the revolutionary cause of Jewish dignity in America in context of the host culture's emotional deficiency, emptiness in relation to human passions and desires.

Peter Hillman Taylor – “Miss Leonara When Last Seen”

The author as narrator describes Miss Leonara's just character and he writes “when he was in school, she was their teacher....She had a Negro woman bring her lunch to her on a tray all the way from Logana, on the other side of town’ (Realistic American Short Fiction, 325-40). The reason of allowing Negro woman out of the four walls of the house and enslavement was that, she wanted them to be out of their inhibitions and ignorance.

Once in her institute, a girl did suicide out of her guilt being discovered by Ms. Leonara. That girl when found dead and all crowd collected there for gasps and groans, Ms. Leonara cried, “Go away!” “Take your curious eyes away. What right have you to be curious about our dead?” She did not like people wailing on a girl's death, whom they had deprived liberty to avail her freedom to be happy in life as per own wishes. When her Female Institute of girls' education centre was set on fire in Feb. 1922 on account of the Women's Movement for Suffrage in 1920 in America, the

author writes that “her only companions were two iron deer that stood nearby, that symbolically refers her determination to stand for her vision. Some of the women whispered amongst themselves, “Poor Ms. Leonara! The school was her life!” Basically it was not self-pity for Ms. Leonara that the narrator explains, but it is the awareness of what was going around her.

After retirement when Ms. Leonara inherited Logana estate she was issued summon by county court to surrender her land for the new consolidated school building which was in separate sections earlier as Boys’ Academy and the female Institute. She was a visionary, intellectual and interactive. She used to be on short trips and survey all areas around her town Thomasville in Tennessee. But she gets in a fix how to get along with Logana legacy in South and her reconstructed insight that she earned as a teacher and by driving too far off areas knowing about the developments happening in the North, South, East and West of America. The narrator writes, “For years her only satisfaction in life has been her periodic escapes into reality that is scattered in bits and pieces along the highways and backroads of the countryside she travels”. Even she fought for her right to property in Logana (down South of America) against the corrupt patriarchal County Court that made her undergo condemnation proceedings, if she would not accept the orders of the court.

In the end when her favourite students came to her to talk about her opinion for surrendering her ‘Land’ to Logana County Court, the author found her dressed in travelling mode, but she ended her interaction and said; ‘You were all fine boys, and you were my brightest hope....It was neither you nor I that failed’.

The author elucidates some of the negative issues and positive images of the contemporary times of American society especially in the South. These are - the desire for the self-reliance and community development, the self-interest of one individual cannot be allowed to hinder the progress of community, the discrimination between the upper class and the bourgeois class, between males and females, between Negroes of South and South White Americans, between agrarian South and the industrial North. The author vouches the feminist pedagogy of Miss Leonara that propounds hope, change and awareness against the corrupt practices, injustice and discrimination. This story reflects the ideals of American Nationalism, American Dream and American Character of freedom, unity and happiness. The vision of Miss Leonara is to enhance the sense of community, collective consciousness, attitude to reading, thinking and to be aware of what is going around. She wishes that Negroes especially women will perhaps one day be educated, be in job and be a part of the American society without being gender-biased.

Flanny o’ Connor – “Good Country People”

The writer is a Jew and a Roman Catholic lived in the South of the United States of America. Her short story “Good Country people” is an irony upon modern life, secular culture, distorted visions of youth to grow and progress. She draws the picture of “devil’s voice, violent means, a repulsive revelation of ugliness in order to make reader’s vision apparent by shock” (Downs, 1974: 253). She generates pity, compassion and disgust as well as recreates moral position for readers to check “the acts of aggression and to check the attack upon the prevailing moral attitudes” (Burger, 1992:134). There is a note of autobiographical element as regards to the change of the name of the girl from Joy to ‘Hulga’. It denotes her shift from unreality to reality. The female characters in the story are self-satisfied, irritatingly pleased with themselves and self-intoxicated. Flannery O’ Connor views her female characters “with objectivity and with an aesthetic distance”(Reaction to Realism, 255). Mrs. Freeman, the nosiest, a ‘positive leer’, a country woman with the sense of ‘direct attack, blatant ugliness’. Mrs. Hopwell, is the mother of Joy – Hulga. A woman of great patience, educated and she believed ‘nothing is perfect’, and she was holistic in life. Joy, a girl of thirty-two, clumsy, large, Ph. D in philosophy, unable to work like other girls due to artificial leg and she changed her name to Hulga legally at the age of 21. The daughters of Mrs. Freeman, one surrounded with admirers and other was pregnant only at 15 years of age. The author

brings on surface the ugliness of the people's mindset in the American society. For instance Mrs. Freeman reveals to Hulga the reality of her deformity when she and the girl happen to be out of the house together. The writer says, "Hulga had arrived at it as the name of her highest creative act. However Mrs. Freeman's relish for using the name only irritated her". (Realistic American Short Fiction, 325-40).

Second example of repulsive, distorted manifestation is presented in the Bible Salesman (a country boy). Ironically all attempts of Hulga to seduce the young boy ended in black tragedy/black humour. Because 'his hollow Bible contains a flask of whisky, pornographic playing cards and a package of condoms, he tells the professed intellectual atheist Hulga "you ain't so smart. I've believing in nothing ever since I was born!" The next example of Southern fundamentalism was followed by the Negroes of South. The author states this in the sentence spoken by Mrs. Hopewell to Mrs. Freeman when she sees the same boy, "he must have been selling them to the Negroes back in there. He is so simple, but I guess the world would be better off if we were all that simple". The author explicates the impact of science on religion and morals of the people in this way: "If science is right, then one thing stands firm: science wishes to know nothing of nothing". The author feels that modern, indifferent intellectuals of North and elsewhere were being exposed to destructive and self-destructive forces due to the radical surrender to science. Hence instinctual potential needs to be flourished in philosophy, faith and in Bible. Thus the author signifies the eclectic character of liberal democracy of American liberal society.

Conclusion

These stories granted autonomy to American citizens irrespective of their class, colour, gender, race and sex to rethink their relationship to the nation and to re-evaluate the historical facts in relevance to the contemporary cultural identity and nationality.

The ideals of nationalism in America during 1950 – 1960s were based on life, liberty, pursuit of happiness and liberal economic system. These desired goals counted on human relations, physical ability to perform, to interact as social beings, emotional satisfaction, reading, thinking, gender/racial/sexual/individual equity and employment opportunities. These indeed had been the prescribed goals but not realised as per conventions, liberal constitution, and liberal democracy or as per puritan culture and history of America. The desired goals were circumscribed to 'American Dream' based on motivation and expectation. Motivation meant to be self-seeking and expectation to be self-fulfilling. There was emphasis on the construction and creation of new distinctions on account of growing industrialisation, urbanisation, materialism, individualism, enlightenment and progressing capitalist bourgeois outlook.

During the same period there was another side of America to be viewed it as a nation and its life. There aroused contradiction and scepticism in self, the faith and the morality. Liberal economic measures, liberal democracy, the depression of 1930s, the two world wars changed the individual perception to the moral values and social values of the society. There happened resistance from gender and coloured communities. There was immigration of multicultural people in America. There was social, civil and feminist movements, vis-à-vis gender, racial and sexual justice, suffrage, employment equity, education, living conditions etc. These transitions critically changed the perspective of nationalism in America. Even it led to anxiety, violation, self-isolation, alienation, psychosis etc. The United States of America entered into an era of life – work, human subjectivity, mass production and machine technology. Subsequently the material of American fiction was the source of exposing the realities.

The American short fiction in the twentieth century of America during or after post-world war second conjoined in the issues of national goals of freedom, subjectivity, community development and social welfare. There was concern for everyone and their local environment and how they live in community group culture. Cultural intelligibilities, individual interest, and

oppression became the target of analyses and discourse in this genre, as it was produced to have ‘the maximum of effect with the minimum of materials’ (Levy, 1993:32).

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Liberal Intellectualism Vs Fascism: A Study of James Jones' From Here to Eternity

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Jones is considered to be the premier novelist of World War II. His trilogy of war novels, *From Here to Eternity*, *The Thin Red Line*, and *Whistle* have often been cited as his best works. He also wrote several short stories based on the war and authored the text of WWII, a collection of graphic art from the war. His candid and realistic portrayals of military life have secured for him an international reputation for his first famous novel *From Here to Eternity*. James Jones drew upon his military experiences in his writing. Page | 82

This article will focus on the military injustice meted out to the soldiers by the Generals. *From Here to Eternity* was Jones' most renowned work, and quite representative of his ideas about individuals in the modern world. The novel is unique in its portrait of the Regular Army--the army that existed before conscription and the war turned it into a civilian army. Leslie A. Fiedler finds that "its value as literature, slight, intermittent but undeniable, lies in its redeeming for the imagination aspects of regular army life never before exploited".

The novel marks a new stage in the literary representation of the victimized combat soldier, since it sets forth a new signification of his situation with its complexities and dubieties, which appear to gain in meaning when presented through a deepening perspective. The quest for freedom and individual liberty is the root of Jones' themes, which is the reason why his protagonist yearns for personal integrity. The novel allows an understanding of the extent that the novel was a distillation of Jones' personality and personal experience in the War.

From Here to Eternity is more than merely a famous novel. It is an entertaining exposition of not only what military service does to men, but also what it emotionally did to James Jones. Thus this study reveals how much an author incorporates the essence of his historical experience—his “soul”—into his work.

The basic issue which Jones highlights in *From Here to Eternity* can be discerned as the dramatized conflict between Private Robert E. Lee Prewitt and the "apparatus of the American army". The situation, as Jones handles it, exposes all the pettiness and sadism of the army life. James Jones' basic assumption seems to be that every combat soldier has a right to assert his individual rights in a corrupt fascist institution such as the army when it threatens to destroy his freedom.

Robert lee Prewitt is a good soldier whose name reverberated, Schofield Barracks, Honolulu, Hawaii. Prewitt's love and devotion to the Army is so “rare” that it would be a “great damage” to the humanity to forget him. He is such a fearless proud character who would rather spend “six months on stockade rock pile rather than admit he was wrong and accept company punishment when he felt he was right in his actions.”(Jones55). His essential fight with the Army is that professional soldiers of the US Army have been with the army for more than 20 years without being tested in combat fight which is a must for the coming US war. The soldiers in the US Army have become corrupt, incompetent, have forgotten their purpose and were totally living without a sense of direction. The army will have to shake this torpor out and it must shield the country. The purpose of the soldier is to sacrifice “pain and suffering” in the war. While this is an irreplaceable value to both the soldier and the Army, James Jones conveys this message with absolute truth. In both *Viet Journal* and WWII James Jones discusses the unnatural protection enjoyed by the officers of old army which virtually rendered the US Army incapable of the sudden, decisive action

necessary for December 1941. Hence *From Here to Eternity* is less a novel and more about the Army and the people that surrounded them.

The army fails due to its loss of liberal ideals. It is a failure of communication which results in a corrupt functioning within the organization. Fascism is the only way out. *From Here to Eternity* is the failure of an honest man to work in an organization that threatens his devotion and integrity. Prewitt's honesty is threatened by the very institution that he is devoted to. The novel raises the question to what extent an honest man can compromise. Robert L Prewitt and Milton Anthony Warden represent the ideal soldiers who want to save America. They want to save the American civilization from a few individuals who back war irrationally and disunite the world in the name of war. WWI has doomed American society and Jones had been seriously investigating the causes of war which have resulted in a lot of flaws/ maladjustments in American society. Jones wanted to "impose his personality upon the world," (Jones 55) through his writing and makes Prewitt enact the same events that he undergoes in the army. Prewitt, like Jones, "believed in fighting for the underdog, against top dog" (275).

Prewitt, a career soldier, in his fight against top dog suffers a cruel fate, first when he is demoted from a top bugler to the status of mere recruit at Schofield Barracks; then at the hands of "Dynamite" Holmes who harasses him for refusing to box for the company tournament; and finally dies in the hands of a sentry while trying to return to his camp to inform about the unannounced military action of the attack on Pearl harbor (called Hawaii Operation AI[1] [2] by the Japanese. It was against the conventions of the war for any country to attack without any formal warning. Prewitt's life is a history of scars.

Robert Lee Prewitt has many things in common with James Jones. Indeed Prewitt is based on an old friend of Jones in the army, Robert Stewart, and has the characteristics of Stewart whom Jones knew. By morphing Stewart into Prewitt, Jones crafts his own experiences in the army through his fictional character Prewitt in *From Here to Eternity*. Son of a miner from Harlan County, Kentucky, Prewitt grew up in utter poverty. Coming from the "Kentucky Mountains along the West Virginia line," (15).

To young Jones "The Profession" seemed to be only way of survival. Trapped in an environment stripped away from dignity and self-respect, Prewitt finds that Army gave meaning to his purposeless life. Prewitt's Uncle John Turner, already an army man, liked to talk to young Prewitt about the adventures of "The Profession".

Prewitt's first quarrel with the County miners comes when he is socially repressed by them. His father receives multiple stabs while his uncle is away in a "blazing gun battle" with his deputies. The memory of his mother always repelled him, because he would blame her for his small stature. Prewitt underwent a lot of turmoil when he watches his dying mother. The unpredictability of human existence leaves him to wonder about his own death. Hazily he looks for signs of immortality for the angles to come down and uplift her to Heaven. His dying mother "to shape" his later life extracts a deathbed promise, a "sacred" pledge from Prewitt.

Prewitt upholds the pledge so faithfully, that it is deeply embedded in his consciousness a bum that he had been. Prewitt leaves Harlan County and enters "The Profession", like Jones. Initially he likes it; he is especially called to play the bugle. It is the bugle that reaches him to the high point of his life when he chosen by the Bugle corps to play on "Armistice Day Taps at Arlington, the Mecca of all Army buglers. "Later many "other people began to come into it" (18)

While he maintains a good record as the best bugler, Prewitt has an affair with a "society girl" and gets venereal disease, which, in the Army, is a seriously "bad mark" on his official record and quite indirectly brings down his ratings in the Bugle Corps. Jones' penchant for exposing the

truth in writing finds a parallel in Prewitt. When Prewitt not only gets the “clap” as it is called in the army and which indeed gave an idea for the novel. “Unofficially, nobody really minded the clap, for in the army it is all a joke. It was a joke to those who had never had it and to those who had been over it for a while. No worse than a bad cold, they said. Apparently the only time it was not a joke was when you had it. And instead of hurting your unofficial reputation it boosted you a notch, it was like getting a wound stripe. They said that in Nicaragua they used to give out Purple Hearts.

At the Bugle Corps’ at Fort Shafter, CO passes Prewitt over as First Bugler stripping him of his corporalship. Prewitt is transferred, giving up his corporal stripes, to a rifle outfit Company “G” at Schofield Barracks on the island on Oahu. Prewitt leaves Fort Myer and arrives at Schofield Barracks. In *Eternity*, “Dynamite” Holmes is obsessed with winning a boxing trophy than prepare for war.

He did not intend the novel to be the classic story of war or combat but used World War II as the backdrop for his analysis of men, his ultimate goal. He wanted to examine and write about ordinary men’s souls, emotions and feelings during peace time and conflict.

Like James Jones, his principal character, Prewitt is totally committed to the ultimate demand; even surrender of self to the Army, for the Army essentially protected the country. This ideal of Robert E. Lee Prewitt is unnatural of a soldier. But for men like Prewitt, the Army had been the only refuge for years especially when political and economic supremacies made their fortunes bleak. Being a soldier allowed him to a profession which he could not easily find anywhere else.

Prewitt goes back to fighting for the Pineapple Army, where fighting was considered true measure of a man than bugling at Myer. He becomes Corporal for winning the company Smoker championships of the 27th and continues to be the runner-up in the welterweight division. Since he predicted assured winner for the next year, he is promoted to Sergeant. But his fate is crossed by Dixie Wells, a middle-weight champion.

The event in the novel begins when Prewitt is singled out by the commander for not pulling his share of the load. Jones has the experience of the stockade, perform through Prewitt, “marching up the Kole Kole Pass in the Waianae Mountain Range ‘...with a full field pack and an escorting non-com, over some stupid argument with company command” (Giles 19) Sergeant Ike Galovitch orders Prewitt to pick up the pace and Prewitt sneeringly responds with a sleight of hand in the earshot distance of the CO, Dynamite Holmes.

This disrupts the routine duty and causes the other non-commissioned officers to watch the incident. Prewitt “never liked being pissed on... Even by a non-commissioned officer. Holmes insists that Prewitt apologizes to Sergeant Galovitch. Prewitt of course, does not apologize. It does not occur to Holmes that Prewitt, “an EM could refuse”. Holmes roared at Corporal Paulson, that Paulson jumps as if stabbed. In real life Jones did apologize, but Prewitt never did. Prewitt’s friends beg him to apologize to the “Old Man” and accept the secondary position in the Bugle Corps. This was just part of “The Treatment” that Prewitt receives from “Dynamite” Holmes, the Head of the Boxing Squad. Holmes favorite hobby is boxing. “Dynamite” Holmes learns about Prewitt’s reputation as a talented boxer, and recommends Prewitt to join the regimental boxing club and promises that he would help Prewitt to be promoted to corporal or even sergeant, if he wins the boxing trophy on December 15.

While his primary desire was only to play the bugle in “the Regiment, bar none,” (4) Prewitt cannot settle for the second position. Prewitt feels it is an unfair judgment and vows to oppose this corrupt fascist policy. Prewitt’s liberal idealism opposes to these symptoms of corrupt and fascist threat and takes the responsibility to fight it. He vows to remain pure in such a corrupt institution and see its destruction or be a martyr for it. James Jones seems to make this point

intensely aware to the readers about his character 'Prewitt' as the need for the American Army, for such individuals who in spite of their futile and self-destructive war against the institution will uphold their ethical position. Prewitt refuses to fight with boxing squad. He faces some unusual problems, which Jones has it in *Eternity*. Jones in real life received boxing lessons from his father to support his life. Soon Jones came to be known as "Jeeper". Jones was encouraged to enter the Golden Gloves boxing tournament in Terre Haute. He wins the first round and reaches the semi-finals. But the sight of blood bothers him and he didn't like hurting people he knew. That was the end of his boxing career. Jones' Prewitt is a success. Prewitt was good at boxing and participated in the Company smoker within the army. Prewitt tells the crumbling tale of Dixie Wells to Lorene aka Alma, his beloved girlfriend. In one of his regular workouts with Dixie Wells in the ring, without gloves, and headgear, he catches Dixie wide and falls on him. It was a deadly weight that Prewitt puts on Dixie's face and Dixie goes into coma for six weeks. If the blinding of Dixie Wells becomes just one reason for Prewitt's transfer, it gives Prewitt a taste of success and the importance of war for men who are waiting for the "war" to happen. It allows him to become a boxer again with sergeant Galovitch.

Yet another parallel soldier character like Prewitt whom Jones introduces in the novel is Milton Anthony Warden. Warden is the dominant personnel of G Company under the authority of Lt Ross. Richard P Adams makes a perspective study of these two soldiers in respect to the structure of the novel. It is based upon "the form of the letter X", he writes: One line of the X corresponds to Prewitt's downward movement to death and the other to Warden's upward movement to 'dominance of G Company under the authority of Lt Ross.

Adams sees that these two soldiers assume symbolic importance. Both are devoted to Army and both love Army. In deed Prewitt is devoted to Warden and Warden loves Prewitt. In Prewitt's devotion to the Army Warden sees a symbol of "the integrity for the Company" and tries to save him from self-destruction.

When Prewitt refuses to box, Holmes orders the first Sergeant to prepare court martial papers and doubles up Prewitt's punishment. As some Non-commissioned officers help Holmes in his conspiracy, Prewitt is supported by Angelo Maggio. Prewitt and Maggio spend their free time at the New Congress Club, a gentlemen's club where he falls in love with Lorene and attracts venereal disease.

Later at a tavern of "Choy's" near the base, Maggio meets Judson, Sergeant of the Guard of Stockade. Judson makes an improper comment at Prewitt and Maggio's sister. Maggio smashes a bar stool on Judson's head, as Judson pulls switchblade at Maggio. Warden intervenes to save Maggio and warns Judson that killing Maggio would penalize him to "create two weeks of paperwork" for him. Judson retreats. Later in the night, Maggio is arrested for being drunk in uniform and is sentenced to six months to the Stockade.

Things get bad for Prewitt, When Sergeant Galovitch picks a fight with Prewitt on a yard detail and the two come to blows. With repeated punching at Prewitt, Prewitt though refuses remembering his deathbed promise, resorts to boxing and finally knocks out Galovitch body by blinding him. Holmes steps in to stop the fight. Galovitch accuses Prewitt of insubordination. Holmes is about to punish Prewitt, but lets him off the hook. The Base Commander witnesses the entire incident and orders an investigation by the Inspector General. Holmes's true intentions are exposed and a court martial is ordered on him. Holmes's plea for option is denied. He is asked to resign "for the good of the service and leave the Army. Holmes is replaced by Captain Ross, who demotes Sergeant Galovitch to the charge of the latrine. Meanwhile Maggio manages to escape from the Stockade to meet Prewitt. He tells about the abuse he suffered by Judson and dies in the arms of Prewitt. Prewitt the next morning plays the taps on his bugle. He waits to seek revenge on

Judson and invites him to a back alley to talk. Prewitt did not like Sgt. Judson (known as Fatso) for accusing him at being stabbed.

Prewitt kills Judson with same switchblade Judson had pulled on Maggio earlier, but not before he sustains a severe wound in the stomach. Prewitt runs away. Despite Prewitt's AWOL, the platoon sergeant marks him present on Warden's instruction. Prewitt's dual problem is, he is wounded and a murderer and it needed that he goes "absent without leave," AWOL.

Prewitt feels hopeless to go back to Schofield. He does not even go to claim baggage left behind at station. After Fatso's dead body is discovered, it eventually leads to question, where should he go back to the post or..."But if could get to Alma's he would all right" (666). With the cut he received from Judson, he considers the possibility to get to Alma's apartment and get his wound all right. Prewitt hides at Lorene's apartment. Lorene aka Alma tends Prewitt's wounds.

Prewitt like Jones is disillusioned about the Army. His thoughts were: "Your days as a thirty-year man are over," and as he had struggled with the essence of life always. But life was "Complicated, very complicated. Why it was everything was always so goddam complicated? Even the simplest things were so goddam complicated when you come to doing them". (668-669) It appears that his best plans and best intentions went awry. His own thoughts were "he hadn't meant to go over the hill and some up here tonight, He had meant to go right back to Post. That was what he had meant to do." (671)

The wound that Prewitt receives from Judson has yet another parallel to Jones' own non-combat injury on his ankle. Jones was sent back to the States to be operated at a naval base in the New Hebrides. Jones has a short stay at Letterman General Hospital in San Francisco. Later Jones was sent to Kennedy General Hospital at Memphis, Tennessee. During his stay in Memphis he gathers information for his later writing.

Jones has a wild time boozing, picking fights in the local bars, and with his trouble stricken ankle. The Hospital review board declared that he was ill-suited for full-Infantry duty and reassigns him to "Limited Duty" to train new men. Very typical of the bureaucrats, Jones is assigned back to full Infantry duty at Camp Campbell. Here while the Camp unit was preparing to leave for Europe and D Day invasion was expected, Jones instead goes on AWOL to visit his family AT Robinson. When he returns he was not court-martialled because the warrant officer befriended Jones and marks his papers as "two week delay" on route. Jones was reduced in rank to a quarter master gas and supply company to "have all of the washouts of the army" (Hendricks36-38)

In the same way Warden in *Eternity* protects Prewitt from court martial proceedings. Prewitt too like Jones participates in all the Peacetime Hawaiian delights. Prewitt literally enjoys the streets of Honolulu. The names Prewitt sees are real places in Honolulu. Prewitt falls in love with Mrs. Kipfer, an unusual thing for a soldier. The dramatic similarity between Jones and Prewitt's social life is quite interesting to note.

Jones used to observe the people around him. He liked to talk to the girls in the whorehouses and drink and dance and find out about their lives. In his letters home to his brother, Jones bragged about his successes with women referring casually to "the cupcake" whose favors he received. Jones attempts to put these sensations in *Eternity* in an attempt to describe the feelings and the frustrations of the peacetime soldiers and how a soldier longs to have a woman who will love him. Jones is making an attempt to deal the feelings of a soldier who yearns to come out of the confines of army life.

Jones wanted to be the voice that shrieked out the agony of frustration, lostness, despair and loneliness, that all men feel, yet cannot understand; the voice that rolled forth the booming,

intoxicating laughter of men's joy; the voice that richly purred men's love of good hot food and spicy strong drink; men's love of thick, moist, pungent tobacco smoke on a full belly; men's love of woman: voluptuous, throaty voiced, silken-thighed and sensual.

Prewitt echoes Jones in his agony and despair, "trying to be a successful writer". Prewitt even determines to sacrifice his love to be a successful writer. Prewitt is introduced to literary works and becomes an obsessive read. It appeared that even worst literature appealed to him. Prewitt attempted to read every book in the apartment. His personality comes again and again through Prewitt and even in the choice of reading material. Jones felt that he could not accomplish everything he wanted and Prewitt also sees the futility in event. Jones was not totally satisfied with his army life. He lives as he likes, gets drunk and eventually admits a pack of lies to his brother who he feel that his brother expected to hear more the exotic world, Hawaii, so he exaggerates his adventures only to withdraw.

The pity is that the 'Magnificent Gesture' will become a reality with a surprise attack on Pearl Harbor. Earlier, before Maggio had been attacked by Judson, Maggio had already warned, "theys a war goin on here." Structurally Jones novel has two ideal soldiers, Prewitt and Warden, fascist Sergeant and General Slater. Now Warden has been observing Prewitt. Warden helps Prewitt with AWOL. Jones uses the opportunity to retell his own actual experience during the Pearl Harbor attack through Warden. With Maggio and Bloom being dead over the Hickam field, at this time, First Sergeant Warden plays the part of Jones to narrate the last scene in the novel that was truly the real experience that Jones had in Hawaii.

Warden was just going back for seconds on both hot cakes and eggs, with that voracious appetite he always had when he was drunk when this blast shuddered by under the floor and rattled the cups on the tables and then rolled on off across the quad like a high wave at sea in a storm. He stopped in the doorway of the KP room and looked back at the messhall. He remembered the picture for the rest of his life. It had become very quiet and everybody had stopped eating and looked up at each other.

Warden tries to arm up and heads to the roof to shoot the Japanese planes, hopelessly trying to fend off an attack, but in vain. In reality, Jones during the attack carried messages for panicky officers in the Infantry trying his own way, though, to help the situation. Jones though armed with the special pistol; what remains with him are the memories which serve as a source for his writing. Ironically, Jones takes out a personal record.

After Prewitt went AWOL, Prewitt realizes much as Jones did to get back to Schofield Barracks and face the music. Prewitt plans to get back before the attack on the Pearl Harbor. But the decision turns into a fatal one during from Prewitt learns about the Japanese secret mission to attack Pearl Harbor, though weak from his wounds tries to return to his camp to alert. But Prewitt is shot by a sentry.

Warden identifies Prewitt's body and grieves over Prewitt's stubbornness and mocks that because of the Pearl Harbor attack, the December 15, 1941 boxing tournament is cancelled. Holmes's resignation results in Karen returning back to the US. Also Warden does not become an Officer as she desired and realizes she can never be with Warden forever. Prewitt's death is like the *leu that floats* out to sea, a parable that she explains to Prewitt's much-loved Alma aka Lorene. Alma/ Lorene knows her fiancé will not return because he was killed in a B-17 attack. He was awarded the Silver Star after his death which his mother, a woman from the south, treasured it. Karen identifies as a General Robert Lee Prewitt, whose name she heard from her conversations with Warden. Lorene aka Alma holds Prewitt's bugle mouth piece.

Following that, Warden begins an affair with Holmes' deserted wife, Karen. Karen was married long to Dana Holmes, when he was stepping out on learning about her pregnancy. Finally the Army hospital, when they had the baby out, fined her heavily. Karen even admitted to Warden that she had been out with many men. She confessed to Warden that she had been "made dirty" and wanted "to be clean" and get her revenge on Holmes, but alas! lived with Holmes hatefully and miserably. Karen was excited to return to the States if Warden became an Officer, not knowing his dislike for officers.

Sergeant Maylan Stark warns Warden about Karen's affairs with several Army men. Warden wants to test Karen's love. Karen admits that she has lost a baby when Holmes, in a drunken stupor, failed to rush her to the hospital. Karen affirms her genuine love to Warden.

Indeed, to Prewitt, a combat soldier of the United States Army, "the Profession" was the first thing in his life that gave him a sense of pride and identity. Prewitt loved the army heart and blood and would die for it. The Army is the one institution which gave him a purpose and direction, and if it appears to act corrupt or turns fascist, Prewitt will challenge it.

In the early 20th century, the years in the wake of the great Depression, military service was the only option for many young men in America. Few men who had private means prospered, but men, who were poor, poorly educated, or of poor spirit had few choices, except the Army. Although only twenty-one, Prewitt had lived 'on the bum' for years to improve his lot in life and joins the Military profession. At the Pearl Harbor Army base in 1941, on his first position with the 27th Infantry at Hawaii Division, Robert E. Lee Prewitt, and 'Prew' Prewitt is a helluva a boxer and the "best bugler in the Regiment [sic]."

Prewitt gives up fighting after a bout of blinding an opponent and decides not to hurt anyone like that again. Prewitt, Fort Shafter's finest bugler and a professional soldier, cannot tolerate army politics. *From Here to Eternity* is the first of the trilogy which deals with the Jones' experiences in Company E ("The Boxing Company") of the shocking days after the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor. Infuriated when a commander's favorite wins the title of First Bugler, Prew rejects his commander's advances; Once again, Prewitt is transferred from the Bugle Corps at Fort Shafter to an infantry rifle outfit, Company "G", at Schofield Barracks on the island Oahu, whose Commander is interested in boxing than in preparing for war.

When Prewitt refuses to join the company's boxing team, the commander and his sergeant make the bugler's life hell. Prewitt's refusal to box results in his being given "the treatment"--a concerted regime of physical hazing by the NCOs to break him and make him change his mind. Taking an objective view of his characters and their actions, Jones allows a cruel fate of punishment and reward to Prewitt. Prewitt's action is "right" both morally and legally, but "wrong" according to Army regulations. Sergeant Milt Warden must maintain a facade of official non concern in Prewitt's hazing, but respects his solid soldier skills.

Forced back to the ring, Prewitt is determined to withstand his punishment; ironically, he does not know why he is being court-martialled. Jones' ability lies in portraying the tension between the regular officers and non-commissioned officers who try to survive against the backdrop of cataclysmic events. Prewitt's death at the hands of fellow soldiers is Jones' final statement of the futility of men's attempts to control their own destinies.

Depicting the army life of a group of soldiers stationed on a barracks in Hawaii in 1941, Jones creates a cynical world in which the army emits cruel power like Slater's over the soldiers' transfer, company and even military stockades It is a portrait of men just trying to survive the politics, the discrimination and the brutality of the few who held power over the many. While these are some of the undeniable accounts of men who lived it, Jones served as a soldier from 1939

to 1945 and was present at both the attack on Pearl Harbor and the battle for Guadalcanal, at which he was injured, and also decorated for his service.

From Here to Eternity has a parallel story of first sergeant Milt Warden, who has an affair with Karen, the wife of his captain. 60 years after it was first published in 1977, the original version is produced as an e-book through digital publisher Open Road.

Sarah Churchwell, senior lecturer in American literature and culture at the University of East Anglia, welcomed the publication as a reversal of censorship. "Jones was aspiring to realism and verisimilitude and objected to the sanitization of his novel," she said. He was trying to tell the truth about war. In the 1950s the US was telling itself a mythic, grandiose, heroic story about the Second World War and GI Joe saving the world. Jones was saying, "That wasn't the war I saw, I want to write something more honest and realistic. Whatever the mid-America myth, one of the things men were doing was giving blow jobs for money." (Church well's review)

When Jones was criticized for promoting homosexuality through *Eternity*, A war critic, Churchwell added that a story celebrated for inspiring the classic Hollywood beach scene between Lancaster and Kerr was actually envisioned, should allow James Jones his rightful place as one of the earliest mainstream US novelists to try to treat homosexuality sympathetically, without judging or pathologising it. She said, "People don't think of Jones as an avant-garde writer, but in his way he was. We know about Hemingway and Allen Ginsberg, but we don't put James Jones into that story and he deserves to be there." (ibid)

It was queer, he thought, how a man was always being forced to decide these things. Sometimes he got confused and could not quite remember what the reason was, and the necessity that had been at the beginning of this endless chain of new decisions. Prewitt, the best bugler in this Regiment of bar, none is the best in Schofield Barracks.

In conclusion, Jones takes an objective view of his characters and their actions, allowing a cruel fate to hand out punishment and reward. Prewitt's refusal to box results in his being given "the treatment"--a concerted regime of physical hazing by the NCOs to break him and make him change his mind. Determined to withstand this punishment, he is unable to forestall the incident that results in his being court-martialled. As in other cases, Jones is able to portray Prewitt's action as "right" both morally and perhaps legally, but "wrong" according to army regulations. Prewitt's ironic death at the hands of fellow soldiers is Jones' final naturalist statement of the futility of men's attempts to control their own destinies.

The perfect ideal would be that a man who is essentially nonviolent would be able to defend himself against any form of violence. But this is very rare in life. But this raises one of the most important themes in *Eternity*. Why Prewitt does not shoot back? at the MPs who kill him as he tries to get back to his unit after his murder of Fatso Judson. You see, when Prewitt kills Fatso he is carrying the theory of vengeance by violence to its final logical end. But the thing is that Fatso doesn't even know why he is being killed; and when Prewitt sees that, he realizes what a fruitless thing he has done. To survive the war, Prewitt completely submerges his own individuality into an unavoidable mass of anonymous individuals. Prewitt is totally committed to the oppressed in the society and accepts the inevitable challenge to oppose young man who is devoted to moral purity.

Prewitt and Warden are "good soldiers" in Schofield Barracks, Honolulu and Hawaii, in 1941. Set in the summer and autumn of 1941 at the Schofield Barracks in Hawaii; Through the eyes of an all too human soldier on the eve of Pearl Harbor, Jones provides a stark glimpse at the relations between friends and foes in the most basic, fatalistic of surroundings: an Army base on the eve of a great war.

Brigadier General Sam Slater from Sheboygan believed in the efficacy of “rank and privilege.” It was his “bread and butter” and something which he did not find in the Regiment, when he was facetiously welcomed by Col. Jake Delbert. Dynamite Holmes is struck with deep admiration of Slater and his theory of junior officers being “insanely afraid of their superiors,” and superiors governed in “perpetual apprehensiveness of official disapproval, as wrong” (340).

Holmes is affected by Slater’s enthusiasm. He grows calmer and colder to hear Slater charm him, when Slater says that man cannot be chained to a machine because it is “Honorable” as a symbol of fear of authority, but rather makes “man afraid of not chaining himself to his machine”. It is interesting when two fascist leaders, Slater and Holmes, express their views on the issue of how to make man fear as follows.

Slater nevertheless, carries on his admiring discourse with Holmes that though we pay lip service to ‘Honor’, to soldiers in editorials, for the “sake of appearances” and for “peacetime drafts,” he admits, that we must have “men ready for this war or be defeated.”(341). He was full of hatred that lot of modern men live in “perpetual apprehension”. According to Slater, “modern Armies that are governed and controlled by fear must be stabilized by masters” like Slater and Holmes.

Slater is the only character in the novel who admires Dynamite Holmes’ totalitarian streak. Slater insists that society has arrived at a time when repression from master class is a must to control neurotic masses. Holmes clearly speaks for totalitarianism, and is suspicious of individuals like Prewitt and Warden who talk reasonably unlike the fear stricken junior officers or apprehensive superior officers.

Slater is logical and capable in perceiving the trends of the time. A fearless Slater understood that for an organized society and civilization to continue at all, there must be “complete unquestioned control to head it”. (342) Holmes is overwhelmingly excited to see that Slater already discerned that the unquestionable power to control man lay in the machine. Slater chills Captain Holmes down when he elucidates the “productive capacity and machine techniques of the Germans, Japanese and the Russians.

Personally, Slater is an anti-paternalist and hopes and believes that America will learn not to be utterly controlled by machines; the way it is completely handled by the great corporations like Ford, and General Motors and US Steel and Standard Oil under the “banner of Paternalism”. Like the Victorian Moralism in England, the Paternal Imperialism of America should be stopped before it becomes deadly, according to Slater.

Slater contends that the ‘social fear’ spread by these imperialists of giant corporations is one tremendous source of Individualism which positively destroyed America and ‘Honor’. He finds the whole thing absurdly false, immoral, inefficient and harmful in many ways. Holmes finds Slater’s argument absolutely truthful, when Slater disputes that these imperial corporations run by individuals do not direct their power on important problems of America “whether to go to war,”(344) they diffuse “conflicting opinions such patriotism versus the love of ‘peace’.(344)

He vehemently expresses that it is time America got rid of such individual moralists and replaced them with realists or else the absurd logic would be that America with all its “industrial power will sit back and vacillate (when everybody knows war is inevitable) until somebody or other attacks us and makes us fight-and incidentally gets a great big drop on us”. (344). Slater wants Holmes to transfer to his Brigade for the reason that he found “a truly firm ground, a foundation a thinking man can stand on, a sound logic that will not let you down. Give me that and the rank can go to hell.”(351) Holmes is not keen to be transferred to the Brigade. Slater does not like individuals working for the corporation commit suicide to prove their existence in the corporation. He disapproves such expressions of individualism as vengeance:

Accordingly, Individualism in any kind of organization is a crime and the machine must not allow this. Keeping this in view he tempts Holmes with the prospect of appointing Prewitt so that Captain Holmes can extract obedience from Prewitt “as a precondition for promotion.” Verily, Slater recommends Prewitt’s transfer to the Brigade as important as he would be better for Holmes not just for his boxing squad, but in reality that Prewitt would be a springboard for testing and developing Holmes’ abilities as a boxing coach.

In *The Thin Red Line*, First Sergeant Welsh, the counterpart of Eternity's Warden, echoes Slater's vision when he tells the mess sergeant, Storm, "There aint any choice. There's no choice left for anybody. And it aint only here, with us. It's everywhere. And it aint going to get any better. This war's just the start. You understand that". James Jones makes it abundantly clear that what is just starting is the reduction of human beings to insignificant ciphers. He hints at such at the end of Eternity when Lieutenant Ross tells Warden that "One soldier more, or less, don't matter much. . . . Production is what wins wars". Elsewhere, Jones writes that modern war is machine war and that the combatant with the best industry will win.

Private Robert E. Lee "Prew" Prewitt is the epitome of tragic heroism, a great man who allows him to be torn down bit by bit all the while to beat the growing corruption in the army. The harsh environment created for him by Warden and Slater vividly illustrate their irrational fascist practices in the army. War is Hell, and so, Jones reminds us, of the conditions that set the stage for it. Amidst all the ugliness, Prew reflects a noble spirit of persistence. In the face of adversity against the ultimate culture of conformity, Prew’s resilience to alert his American soldiers of the attack on Pearl Harbor which inevitably leads to a stormy climax. Jones makes Prew’s death not only heroic but as a triumph of a good soldier over Crypto fascism.

Jones “*From Here to Eternity*” is also a social statement. According to Robie Macauley, “it seems to serve the good purpose of expressing for a whole generation of American men all the hates, frustrations and protests they accumulated while they were in uniforms. (529)

James Jones knew the pain of the honest soldier. *From Here to Eternity* deals with life of an honest soldier trapped in the hatred of institutional oppression and yet lives life only to fight. These are real good soldiers going through a planned institutional oppression like any other soldier whose ocean of sufferings remain unknown even after hundred years of their death and their honesty, courage, patriotism and idealism will remain silent and unwritten. *From Here to Eternity* is James Jones’ unheard tale of a good soldier.

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The Revolutionized Genre

Mojgan Abshavi

Compared with other dramatic forms such as tragedy, comedy is the much revolutionized one. Comedy as a literary genre today is far away from its ancient ancestors but has kept certain characteristics to be yet recognized as 'comedy'. In order to prove the idea one must look back to see how far the literary, political, and social changes taken the genre to what it is today. Page | 93

In the most common literary application, a comedy is a fictional work in which the materials are selected and managed primarily in order to interest and amuse us: the characters and their discomfitures engage our pleasurable attention rather than our profound concern, we are made to feel confident that no great disaster will occur, and usually the action turns out happily for the chief characters. The term "comedy" is customarily applied only to plays for the stage or to motion pictures; it should be noted, however, that the comic form, so defined, also occurs in prose fiction and narrative poetry (Abrams, 41).

The origins of comedy are obscure, but it is agreed that it somehow grew out of ritual miming, singing, and above all dancing (Cartledge, 14). The earliest form of comedy, known as Old Comedy, appears almost to have sprung fully formed from the brain and stylus of Aristophanes (448-385 BC). But it should not be forgotten that he *did* have predecessors, and indeed contemporaries and rivals. What the ancient critics called 'Old Comedy' (to distinguish it from the 'New Comedy' of Menander; 'Middle Comedy' is a more recent and fuzzier classification) was not identical with the output of Aristophanes (Cartledge, 12).

As a genre, Comedy had been officially recognized at the Dionysia since 486 BC, forty years or so before Aristophanes was born and at the Lenaia since about 440 BC. When he made his debut in 427 BC, comedy was almost sixty years old. Krates and Magnes were the great names of the first generation of comic playwrights; and Kratinos, a much older contemporary of Aristophanes who was showing before Aristophanes was born, yet survived many trials and tribulations to defeat the younger man's *Clouds* with his *Putine* ('Flask') at the Dionysia of 423 BC. Then there was his almost exact contemporary Eupolis, who kept pace with him until his death in 412/11 BC (Cartledge, 12).

All the same, it does seem pretty clear that the contribution of Aristophanes to comedy was overwhelming and unique, that it was he above all who shaped the genre of Old Comedy. We only have about one quarter of his original output in anything like its original form (Cartledge, 12), and the remainder of the almost 400 known plays survive only in snippety quotations or tatters of papyrus fragments or just as bare titles (Cartledge, 13).

Old Comedy was a kind of drama developed from fertility rites in honor of Dionysus. It was fantastic, bawdy and scurrilous, and at times obscene. It featured three stock characters: bornlochos (buffoon); alazon (impostor or braggart); and eiron (a self-derogating character). Invective and satire were essential elements in it. Much of the verse was finely lyrical. The Chorus took an important part in the action and represented the dramatist's point of view. In what is known as New Comedy the Chorus disappeared. Unhappily only the plays of Aristophanes survive from this period. The best known are *Clouds*, *Knights*, and *Frogs* (Cuddon, 611).

New Comedy flourished in the 3rd and 4th centuries BC. It differed from the Old Comedy in that there was little or no satire (common in Aristophanes) and both plots and characters were very often stereotyped. The emphasis was on intricate amorous intrigues with a happy ending. Menander, Philemon, and Diphilus were the best known playwrights. They were imitated by the Romans

Plautus and Terence, who, in turn, had a considerable influence on Elizabethan comedy (Cuddon, 544).

According to Aristotle (384-322 BC) in his *Poetics*, comedy “wishes to imitate men worse than those of now,” and tragedy imitates those “who are better.” This is the opening salvo in Western criticism on the topic of comic theory offered by Aristotle in the second chapter of his fragmentary *Poetics*. In chapter 5, he expands: “Comedy . . . is an imitation of the more base, not, however, in respect of every kind of badness, but in respect of that part of the ugly which is ludicrous”. Comedy presents men as worse than in actual life, ludicrously ugly, though not precisely morally bad (Demastes, 11). According to Peter Thomson, modern reconstructions of Aristotle’s lost notes have plausibly proposed that he would have claimed for the genre a purgative effect comparable with that of tragic catharsis, a provoking of pleasure and laughter that would have the effect of curbing harmful excesses of either. Such theorizing can be remote from practice. More significant in the subsequent history of drama is the neo-Aristotelian distinction between the social status of the characters appropriate to tragedy and to comedy (cited in Coyle et al., 1993: 376)

From the 4thC. AD, we have a few generalizations by the grammarians Evanthius, Diomedes, and Donatus. Evanthius says that in comedy the men are of middle fortune, the dangers they run into are neither serious nor pressing and their actions conclude happily. He goes on to say that whereas in tragedy life is to be fled from, in comedy it is to be grasped. Diomedes observes that the characters in comedy (unlike those in tragedy) are humbled and private people (thus, not heroes, generals, and kings). He adds that two of the main themes of comedy are love affairs and the abduction of maidens. According to Donatus, comedy was a tale containing various elements of the dispositions of town-dwellers and private people who are shown what is useful and what is not useful in life, and what should be avoided (Cuddon, 149).

The next major reference to comedy occurs in the *Ars Versificatoria* of Matthieu de Vendôme (c. 1150), where he refers to comedy as an allegorical figure who comes surreptitiously with a work-a-day (or daily) grin or in a work-a-day dress, bearing his head in a humble fashion and not bringing any pretensions or suggestions of gaiety. This striking description is a little ambiguous, but the implications are that comedy is unlike tragedy, and in comedy it does not look as if things are going to turn out well (Cuddon, 149).

A century later, the term expanded to include narrative poems with happy endings and a lighter tone. Vincent de Beauvais (1190-1264), in *Speculum maius triplex*, describes a comedy as a poem changing a sad beginning into a happy ending. In 1286, in *Catholicon*, Johannes Januensis (died c. 1289) makes a distinction, similar to that of Evanthius and Diomedes. Tragedy and comedy differ, he says, because comedy is concerned with the acts of private (or ordinary) men, and tragedy has to do with kings and people of importance. Comedy uses a humble style, tragedy a lofty style. Comedy begins with misfortune and ends with joy. Tragedy is the opposite (Cuddon, 149).

Eventually a certain pattern is becoming clear. It is made even clearer by Dante (1265-1321) in his *Epistle to Can Grande* in which he explains what he is setting out to achieve in the *Divina Commedia* (which he began c. 1310). He derives the word comedy from *comos*, 'a village', and *oda*, 'a song'; thus comedy is a sort of rustic song. He goes on to say that comedy is a form of poetical narrative which is different from any other kind. He contrasts comedy and tragedy and points out that comedy begins with harshness but ends happily. Its style is negligent and humble. Thus, the *Divina Commedia* begins with misfortune in the *Inferno* and concludes with pleasure and happiness in the *Paradiso* (Cuddon, 149-150).

As time progressed, the word came more and more to be associated with any sort of performance intended to cause laughter. During the Middle Ages, the term "comedy" became synonymous with satire, and later humor in general, after Aristotle's *Poetics* was translated into

Arabic in the medieval Islamic world, where it was elaborated upon by Arabic writers and Islamic philosophers, such as Abu Bischr, his pupil Al-Farabi, Avicenna, and Averroes. Due to cultural differences, they disassociated comedy from Greek dramatic representation and instead identified it with Arabic poetic themes and forms, such as *hija* (satirical poetry). They viewed comedy as simply the "art of reprehension", and made no reference to light and cheerful events, or troublous beginnings and happy endings, associated with classical Greek comedy. After the Latin translations of the 12th century, the term "comedy" thus gained a more general semantic meaning in medieval literature (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comedy).

Surprisingly enough Chaucer (1343-1400) uses the word 'comedy' but once, and that right at the end of *Troilus and Criseyde*, a tragic story:

*Go, litel book, go, litel myn tragedye,
Ther god thi makere yet, er that he dye,
So sende myght to make in som comedye!*

Here the usage is antithetical. Frustrating though it is that Chaucer never told us what he thought comedy was, he comes very near to describing it in *The Canterbury Tales*. The Knight interrupts the Monk's long catalogue of tragedies and says that he would like to hear a different kind of story. The Knight's description of a person climbing out of misfortune to prosperity to the 'gladsom' is as satisfactory a definition of the medieval conception of comedy as one will find.

A description later confirmed by Lydgate in his *Chronicle of Troy* (1430):

*A Comedy hath in his gynnyng,
A pryme face, a manner complaynyng,
And afterwarde endeth in gladnesse.*

But it must be remembered that in the Middle Ages a comedy was a poem with a sad start and a happy end (Cuddon, 150).

At the Renaissance a very different view of comedy from the preceding views prevailed, as one can soon discover from a brief examination of the English critics. For the most part they held the view that the object of comedy was corrective, if not actually punitive. Representative points of view were expressed by Sir Philip Sidney (1554-1586) and George Puttenham (1529-1590). It is certainly true that many comedies of the Tudor and Jacobean periods had some moral and corrective purpose but quite a few had not. They were intended to give pleasure and entertainment. The two major writers of comedy between c. 1590 and the 1630s in England were Shakespeare (1564-1616) and Ben Jonson (1573-1637). In their conception and treatment of comedy they were very different. Shakespeare wrote almost every kind except satirical comedy; Jonson hardly wrote any that was not satirical (Cuddon, 151). According to Thomson, by the mid-sixteenth century, the confidently opinionated Scaliger could announce, in his *Poetices Libri Septem* (1561), that 'Comedy employs characters from rustic or low city life.' The distinction is less important at its extremities than in the generally accepted belief that comedy is about people who are not socially removed from the majority of the audience. It was this compatibility that gave currency to Cicero's famous dictum that comedy is 'an imitation of life, a mirror of custom, and an image of truth.' The writers' craft, that is to say, is displayed in the quality of their imagination, the accuracy of their mirroring, the vividness of their images, but the subject (and the object) is life, custom, truth. For Aristotle, comedy is 'an imitation of men worse than the average; worse, however, not as regards any and every sort of fault, but only as regards one particular kind, the Ridiculous, which is a species of the Ugly.' What is held up to ridicule is also held up for correction, and it was the intention 'to mix profit with your pleasure' (Jonson, Prologue to *Volpone*, 1605) that came to distinguish high comedy from its hangers-on in Elizabethan and post-Elizabethan Britain. There are

echoes of Aristotle and of Cicero in the Prologue Jonson wrote for the revival (c. 1612) of his *Every Man in His Humour*. Determined to guide his new audience's responses, he promises:

*...persons such as Comedy would choose
When she would show an image of the times,
And sport with human follies, not with crimes.*

But he warns that follies become crimes if we persist in them:

*I mean such errors, as you'll all confess
By laughing at them, they deserve no less:
Which when you heartily do, there's hope left, then,
You, that have so grac'd monsters, may like men.*

Jonson is the articulate advertiser of a form of critical, or corrective, comedy which provided a model, honored in the breach as well as in the observance, for what became the dominant European tradition. Prefigured in the 'New Comedy' of Menander, it is variously reflected in the work of Molière and Beaumarchais, of Lessing, of Griboyedov, Gogol and Ostrovsky, of Wycherley and Congreve, of Bjørnson and Ibsen, as well as of countless lesser writers. It is a kind of comedy which invites us to laugh at the faults and fetishes of its chosen victims and may scold us if we fail to do so. Having exhibited their own intelligence, the authors expect intelligent responses. This, for George Meredith in his much-quoted *Essay on Comedy* (1877), is 'true comedy', whose test is that 'it shall awaken thoughtful laughter' (Coyle et al., 376-377).

With the coming of the Civil War, the closing of the theatres and the Puritan or Commonwealth period, comedy, like other forms of drama, was not produced in England. However, in France, in the middle of the century there appeared a man whom many regard as the greatest comic dramatist of all - Molière; an immensely prolific playwright and many of whose works have become classic. Like Ben Jonson he was a satirist. Contemporaries of Molière who wrote some good comedies were Racine, Quinault, Montfleury, and Cyrano de Bergerac (Cuddon, 153).

Congreve's *The Way of the World*, written a generation later, is a less threatened work, and the product of a less fragile environment. No less a critic than William Hazlitt described it as an essence almost too fine; and the sense of pleasure evaporates in an aspiration after something that seems too exquisite ever to have been realized. By the time it was written in 1700 unease over the Catholicizing tendencies of Charles and James had receded under the Protestant William; peace had been established between France and Britain in 1697, and the Act of Settlement of 1700 consolidated the shift of power away from the monarch towards parliament. It would all make for a less volatile political regime. None of these events are specifically referred to in Congreve's play, but the greater certainty they generated is part of its character. For instance, where in Wycherley's play it is hard to find any evidence of mutual affection among the characters (and the insecurity of their world stems from that fact), the fundamental assumption of *The Way of the World* is that beneath the sparring, gossip and jockeying for position, its protagonists genuinely care for and even love each other. In his prefatory epistle Congreve states that his aim was to create characters who displayed 'an affected Wit; a Wit, which at the same time that it is affected, is also false'. His point is, beneath the surface, relationships blossom and take their course. His characters are more persuasive than Wycherley's, partly because they have greater depth (Wu, 4). All in all, Congreve's satire is gentler than that of Wycherley or Rochester (Wu, 5).

According to John O'Brien (2005), Restoration comedy was supposed to offer negative examples, models of behavior so obviously *unlike* anything a spectator should want to imitate as to be actively repulsive (188). Comedy assumed that examples should be equally intelligible but repugnant. Rather than being attracted by a figure in comedy, the spectator should rather be

revulsed, his absorption by the performance thoroughly broken by the negative force of the example that the playwright has presented. We should learn, that is, *not* to imitate Horner, the rake anti-hero of William Wycherley's *The Country Wife*, and, perhaps more important, not to be as foolish as the men he cuckolded. Comedy offered models, not of virtue, but of human folly, models that should be so obviously ridiculous as to make imitation undesirable. It is not hard to see that this went against the grain of the assumption that the theater invariably prompted imitation. Hence anti-theatrical writers, who at times seemed to endow the theater with almost magic power, were particularly zealous to reform comedy. Collier and others believed that spectators were actually inclined to take their behavioral cues from the misbehaving casts of Restoration comedy, a claim that may have violated comedy's normative intentions, but that demonstrates the reformers' respect for the power of the theater's ability to prompt mimetic desire (O'Brien, 189).

Political theory was also used to describe the construction and function of individual characters in Restoration comedy. For instance, the epilogue to George Etherege's 1676 comedy *The Man of Mode; or, Sir Fopling Flutter*, written by John Dryden, calls on the rhetoric of parliamentary representation to describe how Fopling Flutter, the comic butt of the play, mirrors the audience back to itself. Stepping forth to address the audience, the actor who has just finished playing Sir Fopling observes that his character is not one of the "monstrous fools" typical of other plays, "nauseous harlequins" who derive more from the imaginations of their authors than from any social context familiar to the audience. Sir Fopling Flutter, by contrast, is "knight o'th'shire," who "represents" the "gallants" in the playhouse in the manner of a member of Parliament. Dryden's reach for the rhetoric of political representation signals how important it is that the play's cast be understood to reflect back the mores of persons not only of its own moment, but of the very kinds of people who went to the theater (O'Brien, 190). *The Man of Mode* became, as it happens, a crucial text in a debate over the nature of a representative character, a debate that helps identify some of the ways in which the nature of "representatively" changed in the course of the period. The debate was precipitated by Richard Steele's unconcealed desire to discredit the Restoration-era repertoire of satirical comedies in order to replace it with a kind of comedy structured on new, reformed principles.

Moore's agenda was shared by enough other dramatists in the middle years of the eighteenth century to make sentimental comedy into a recognizable form. The term sentimental comedy is even more problematic than most generic labels. Its frequent dating to the first performance of *The Conscious Lovers* occludes the many impulses that Steele shared with playwrights like Colley Cibber and George Farquhar, each of whom produced earlier plays with recognizably "sentimental" components, and the term itself is too vague to be completely useful. Still, the emergence of the category into public discourse is significant, as it identified a set of shared values and expectations, linked them to a broader social movement of sentimentalism, and identified both of these as marking a significant break with the past. Sentimental comedy, *The Foundling's* prologue asserts, is "politer" than earlier comedies, by which it means the satirical works of the Restoration Theater. These now not only looked scandalous and licentious, but archaic, old-fashioned, the residue of a less civilized culture. Sentimental comedy reflected its own culture back to itself by identifying that culture as polite, modern, a society reformed away from the perceived excesses of the Restoration court (O'Brien, 192).

After the vogue of sentimental comedy no new comic form emerges in drama until the Theatre of the Absurd in the 20th century, but many dramatists worked within the conventions already established, modifying them and exploiting them. A particularly popular form of comic drama in England in the 18th century was the burlesque (Cuddon, 153). In the second half of the 18th century, in Britain, Goldsmith and Sheridan wrote outstanding plays which combined some elements of comedy of manners, satirical comedy, and sentimental comedy (Cuddon, 153).

In general, during the 19th century, farce proved the most popular dramatic form of comedies until approximately the last twenty years of the century when we find a remarkable resurgence of vitality in the theatre in Europe, England, and Russia. In Russia this had been presaged to a certain extent by the work of Gogol and Turgenev. Turgenev wrote some comedies which anticipate the work of Chekhov (Cuddon, 154-155).

Meredith's *Essay on Comedy* (1877), mentioned above, was the expanded version of a lecture delivered in 1877, shortly after George Henry Lewes had mourned the decline of the drama, throughout Europe and America, from art to amusement and may fairly be said to herald a dramatic revival, although Meredith was not to know that Ibsen's *Pillars of Society* was first staged in the same year. To a modern ear, Meredith is too floridly enamoured of 'the comic spirit', but he opens up a prospect for Ibsen and Shaw with the lively perception that 'any intellectual pleading of a doubtful cause contains germs of an Idea of Comedy.' The last quarter of the nineteenth century saw comedy shaken by the ears. The prolific Dion Boucicault, triumphant in 1841, supreme by 1874, could no longer find a theatrical buyer for his comedy *Ourselves* after 1887. The old formula had lost its authority. Meanwhile, Ibsen was crowning his already substantial achievements, Wilde would soon preach, through lucid inversion, the importance of not being earnest, Chekhov be given a second chance by the founding of the Moscow Art Theatre, Shaw would begin his sabotaging of the British theatre with *The Quintessence of Ibsenism* (1891) and some 'unpleasant' plays of his own, and in Paris, on 10 December 1896, Jarry's *Ubu Roi* would scandalize a public that was going to have to learn fast (Coyle et al., 377).

From 1870s onward, comedy found a new source of energy which continued into the 20th century. So this date can be the starting point of modern comedy. However, WWI changed many interpretations of life in general and the depiction of these changes in literature, including comedy, needed new forms. Moreover, WWII exacerbated the situation. If we want to categorize accordingly, then we must stop our discussion after the Theatre of the Absurd, since absurd drama somehow links modernism to postmodernism. Thus, modern comedy ranges from the last decade of the 19th century to the Theatre of the Absurd. Within these years, many forms in comedy emerged, some innovations and some imitations or adaptations of former kinds.

Thus, from 1870s onwards, a great number of gifted dramatists have exploited the comic forms in different ways and directions. The most remarkable feature of the whole period, therefore, is the extraordinary variety of comedy that has been created. In many cases the traditional classifications are not adequate, but the variety certainly includes satirical comedy, drawing-room comedy, 'French-window' comedy, domestic comedy, tragi-comedy, *drame*, comedy of ideas, comedy of manners, comedy of menace, black comedy, farce, dark comedy, high comedy, light comedy, and many works which come under the heading of 'Theatre of the Absurd'. There are also a large number of plays which may be put under the French category of *drame* - serious plays with comic elements (Cuddon, 155).

The need for a reassessment of comedy was met, at the very outset of the new century, by the French philosopher Henri Bergson. Bergson's particular subject was laughter—the title of his 1900 monograph is *Le Rire*—but he explored his theme largely through the work of Molière and later French playwrights. Whatever the limitations of *Le Rire*—and those who look to comedy for a subtle and multi-faceted expression of human experience have been at pains to expose them—it brings expertly into focus the social effect of laughter in particular and, by association, comedy in general (Coyle et al., 377-378). It is an absence of self-awareness, a spectacular rigidity, that isolates, for Bergson, the comic character. As a social gesture, laughter inspires fear and thus 'restrains eccentricity' and it is this that leads Bergson to formulate the view that comedy's prime attack is less on immorality than on unsociability. The vision, still supported by the majority of sitcoms, is of comedy as a socially conservative form, punishing/rewarding deviations from a bourgeois norm with laughter. The audience laughs at the mechanistic predictability and social

inappropriateness exhibited by characters with whom it has no strong emotional ties: 'the comic, we have noted, addresses itself purely to the intelligence: laughter is incompatible with emotion' (Coyle et al., 378).

Bergson, we should remind ourselves, undertook a study of laughter and used comedy to illustrate his thesis. Freud's investigation of *Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious* (1904), despite an even greater distance from the theatre, has influenced the development of comic theory, not least in its recognition that jokes can override taboos, license vicarious indulgence and permit both teller and listener to express their hidden hostility towards the restrictive attitudes and practices that circumscribe their lives. The implications for comedy here are very different from those argued by Bergson. Bergsonian laughter punishes eccentricity (comedy is conservative), whereas through the Freudian laughter that greets a joke and the anger/desire/frustration that motivates its telling, eccentricity briefly triumphs over authority (comedy is subversive) (Coyle et al., 378-379).

The end of the 19th century was also concomitant with the advance of naturalism in Europe. According to Styan (2005), realism, or truth to life, was always the legitimate end for a good playwright; naturalism intended truth to life only as a method of presentation, using what was likely to be said and done as a way of reaching out to us (54). The advent of *realistic* naturalism brought with it many new problems for the writer at the time, and placed many new pressures on the actor and his audience. The play's dialogue had to do all it had done before, carrying character and movement, exposing the past and furthering the plot, but it had to do this while seeming casual and conversational. Elements of triviality and a lightness of touch had to be presented together with elements of importance and seriousness, if the illusion was to be sustained. Instead of distracting the attention of the spectator from the true aims of the play, paradoxically such dialogue tended to intensify and hold the attention by supplying the gentle ironies implicit in everyday intercourse (Styan, 55). Interest became centered on causes and not effects, and in the best of the naturalistic plays that old cliché 'the irony of life' acquired the reality it deserved (56).

Spectators were expected to be eagle-eyed for signs of unrest, and they were prompt with laughter and ready with compassion. Effects were possible which might have passed unnoticed in the boisterous theatres of other times. The toning down of feeling, the merging of farcical and tragic exaggeration, in fact required the spectator to be more alert to overtones of tragicomedy (Styan, 56).

The naturalistic playwright wished to point the incongruities he observed, but without having to distort the truth of life as he saw it. He aimed, therefore, at avoiding the cardinal principle of the old comedy—that of exaggeration. As a result of this, he was not able entirely to exclude the audience's tearful response as writers had done before. Nor perhaps did he wish to; but he could command it at will. Essentially, only the details of life as it was lived were to be his raw material: he chanced upon a variety of the so-called "domestic comedy" which has since his time been vastly abused by the countless dramatists who wrote a melodrama spiced with a handful of cardboard characters drawn from artificial comedy: sniffing maids, pompous aunts, well-bred fiancés, absent-minded grannies and comic policemen (Styan, 57).

In the 1890s Chekhov first made his influence felt. Subdued, ironical and sad, his comedies (which are very nearly tragi-comedies) represent something approaching perfection. In the 1890s, too, Wilde revived the comedy of manners and this was just in time because he wrote for an audience that scarcely existed after the First World War. In the same period Shaw broke upon the scene and was to be a dominating force in the theatre for many years. His plays showed a wide range of talent but most are comedies of one sort or another, though not always easy to classify (Cuddon, 155).

According to Ulea (2002), the appearance of Balzac's and Chekhov's comedy posed new questions concerning the formation of protagonists' potential, namely, the integration of the part

and the whole. The new development in comedy is linked to an elaboration of the quasi-strong potential of the protagonist. A traditional comic hero is distinguished by an apparently weak potential that is structured from homogeneous characteristics that do not create a spectrum. Therefore, traditional comedy does not require a special technique for detecting the degree of strength of its simple-minded characters since their weight is apparently small. The need for a new methodology appears when contradictions arise between a traditional view of comedy (as linked to the idea of the laughable and survival) and its development into something quite the opposite.

The comedy of a new type highlights the question of integrating the part and the whole. Most importantly, such integration cannot be done intuitively; it requires an analytical approach to characters' potential and predisposition. This is in disagreement with traditional comedy, which requires an immediate and intuitive assessment of the comic. The spectator of traditional comedy must not wonder if the character is comic, he or she must immediately see it and react to it in accordance with the rules of the comedic genre. All the efforts of the dramatist, director, and actors would otherwise be wasted. In other words, no intellectual, analytical thinking with regard to the characters' potential is required from the spectator of traditional comedy, whose feedback is expected to be reactive. This is the main reason why many critics do not agree with Chekhov's description of his four major plays as comedies (since, on the surface, his main protagonists resemble characters of drama). Needless to say, a new theoretical approach to comedy is required to see the ingenuity of Chekhov's works (Ulea, 111-112).

Chekhov was the one who changed the tradition in drama and introduced a group of characters instead of a single protagonist as the central figure. As a rule, characters of Chekhov's major comedies are intelligent, gifted people who suffer from their inner weakness and inability to develop. If approached as an aggregate, they represent an above average potential; however, if analyzed as a system, their potential appears to be weak (Ulea, 119).

Another fact is that characters of this new kind of comedy may set global goals, but their lack of global vision predisposes their failure (Ulea, 128). Characters of traditional comedy are rarely provided with global goals; as a rule, they think in terms of local pragmatic objectives linked to short-term tactics. On the other hand, characters of the new kind of comedy often set long-term global goals, and readers who do not differentiate between setting global goals and possessing a global vision may be deceived about the ability of these characters. (130).

Ulea believes that the other fact is that deaths and losses, though not usually, were still subject matters of some traditional comedies. However, they clearly show limited potential of the protagonists in traditional comedy never deceived the reader/spectator concerning the type of genre of the work. The deaths of protagonists in the comedy of the new type have quite a different impact on the reader/spectator, who wonders if the dramatist was serious in defining his work as comedy. The most common reaction is to accuse the author of cynicism, as some conservative critics did with regard to death in Chekhov's major plays. This becomes a primary subject of Chekhov's philosophy of death, in which one's demise plays the role of a litmus test, revealing the unconditional value of one who has gone forever. Therefore, the main questions that must be answered with regard to the death of a Chekhovian character are: what was the meaning of the character's life and did he or she influence the development of society, friends, and family? The answers to these questions serve to reveal the character's weight on the scales of eternity (Ulea, 143).

Another element in the new kind of comedy is myth. Myth becomes a scale of measurement of protagonists' potential. Allusions to mythological figures facilitate the discovery of the unconditional value of protagonists in particular and their universe in general. The same can be said of any literary or nonliterary structure that appears as a result of intertextual associations. In

establishing intertextual parallels, one must also outline deviations, since they are important in approaching the mytho-literary continuum of the plays (Ulea, 163).

Oscar Wilde (1854-1900) and George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950) are the other persons whose name should be mentioned with regard to modern comedy. Wildean and Shavian comedy both seem to be initiated by satire but before long they slide into something else (Gordon, 131).

If there is any consensus among critics, Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest* (1895) is in locating it somewhere between the Anglo-Irish comic tradition established by Congreve, Goldsmith, and Sheridan on the one hand, and, on the other, the Victorian genre of "nonsense literature" as represented by Lewis Carroll and Edward Lear. To put it another way, it is satire turning repeatedly into farce but farce with a peculiar seriousness because it seeks not merely to resolve plot complications but, through its language, to define an aesthetic Utopia, a guiltless "triumph of the pleasure principle." Its final recognition scene exploits the conventions of melodrama, the most moralistic of dramatic genres, but sends them up: the discovery of a long-lost mother is deflected onto an all-important handbag, of a long-lost father onto an all-important name in a reference book (Gordon, 133).

During the half century between Wilde's death (1900) and Shaw's (1950), Shaw's reputation was high and Wilde's depressed (Gordon, 139). Shaw might appear to have earned his reputation of being the principal writer of English comic drama since Shakespeare (Bloom, 2011: 1). But this has been reversed during the second half of the twentieth century, and Shaw may be said once again, in a different way, to be shadowed by Wilde, as he was in late 19th century. Wilde's increased appeal in our day has to do primarily with his tapping into postmodern skepticism regarding objectivity, truth, and art. One is inclined to trace this skepticism back to Nietzsche, and, in so far as this is justified, it is significant that Nietzsche's influence in the first half of the century (on such writers as Yeats, Lawrence, Dreiser, London, and O'Neill) concerned mainly the question of power whereas in the second half it has concerned mainly the question of truth. Although Wilde remains a late Romantic and not a postmodern figure, he wrote with memorable flair about objectivity as an aspect of subjectivity, of truth as an aspect of fiction, and of art as an aspect of criticism (Gordon, 139).

The theories and practices of Chekhov, Wild, and Shaw were inclusive and in their names, that is, the greatest practitioners of their styles were themselves. However, what they developed generated the gist of modern comedy which was to move through the first half of the 20th century combined with other common genres in comedy to reach the Theatre of the Absurd, which is discussed later. We can say that modern comedy began with the revolution of Chekhov, Wilde, and Shaw, and ended with revolution of absurdist dramatists. The 'New Theatre' of the 1950s, soon to be known as 'the Theatre of the Absurd', overturned twenty-five centuries of tradition by rejecting all rules and by facing the chaos head-on (Coyle et al., 464-465). The Theatre of the Absurd was a term, derived from Camus and popularized by Martin Esslin's book *The Theatre of the Absurd* (1961), applied to a group of dramatists whose work emerged during the early 1950s (though Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* and Ionesco's *The Bald Prima Donna* were actually written in the late 1940s). In *The Myth of Sisyphus* (1942), Camus defined the absurd as the tension which emerges from the individual's determination to discover purpose and order in a world which steadfastly refuses to evidence either (Childs & Fowler, 2006:1). For Camus 'the feeling of the absurdity of the world' springs from the confrontation between man's conscience, his consciousness, his thirst for rationality and the inert, irrational, unknowable world. Yet, contrary to received ideas, the realization of such an irredeemable divorce does not lead to passive despair or intellectual suicide. Convinced of the ultimate absurdity of life, man will strive towards a moral and ethical imperative for greater lucidity and for living life to the full, since life is, after all, the only human tangible reality. Camus's most despairing play, *Cross Purpose* (*Le Malentendu*, 1944), tells of the murder of a young man by his long-lost mother and sister who fail to recognize him in the lone traveler come to spend the night in their inn. Constructed like a mathematical equation, *Cross*

Purpose, has a simple, realistic set, a small cast of well-defined characters, a relentless action that lasts just a few hours, and contains not the slightest incident that could distract the spectator's attention from the subject under scrutiny. Well played, this becomes a metaphysical tragedy of the highest order, stating that 'this world we live in doesn't make any sense'. The same clarity of meaning is also the hallmark of Camus' other plays, and of the dramatic output of his fellow existentialist Jean-Paul Sartre whose *In Camera (Huis clos)*, also 1944) presents a metaphysical tragedy set in a metaphorical hell. Camus and Sartre, both convinced of the ultimate absurdity and incoherence of life, couch their demonstration of this truth in the most lucid and coherent prose, within a solid and conventional theatrical structure. The philosophy of the absurd does not necessarily lead to the 'Theatre of the Absurd' (Coyle et al., 465).

To writers like Ionesco and Beckett this paradox leaves human actions, aspirations and emotions merely ironical. The redeeming message no longer comes from God but is delivered by a deaf mute to a collection of empty chairs (Ionesco's *The Chairs*, 1952); human qualities, such as perseverance and courage, no longer function except as derisory comments on the individual's impotence (Beckett's *Happy Days*, 1961); basic instincts and responses, the motor forces of the individual, become the source of misery (Beckett's *Act Without Words*, 1957) (Childs & Fowler, 1). Ionesco's Bald Prima Donna, as conspicuous by her absence as Beckett's Mr. Godot, proclaimed the advent of the 'new theatre' and Ionesco, more than any other playwright of the time, was aware of breaking with tradition as he called his play an 'anti-pièce' ('anti-play') and his theatre 'anti-théâtre' (Coyle et al., 466). Camus himself could see a limited transcendence in the ability to recognize and even exalt in the absurd (Camus's *The Outsider*, 1942) or in the minimal consolation of stoicism (Camus's *Cross Purpose*, 1944). But he came to feel that absurdity implied a world which appeared to sanction Nazi brutality as easily as it did individual acts of violence. From an examination of the nature of absurdity, therefore, he moved towards liberal humanism: 'The end of the movement of absurdity, of rebellion, etc is compassion.....that is to say, in the last analysis, love'. For writers like Beckett and Ionesco such a dialectical shift was simply faith. For to the 'absurd' dramatist it is axiomatic that humans live in an entropic world in which communication is impossible and illusion preferred to reality. The individual has no genuine scope for action (Hamm sits lame and blind in *Endgame*, 1958; Winnie is buried to the neck in sand in *Happy Days*; the protagonist of Ionesco's *The New Tenant* (written 1953, produced 1957) is submerged beneath proliferating furniture); individuals are the victims of their metaphysical situation. Logically, the plays abandon linear plot, plausible character development and rational language. In contrast to Camus's work their style directly reflects their subject (Childs & Fowler, 1).

The term 'absurd drama', applied by Esslin to dramatists as diverse as Beckett, Ionesco, Adamov, Genet, Arrabal, and Simpson, is something of a blunt weapon. Esslin had a disturbing if understandable tendency to trace the origins of the absurd in an incredible array of writers some of whom do not properly belong in a theatre which is convinced of the unbridgeable gulf between aspiration and fulfillment, the impossibility of communication or the futility of human relationships. In other words he is not always completely scrupulous in distinguishing between style and content. In his revised edition of his book, however, he has shown a commendable desire to underline the deficiencies of a term which, while proving a useful means of approaching dramatists' intent on forging new drama, was never intended as a substitute for stringent analysis of the work of individual writers (Childs & Fowler, 1).

The Theatre of the Absurd drew significantly on popular traditions of entertainment, on mime, acrobatics, and circus clowning, and, by seeking to redefine the legitimate concerns of 'serious' theatre, played an important role in extending the range of post-war drama (Drabble, 2000: 3). In general, for the 'new theatre' inaugurated by the Theatre of the Absurd, reality is often fantastic, grotesque, oneiric; the action takes place in non-defined locations, within surrealist, distorted, subjective, dream-like settings; characters behave arbitrarily, without motivation, according to a principle of discontinuity; they are prone to parody themselves or one another. The

dialogue follows its own logic and has recourse to interior monologues, streams of consciousness, rhythmic repetitions, flat contradictions, sudden ruptures, logorrhea interspersed with long aphasia-like silences. Although strictly speaking the 'Theatre of the Absurd' already belongs to history (*Godot* and *The Bald Prima Donna* have long since acquired the status of 'classics'), it exerts a profound influence on contemporary writers and directors and has forever shattered the illusion that dramaturgical conformity can yield a satisfactory theatrical artifact or that an orderly discourse can make sense of this world of ours (Coyle et al., 473).

Rational smile or tummy laughter? That is the question that we face in modern comedy. What is significant about the comedies of realist, naturalists and then the absurdist's of modern comedy is that they were not after tummy laughter. They didn't want to depict scenes and characters to provoke matters of entertainment for the passage of time. But rather, it was the time that wanted them to see how humans were passing their lives. Satires, farces, comedies of manners, and social comedies all contribute to the criticism of the society. And these playwrights were doing exactly the thing. They were criticizing what they saw. According to Styan, outrageous effects were to free the imagination of an audience trained by tradition to judge plays by their likeness to life. A new stylization in drama was to permit the contrasts necessary to project those monstrous ironies of life which are the great subject and the world theme of the modern stage.

The characters in the revolutionized genre are individuals facing real problems in real life, not in an imaginary world or arcadia. Their problems are neither tragic, nor comic, hence tragicomedy or *drame*; their problems are mostly related to their families, hence domestic comedy or drawing-room comedy; they are part of the corrupted society, hence satiric comedy; they struggle with cosmological issues, hence comedy of ideas; they have to deal with the opposite sex and moral norms, hence comedy of manners; they are threatened by frightening forces, hence the comedy of menace; they are pessimist to the world around and desperate totally from all living, hence black comedy; they feel baseless and mere objects of ludicrousness, hence farce; they feel that the world is baseless and no divinity exists, hence the Theatre of the Absurd. They feel hanged but not dead. Or as Estragon and Vladimir near the end of Act II in Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* say:

Estragon: *Why don't we hang ourselves?*

Vladimir: *With what?*

Estragon: *You haven't got a bit of rope?*

Vladimir: *No.*

Estragon: *Then we can't.*

In this case, death, as in tragedy, is more promising because if there is any other world, the suffering human beings are saved, and if there is not any other world, they have been again saved from the indifference of life; death is better than living in suffering. But the problem is that in comedy death does not exist and it is the dominance of suffering which make us laugh at the condition of our living. According to Styan, in dark comedy, which is the essential form of modern comedy, there are moments when, in counterpointing his effects, the author takes his play to the very edge of disintegration. So in our minds the image grows perilously brittle, and we the audience are on the point of making a destructive analysis. But a synthesis and reconciliation of the parts will follow if their dramatic chemistry has been perfectly calculated (117). The swinging of the pendulum within our minds, the dialectic of laughter and tears with its energizing effect on the spectator, is to be observed through much of the drama of our time (118).

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Empowerment of Women through Autobiography: A Study of Shobha De's Selective Memory

Naveen Kumar Kottidi

Introduction

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Feminism is a political, social and cultural movement which gives a considerable significance to "text" as a vehicle for carrying the ideas, beliefs, assumptions, desires and wishes of its author. It is a weapon in the hands of writers who battle for the equality of women.

A text can be any of wide variety of literary creations such as articles, manifestos, memoirs, poems, novels, diaries. For the women born into a male chauvinistic world, writing enables and empowers them to go beyond the limitations imposed by the masculine dominance and to free themselves from the chains and express their inner thoughts, ideas and feelings. While each of these creations has its constraints, autobiography gives authority to its author. To simplify, it empowers a feminist author by way of its free expression.

Autobiography is one of many forms in which a writer communicates of himself [or herself] and the events of his [or her] personal experiences to the audience. (1)

A female autobiography is the one through which the female protagonist records its personal development as well as issues it handled which are specific to women in society. Baisnée, Valérie states that,

"The autobiography situated at the border between public and private discourse, and in which the present perspective mixes with that of the past, enables a registration of changes at both individual and social levels"(2)

Autobiography is a powerful device for recording memories. In her 1974 essay *The Laugh of Medusa*, Cixous suggests that laughter, sex and writing may have liberating effects. It must be acknowledged that writing generally helps in the consolidation of patriarchal power, so Cixous recommends *Écriture féminine*, a female or feminine writing which will outlive, the constraints posed by masculine system.

"It is impossible to define a feminine practice of writing. It does and will take place in areas other than those subordinated to philosophic-theoretical domination. It will be conceived of only by subjects who are breakers of automatism, by peripheral figures that an authority can ever subjugate."(3)

Hence, it is said an autobiography empowers a feminist writer through which she can express freely and impact considerable audiences, specifically women.

"Literary text is not in the first place the product of an individual author, but rather than product of a much larger culture that speaks through the writer and that conveys political messages that the writer may be completely unaware of." (4)

Feminism presumes that it gives voice for all women irrespective of culture, caste, class, religion, and race. Since the mid-1960s women writers, drawing on their personal experiences, have increasingly brought female sexuality, female anguish child birth, mothering, rape and other specifically female themes into their work. A feminist encounters the subjugation propagated by binary division in phallogocentric world. Foucault states, "A real subjugation is born mechanically from a fictitious relation."(5)

Feminist criticism makes a detailed analysis of gender roles. The word feminine, is a cultural construction and a role that is assigned to generation of women. It holds true to not only masculinity and males but also homosexuals. A thorough revision of gender roles seemed the most effective way of changing the power relations between men and men.

Women were denied opportunities to grow intellectually; they were even not supported in academic circles that confirmed them to kitchen. Women refrained from the sphere of imagination and fantasy for decades and took to household chores, working hard from dawn to dusk, and never were paid a penny nor were empathised. Women were rather forced to be at the service of men buttressing their glory and achievements. Ashraf Behan is the first woman who earned through the art of writing. Virginia Wolf says,

“All women together ought to let flowers fall upon the tomb of Aphra Behn, for it was she who earned them the right to speak their minds.” (6)

Elaine Showalter delineates woman as a writer – producer of her own text, in her own language, by her own thoughts which are combined by her own feelings and reactions. She uses the term ‘gynocritics’ which is derived from the French word ‘la gynocritique’. She applies it to mean woman as a writer and critic,

“...woman as a writer – with woman as the producer of textual meaning, history, themes, genres, and structures of literature by women. Its subjects include the psychodynamics of female creativity, linguistics and the problem of a female language...” (7)

The autobiography depicts the hidden form of self, and it is expected of the writer to speak the real self. It is significant to study if the lady-autobiographer reveals the inner thoughts and ideas. A woman’s autobiography is more often revolves around her family and relations, where as a man’s story is mostly concerned with his success and achievement in life. Nevertheless, twentieth century came up with a set of women writers, such as Shobha De, who is no longer passive and submissive, but daring, dashing, and intellectually progressive and innovative in their writings.

Shobha De: A Woman Empowered

Shobha De, the prominent and cosmopolitan woman writer in English literature known for her flamboyant feminist approaches is a best seller. She is a pioneer in the world of popular fiction ranks the first to explore the ecstasies and vicissitudes of the urban woman. She portrays the sensitive aspect of human life in an extraordinary way, through her wonderful narrating prowess, of human aspects of life with frankness, precision and with an open heart.

When compared to contemporary women writers, De is really special. She gave much significance to women’s issues which are dealt with psychology in a way of understanding unique to her. She hails the new Indian woman, ready to defy the organized moral institutional orthodoxy of the Indian society, searching for identity in her own unique way. Her feminine characters break the manacles of traditions and customs that tie them in the predicaments and rule in their freedoms and rights. They are not entirely against the social system but refuse to accept it as it is. This confirms her place as a feminist.

Selective Memory: Stories from My Life (1998) serves as a source to understand the intimate details of Shobha De’s life. Though De cannot unveil all the secrets of her life, she has focussed on the image of herself, by cleverly delineating the incidents and accidents without destroying the finer qualities of an Indian woman.

Autobiography is a literature of personal revelation and its success lies in conscious or unconscious self-portrayal by the author. According to Andre Maurois,

“Best autobiographies are those, which expose the inner journey of the self and depict the inner struggles of the person. It establishes a coherent and individual identity of the person.” (8)

Shobha De in a confessional manner has given a true account of her childhood days, adulthood as model, and her career as an editor. She has provided brief and sensitive details of her family, particularly her father. She has narrated number of incidents of her life for example as a youngster, and she was a rebel and always did things against the normal traditional way. As she writes in her memoir,

“I must have created many problems for my parents as an adolescent. Journalists often asked me whether I was a rebel?” (9)

She describes her journey from being a middle class girl with a lot of aspiration in life to best-selling author as ‘exciting’. The lady, who has depicted women as epitomes of power, liberty and beauty in her books, says, “There should be no word like ‘Compromise’ in the dictionary of women.” (headlinesindia.com)

As an editor, when she has made up her mind to depart with Nari Hira and to start Society, it was a challenging task for her as she has shared her experience in ‘Selective Memories.’ As she states in her memoir,

“The first thing to get right was the cover story, always the bane editors in search of the right subject. International reach on the matter had shown that woman sold better than men, photographs better than illustrations and babies best all.” (10)

Further, she narrates her mental conflict of ‘To Be or Not’ with her magazine ‘Society.’ She narrates her story prior to publication of ‘Society’. She was confused and admits,

“while I was enjoying ‘society’ editing enormously, one side of me was acting up, ‘listen you can do its own your own. Why work for somebody else? Goon, flout your own magazine. Do it now.” (11)

The failure to run the magazine and the broken marriage disturbed her too much and her conscience her womanhood and at one point she thought about identity crisis of her life as she writes,

“I had never been in such a situation before. Nothing, but nothing-was going right financially or emotionally. My marriage was breaking up. The magazine I started ‘Celebrity’, was facing all sorts of problems. For the first time in my adult life, I felt alone, alienated and isolated.” (12)

Shobha De with her cosmopolitan background represents the affluent class of writers in the Indian English literature. Shobha De says that her father created an environment of restriction under guise of self-discipline persons. As regarding, the narratives by the women writers Estelle, C., has her own views,

“Women’s self- image is projected by the very means used to distance or detach themselves. In their life stories, a variety of forms of understatement in place of growing narratives, women tend to write in a straight forward and objective manner about both their girlhood and adult experiences.” (13)

Similarly, in case of Shobha De writing articles doing editing at a magazine was an occupation and hobby as a freelancer. Writing novels is a new experience for her, as she has not experimented with this form of writing. Similarly when she has made up her mind to write her memoir she was not sure about the accuracy and adoption of this memoir writing.

Shobha De has had unhappy and troublesome marriage life. She could survive with the social custom of marriage. Due to her firmness, she could survive her family life. She has refused to bow down as ordinary homemakers against oppression and patriarchal orders.

The spirit of secularism instilled in her writings. She spoke for and stood with strict discipline. She has proved herself as secular in her approach to all the religions of the country. De has maintained her secular character by detaching herself from any favour or bias feelings towards any group or community as a journalist and novelist.

Shobha De is one of the most prominent writers in this genre to bring into light the underworld of woman's psyche. With her writings, De throws light upon the vicious life of urban glitz and glamour. When critics call her as Jackie Collins of India, De blurts out in one of her interviews with Sumaya Samara Singhe as:

"It was a lazy tag thrust on me by Anthony Spaeth for a profile he had written in Time magazine. He had over focussed on the glamour angle and the tag stuck!" (14).

In a way, she implies that her novels have more than glamour elements. Unfortunately, critics highlight only glamour aspect at the expense of more serious issues of women she deals with. Narendra Kumar Neb in his article, "Shobha De: To Read or Not to Read" observes:

"The critics who reject De's fiction for being popular fiction fail to understand the fact that popular fiction has its own value. It doesn't remain limited to specific history of a particular period but forms a dynamic part of the history of that period. Popular fiction articulates the tensions and contradictions within the society giving them popular expression." (15)

"De's treatment of female sexuality gives the impression that she propagates free sex and macho female behaviour as a means of women's emancipation." (16)

Shobha De's keen surveillance of woman's condition in the post-modern world explores the turbulent territory of women's psyche with identity crisis. She finds that the educated urban woman in India believes change in her concept of life towards family and society. This belief later brings out internal and outer conflicts and moral dilemmas affecting her psychic conditions. She always fights against the cultural barriers, which curb her freedom to enjoy her own life. The urban woman does not want to be a docile spouse to her male partner. When her views are not respected in the name of marriage, she is ready to challenge men without any fear and confusion.

Shobha De depicts modern, educated, career-oriented upper class women who are delicate to eternal changing times and situations. Her women are aware of cultural shortcomings to which they are subjected to in this patriarchal society. They rebel against their men seeking considerable identity and unlimited freedom. They are trapped in a conflict between personal aspirations and social demands. Her women do not accept to be labelled as objects of gratification. They challenge their victimization and find a solace redefining their own morals. Their idea of freedom is borrowed from the west because the urban woman in India today is matched with the woman from the west. They refuse to become a male appendix and want to have a significant role in the society.

Shobha De's narration arrests the attention of the readers readily because of her bold stance in sticking to a voice and style; she adopts to unfold the concealed realities of the urban milieu. She wants to explore the hypocritical nature of human beings in Indian cities. She writes in a medium of

'Hinglish' which is a mixture of Hindi and English words in her description of novels. Her prolific work ethic and her unmatched commitment make critics probe into her fiction.

Conclusion

Writing is also more than subversive - it goes beyond an ideological masculinity and abolishes the "Institution" of male writing. It is more than a woman's attempt to free her forces through the process of narrative creation. Page | 109

Writing has become a tool to link the gap or break the silence in which women, both as gendered beings and authors are situated. Writing may actually contribute to making the female voice heard (16). The production of a text may involve a feeling of pleasure *jouissance*. It may also serve as a way to escape the overpowering attitude of the phallogocentric world dominated and determined by men's laws. Its success lies where the author is able to overcome "[the] anxiety of authorship" - a radical fear that she cannot create, that because she can never become a precursor, the act of writing will isolate or destroy her" (17).

Selective Memory: Stories from My Life as a text pushes the limits of female writing, and their protagonist resists fixed identity categories. However, this is not enough to acquire the label of feminist text, but definitely sufficient to merit acclaim.

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Language in Anne Sexton's Poetry, a Mirror Image of the Poet's Identity, Poetry and her Truth

Neelam Dasgupta & Dr. Jyoti Sharma

Once in a letter to a psychiatrist friend, Sexton mentioned the following regarding language:

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“It is hard to define. When I was first sick I was thrilled ... to get into the Nut House. At first, of course, I was just scared and crying and was very quiet but then I found this girl very crazy of course like me I guess, who talked language. What a relief! I mean, well ... someone! And then later, a while later, and quite a while, I found out that Dr. Martin talked language ... By the way, Kayo has never understood one word of language ... Language has nothing to do with rational thought. I think that's why I'm so horribly disturbed with rational thought. Language is the opposite of the way a machine works ... I mumble language to the trees by the pool as if they knew and am fiercely resenting anyone who doesn't talk language and now it's an obsession. Language is verbalizing the non-verbal. That's what makes it so complicated” (Sexton and Ames. p.108)

Anne Sexton wrote for her own redemption indeed as she felt that her writing was like keeping a journal or maintaining a scrap book “to make life mean something as it goes by, to rescue it from chaos--to make ‘now’ last”(Colburn.p.23) According to her, poetry preserved moments of life. She was a ‘lady of letters’. She not only wrote poetry which was very close to her own life but she also wrote letters to her friends, family members, publishers and students too and provided the updates on her poetry and her stream of thoughts. Anne Sexton was ambitious and she knew how to showcase and exhibit her talented work. Although, Anne Sexton wrote many letters to many people, she used her poetry to communicate with the people across the world. Her poetry was addressed to every individual who felt that he was the part of the journey which Anne Sexton had undertaken. Poetry became a powerful channel for Sexton to connect the women all over the world. The intensity of pain which she could express through her poetry was such which each and every reader could feel.

Language in Anne Sexton's poetry became more powerful with the extensive use of imagery and metaphors. Critics agreed that Anne Sexton was metaphorically gifted. Metaphors were an intrinsic and dynamic force throughout her poetry. Metaphors abound in her work. Use of this strong form of speech shows the boldness of Anne Sexton's temperament. Imagery came to her easily. She used metaphor expansively to define everything in her world and leave the readers spellbound with her work.

Use of extensive metaphor created Sexton's identity. It mirrored the poets' inner feelings from the depth of her heart. Through metaphor Anne Sexton laid bare her soul to her readers. She used metaphor to combat her depression and give herself an alternative to the oppression and isolation she felt in the absence of family support to her. Expressing her deep agony in her poem ‘Her Kind’ she wrote:

*Fixed the suppers for the worms and the elves:
Whining, rearranging and disaligned.
A woman like that is misunderstood.
I have been her kind.*

Sexton could be comparing worms and elves in the woods to her husband and children at home. Altogether, the collaboration of different repetitions and metaphors in her poetry help readers to get a better understanding of the message that Sexton is trying to demonstrate – that she understands what it's like to be ‘Her Kind’, a class which is not approved by the society.

The poem, 'Wanting to Die', is an attempt to explain the suicidal feelings that haunts Sexton as well as many others like her. In describing the reasons why a person would like to die, Sexton uses a great deal of simile and metaphor to get her point across. The first two lines of the poem are calm and distant, but the third immediately shifts to the desire for death. In the second stanza, a metaphor is used to give an illusion of things that are normally considered 'worth living for'. She says, "I know well the grass blades you mention, the furniture you have placed under the sun." The third stanza continues with another metaphor in which she compares suicides to carpenters such that carpenters simply ask "which tools, they never ask why build".

*Suicides have a special language.
Like carpenters they want to know which tools.
They never ask why build*

This poem continues with simile and metaphor in each stanza as Sexton tries to explain what wanting to die is like to someone who only wishes to live. An interesting metaphor is used in the eighth stanza. The line reads, "To thrust all that life under your tongue! – that, all by itself, becomes a passion." Ending life is compared to taking pills and implies that it can become a habit eventually, or a passion.

In the final stanza, we are left with an understanding of one's will to die and why life isn't always most favorable. In a sense, "Wanting to Die" is just another suicide attempt. Of course, no matter what the final stanza implies, we are satisfied in being given an explanation of the desire to die, written in a way so that others can relate to and try to understand where Anne Sexton was coming from.

Anne Sexton has used metaphor especially to bring out the depression and mental illness which she underwent herself and she always felt that she understood what depression entails. She spoke about these at length in three poems, 'You, Dr. Martin', 'Said the Poet to the Analyst' and 'Flee on Your Donkey'. In 'You, Dr. Martin' she describes her fellow patients in the mental hospital to her doctor saying "What large children we are." In 'Said the Poet to the Analyst' Sexton refers to her mental illness and her poetical pursuit of language by describing it as her "business of words." In 'Flee on Your Donkey', Anne Sexton describes a mental hospital as "the scene of the disordered senses," and refers to the actual depression as "My hunger." In a way Anne Sexton reflects her own sensible understanding calling the mentally ill- large children, involved in a business of words as they speak anything mindlessly, at a scene of disordered senses, experiencing hunger or urge for something. This hunger is experienced by the grownups in a childlike manner. It is beyond the control of their senses. She brings out a new world by giving description of the people who are depressed and have lost faith over their lives. She also brought out another aspect which shows the need of every individual being accepted by his loved ones. Anne Sexton calls out again and again with the words "Oh my hunger! My hunger! ". She expresses what it is like to be admitted to a psychiatric hospital, examines her relationships to her parents and other patients and identifies the mental struggle that presents itself as depression. She wrote that the hunger never cease, it keeps on taking a new form every time. In 'Suicide Note' she wrote 'once upon a time my hunger was for Jesus'. According to sexton depression posed many faces, it was the hunger which became the urge for committing suicide sometimes and sometimes it became the hunger for the Lord. "Anne Sexton hungered for many things but her foremost interest was in dying; among other things she hungered for death. Her writing indicates that she meant that her yearning for death was like the physiological phenomenon of hungering for food. The sensation was something that rose in her again and again. The desire came and went fluctuating in intensity. Somehow it did not imply the finality of death that one would expect that most people believe in" (Middlebrook.p.243)

Another poem, "Suicide Note," a highly controversial poem of Sexton's, it is very much like many of her other suicide poems, but it is so carefully constructed in the form of a note left to a

“dear friend” that it is said to have possibly been her very own note left before her final and successful attempt. The irony is that “Suicide Note” was actually written ten years before she committed suicide. If she is indeed the persona in this poem, as many tend to believe, it is extremely hard to form an opinion as to whether or not this was a real suicide note written by her and for her own suicide.

*Better,
despite the worms talking to
the mare's hoof in the field:
better,
despite the reason of young girls
dropping their blood:
better somehow*

*to drop myself quickly
into an old room.*

*Before he grew old
he rode calmly into Jerusalem
in search of death.*

She uses symbols such as worms, fields and blood to set the scene for death. After revealing the intentions of the note, the persona introduces the “dear friend” to whom she is speaking. In the following stanzas, Sexton compares her suicide to that of God because he “rode calmly into Jerusalem in search of death.” In the final stanzas, the persona says goodbye and attempts to justify committing suicide once more. The poem reads, “So I will go now without old age or disease, wildly but accurately.” This is only another reference to the earlier statement made about God traveling in search of death – He went willingly and healthily, not of old age or anywhere near unanticipated death.

By using twisted metaphors and similes as a technique in her writing, Sexton transforms her poems to be anything but the ordinary. In *Transformations* sexton uses metaphors in ‘Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs’ to contribute to the breezy contemporary sound. In addition, nearly every line of this quote uses simile or metaphors to develop them and tone:

*No matter what life you lead
the virgin is a lovely number:
cheeks as fragile as cigarette paper,
arms and legs made of Limoges,
lips like Vin Du Rhone,
rolling her china-blue doll eyes
open and shut.*

The metaphor depicts theme and tone for the ‘Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs.’ She portrayed the mental state of the society of that period and satirically commented on their weird beliefs which needed to be dumped.

In ‘In Celebration of My Uterus’, Sexton brought out the unique theme, one of the few poems in which a woman is portrayed as a symbol of unity throughout the globe.

*Everyone in one is a bird.
I am beating all my wings.*

*They wanted to cut you out
but they will not.
They said you were immeasurably empty
but you are not
they said you were sick unto dying
but they were wrong.
You are singing like a school girl
you are not torn.*

Another quote from Love Poems that makes women a symbol comes from ‘The Kiss’:

*My mouth blooms like a cut.
I've been wronged all year, tedious
nights, nothing but rough elbows in them
and delicate boxes of Kleenex calling crybaby,
crybaby, you fool!*

‘Flee on Your Donkey’ from *Live or Die*, contain metaphors so vivid that the actual sights can remind the speaker of the things which have been spoken of in the poetry.

The Hornet knows. Hornets have been sent. They cluster like floral arrangements on the screen. Hornets dragging their thin stingers hover outside”.

“The religious quest of *Live or Die* involves first, the conflict of the speaker and the acknowledgment of the evils that harness the speaker’s life and reside within. Thus, the speaker endures a perilous journey in order to cast out the devils inside her by defeating the metaphorical dragons monsters in her life- the archetypal evil mother, the ominous and controlling male figures, and the alluring temptations of evil from other sources- this involves entering the Leviathan -sea or cave and sacrificing herself, the result being death -metaphorical or physical of herself and the monsters.

Water, in its many forms, has been used as a powerful metaphor and has served a dualistic role. It is both the giver and taker of life, and serves as means for baptism and rebirth. Whether in the form of rain, the sea, or the ocean, it denotes the water of life or of Christ, but also the Leviathan or sea monster, which the speaker must battle and kill. .”(McKena.2008)

“My skin flattens out like sea water” “and go down that river with the ivory, the copra and the gold,” “This August I began to dream of drowning. The dying, went on and on in water as white and clear” “Rain is a finger on my eyeball. Rain drills in with its old unnecessary stories”.

Sexton’s volume is associated with spring, dawn, order, fertility, vigor, and youth. Most notable of these descriptive is fertility, as mentioned in Menstruation at Forty, Little Girl, My String Bean, My Lovely Woman, and A Little Uncomplicated Hymn, Fertility, as Frye suggests, means food and drink, bread and wine, body and blood, the union of male and female. These elements appear throughout *Live or Die* in the form of: ‘That red disease,’ from “Menstruation at Forty”.

*There is blood here and
I have eaten it and I am handed
wine as a child is handed milk.
It is presented in a delicate glass from
for the Year of the Insane...to conjure
up my daily bread.*

Conclusion:

Anne Sexton's poems are heavily populated by simile and metaphor, which, might come off as overbearing but every metaphor was either simple or fresh, and all were uncannily appropriate. Her urge for reunion with God was well stated by the number of metaphoric expressions. She deemed that this was possible only through death.

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“What Sexton was searching for was not only transformation for herself, but transcendence, both obsessions which arose out of the conviction of her own worthlessness. Her desire is to be joined to another in love. Each time that love was disappointed, she was left with her own insufficient resources--left, finally, rowing toward God, that ultimate transcendence of self which seemed to be the only love of which she could be certain because it was love imagined. But love imagined sustains only so long as the imagination works and reality does not impinge too agonizingly” (Hoffman. p. 211).

Most of Anne Sexton's works are quite revealing of the stark reality and in nature they were disclosures of her personal identity. Sexton's poetry revealed much about her feelings, fears, depression. She created her own soul through the language of her poetry. With the use of metaphor and the other imagery, she was able to convey the meaning of a mood with clarity and conviction. The language in her poetry definitely illustrated the poet's deep concerns and desire correctly and candidly.

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R. K. Narayan as an Un-Known Playwright

A. Phaniraja Kumar & Dr. P. Satyanarayana

Introduction

R. K. Narayan is one of the three leading figures of early Indian Literature in English, along with Mulk Raj Anand and Raja Rao. He is credited with bringing Indian literature in English to the rest of the world and is regarded as one of the India's greatest English fictionists. He was an author of series of books- Fifteen novels, five collections of short stories, two collections of Prose essays and two travelogues. They are about people and their interactions in an imagined town in India called Malgudi. Narayan rarely wrote plays and one such play is his One-Act Play, *Watchman of the Lake*. Before studying this one-act play, it is necessary for us to know the basics about one-act play.

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One-Act Play

The One-Act play is to drama what the short story is to novel. Short story is not an abridged novel; similarly one-act play is not an abridged fine act drama. It has its own definition and laws.

The one-act play has a single plot; it is either pure comedy or pure tragedy. The action is confined to a single place and the number of characters is limited. Simplicity and brevity characterise one-act play. It aims at simplicity of plot and concentration of action. It treats the problem of everyday life. The language is very simple without any strain. It makes the dialogue more interesting and at the same time it is short and sharp. It deals with any subject under the scene but attempts to produce the maximum of result by concentrating on action.

Watchman of the Lake

It is one-act play by R.K.Narayan. He presents the theme that Nature is both protective and destructive. It is the story of a shrine which is dedicated to Mara, a Watchman of a Lake, 'Ayyankera', four miles from the town of 'Sakkrepatna' that was the capital of a king called Rukmangada. It is on the eastern base of Bababudan Hills, in Karnataka state. As a token of his love and dedication for his job, the King ordered a shrine to be built dedicated to Mara. Ayyankera preserves the waters of the stream 'Veda'. The tank was built on the command of Goddesses of the river who happened to come to Mara's dream, so that the stream did not flow to faraway places out of the kingdom.

Narayan has created an immortal character Mara. He tells about Mara's sacrifice to save the lake. The man who is selfless and very noble, his great sacrifice raises him to the level of God. The play has Five Scenes and a few characters- a) Village Headman b) The King, c) Mara, The Watchman of the Lake, d) Ganga, Mara's son, e) Son, Ganga's son (Mara's grandson), f) Bhīma, a road worker and others.

Structure of the Play

The First Scene is laid in a village at the foot of a hill. There were workers who were engaged in repairing the road because the king was to pass on that road on the next day. The village headman was supervising the work done by the labour class. Some workers were idle and he was blaming them, ordering them not to gossip with their neighbours. The road must be ready before the King arrived there. The workers worked faster but one timid worker complained about Mara

who was appearing now and then and disturbing the workers. The headman immediately commanded all the workers to stop their work and bring Mara to him. They did so.

At this juncture, our hero Mara entered. According to the headman, Mara was a lunatic and workless dog. The headman abused Mara and threatened to lock him up in the cellar behind the temple but Mara resisted him and told that Goddesses of the river appeared in his dream and she told him (Mara) to tell the king about the tank. The headman became angry on hearing Mara's words and ordered Bhīma, a giant man among the workers to tie Mara's hands and foot and throw him into the cellar. Bhīma took Mara away. Here we got the information about innocent simple character of Mara who is not afraid of anyone, no matter how powerful. He believes in his dream and wants to talk about it.

The Scene Two celebrates the arrival of the king. The king was to pass under a tree. Mara jumped from the tree and paid respect for the king. He told the king what had happened and how he escaped from the cellar. Then Mara described his dream and what the Goddess had said to him. Mara told the king had the goddess asked for a home for the river 'Veda' by building a tank and not letting her leave the village. On hearing this, the king ordered Mara to accompany him to the palace. Accordingly a tank was built so that the Veda wouldn't leave the village.

Here we get to see the earnest nature of Mara which makes him to speak fearless even to the king. He narrates the special significance of the place. Once the great Hanuman brought 'Sanjeevini' at that sacred spot and there arose a stream that was flowed. The river 'Veda' was the elixir of life. The same water flowed down into the village.

In the Scene Three, the time of action is many years after the earlier scene. We notice Mara was standing before his hut on the bank of vast lake. Then Mara had called his son, Ganga who brought Mara the news of a man fishing in the lake. Mara was angry and told him not come there. The water was meant for only animals satisfying their thirst. Then the man questioned his authority. Then Mara replied that he had given this supreme power over the lake by the king himself. He had supervised the building of the tank. It was he who opened the gates to let water into the fields. He had seen to it that the lake was not polluted by man or beast even the headman who had once beaten and bullied him had now to ask permission to even touch the water of the lake. Therefore, in that place he was the king. As he was speaking Mara also noticed how a man was taking his cow to the water's edge. Mara asked his son to warn the man that the water there was very deep and the cow might drown. This shows Mara was concerned about all beings.

In the meantime villager who walked a long distance came up to Mara. Mara asked him to come to his hut and eat some food. The villager told him that his village which was the farthest in the Kingdom was experiencing drought. Crops and cattle were dying. So he had come all the way to ask water for the village. Mara agreed to channelize the water towards their village as soon as the canals were dug. We see the sincerity of Mara here. He can be very strict with wrong doers and very kind towards people in need. Moreover he is also a vigilant watchman.

In the Fourth Scene, we notice torrential downpour and a shrieking storm. There is heavy rain. Veda is swelling and carrying mud and flood into the lake. Mara kept a serious watch. There were also clouds over the mountain tops and heavy rain was expected. So Mara ran all the way to the palace to meet the king and give him the terrible news that the lake's bank was about to break due to the heavy rains, causing flooding of the place. The king became worried. Mara told the king not to worry because he had come praying the goddess. At first the goddess told him that she was giving to kick away the miserable stones which were used to imprison her and she was going to destroy their tank. Mara prayed her to have mercy but she didn't hear. At last he was succeeded in preventing her from destroying the tank. He told the goddess that he would run to the capital and inform the king and return. Till his return, she should stay her hand and also requested her not to do

anything till his return there and the goddess granted his prayer. The king did not believe all this at once but later when he saw mud on Mara's clothes, he believed him.

The king wanted to announce that it was the last of the world and the Sun would rise upon a lifeless land. Here Mara gave the king a suggestion. He asked the king to kill him or get him killed. His last request of the king was that after him his son be made watchman of the lake, then his son's son and so on. This scene presents us with a noble, devout subject, that is, Mara. He sacrifices his life for the sake of his village.

The Fifth Scene is laid in front of a shrine on the lake. We see Ganga and his son. Ganga told his son about the arrival of the King and the death of his father, Mara.

The king told Ganga that his (Ganga's) father Mara was no more and ordered him to carry out his rituals. Then the king built the shrine which looked over the lake. There one could see two pictures. On the top one could see guardian Goddess of the lake and below one could see Mara. The king ordered to carry out the worship on every evening of Tuesday and Friday. Ganga told his son to watch over the lake after his death to carry the worship without any hurdle. Thus Mara's sacrifice saved the lake and the people of the Kingdom. The play also shows how nature can be both protective as well as destructive.

Critique

All the rivers are sacred rivers. People look at them with respect and devotion. They must worship them. They should not pollute its water. Today we have to save water. We should grow more plants and maintain cleanliness so that we can save the lakes today. It is the need of the hour to act. Spread awareness about the importance of protection of water bodies, flora and fauna. Introduce rain-harvesting to each house so that rain water is not wasted. Selflessly decide to reduce consumption of water and animal flesh. People have to see that they do not throw garbage, plastic and toxic wastes into the lakes. Thus this one-act play is a hint at 'Save Water' from Pollution and use it proper cultivation.

Conclusion

This one-act play is a dramatized version of R. K. Narayan's short story *The Watchman of the Lake*. But R. K. Narayan adds history and mythology to the story and writes this one-act play.

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The Influence of the Bhagavad-Gita on American Writers

Dr. Praveena Kaushal

The hoary wisdom of ancient India has attracted many intellectuals and thinkers in the West, Vedantic philosophy, the Upanishads, the Puranas, the Bhagavad-Gita, the tripitakas, the manuscritti were some of the thought currents that reached the New England shores in America in the early decades of the nineteenth century and tribute to the knowledge of many thinkers and men of letters there. These works were among the curiosities brought by the prosperous shipping houses in Boston from Calcutta. When these books reached Emerson, Thoreau and Whitman their affect on them was immediate and inspiring. The transcendentalists, some factors worked actively to make the American soil ready to imbibe the Indian influence. Among these, the early maritime activities, the missionary propaganda, the ideological associations with the romantic savants of Europe, especially those of Germany and England, the opportunities opened by the East India Trade, the work of Raja Ram Mohan Roy are some of the major and conspicuous factors which made Emerson, Thoreau, Alcott, Whittier, Whitman and others respond enthusiastically to the Indian Thought and tradition. Later Mark Twain and Henry Adams were also attracted towards India. And later still it was the turn of T.S. Eliot and others who were influenced by the Indian thought. The process of interaction has continued since then unabated.

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Emerson, according to common belief, was the first man of letters in America who went through the books of the orient and was influenced by these. If we try to read his celebrated Essays alongside the Indian thought we shall be surprised to find deep resemblances in the two. Even on his poetry Emerson remains beholden to Indian thought. There is no denying the fact that Emerson was an original thinker in his own right. But such thinkers would not allow anything to impress itself upon them unless they find something appealing, something fascinating, which can take them nearer to the solution of the dilemma that had been plaguing them. It is this something, which has both the plainness and grandeur of the truth, something that is appareled in celestial light and magnetically drives them towards it. Emerson found in the thoughts of Indian seers and savants that something which provided corroboration of his own thoughts. And he became an avid reader of Indian thought. The knowledge of Indian thought so much impregnated him and soon it became part of his own thought process and unconsciously became part of his writings. His doctrine of 'The Oversoul' finds close parallels in the Bhagavad Gita. He said, "I owed a magnificent day to the Bhagavad-Gita. It was the first of books; it was as if an empire spoke to us nothing small or unworthy, but large, serene, consistent, the voice of an old intelligence which in another age and climate had pondered and thus disposed of the same questions which exercise us." It was he who inspired Thoreau, Walt Whitman and a few other American writers. The romantic movement in American literature paved the way for Transcendentalism through which the literary men of America drew a life of self-reliance and a view of life, which came from oriental philosophy. Transcendentalism was a literary movement founded in 1836 by Emerson, Thoreau and Whitman.

About the Hindu concept of 'rebirth' Emerson writes, "All things subsist and do not die, but only retire a little from sight and afterwards return again." He derives his philosophy from the Bhagavad-Gita when he asserts the Ego of man is the real obstacle in the way of realization of transcendental spiritual experience. From the Bhagavad-Gita, Emerson learnt the philosophy of Karma, Destiny and Ego. According to the Bhagavad-Gita, the cause of suffering in man's life is Maya. So is the opinion of Emerson, as man's activities are confined to the aggrandizement of his sensual and bodily needs; that Ego (Aham) is the real obstacle in the way of the realization of transcendental spiritual experience. Emerson was bound by the idea of eternal flux, the indestructibility of the spirit, the fundamental oneness of the Over soul, the idea of the Deity in which all things are absorbed. It seemed to him that the Indian scriptures were a source of eternal light which can provide us more than any almanac or newspaper. If we read his essays:

Compensation”, “illusion”, “Over Soul”, and the poem: Brahma: we may become conscious of this fact. Some of his stanzas were almost directly quoted from these lines in the Bhagvag Gita –

“He who thinks that the living entity is the slayer or that the entity is slain does not understand. One who is in knowledge knows that the self slays not nor is slain. (Bg. 2:19)

“If the red slayer thinks he slays, or if the slain thinks that he is slain, They know not well the subtle ways, I keep, and pass, and turn again,” (Brahma.)

“O son of Kunti, the non-permanent appearance of heat and cold, happiness and distress, and their disappearance in due course, are like the appearance and disappearance of winter and summer seasons. They arise from sense perception, O son of Bharata, and one must learn to tolerate them, without being disturbed. (Bg. 2:14)

“ Far or Forgot to me is near; Shadow and sunlight are the same; The vanished gods to me appear; and one to me are shame and fame” (Brahma.)

Both Emerson and Thoreau were introduced to Eastern philosophy during their Harvard days. Thoreau published in dial passages from Hindu scriptures. Certainly one of the real excitements of the nineteenth century America was the discovery of Indian thought and tradition. It turned Thoreau into an Indian Yogi. Moved the spiritual experience he wrote in his journal, “I cannot read a sentence in the book of the hindus without being elevated upon the tableland of Ghats.”

“In the morning I bathe my intellect in the stupendous and cosmogonal philosophy of the Bhagwad Gita, since whose composition years of the gods have elapsed and in comparision with which our modern world and its literature seems puny and trivial.”

Thoreau sought throughout his life to live a meaningful existence, a life in which he could understand his own nature, his relationships with other men and women and nature, and with the universe. In the Bhagvad-Gita he found clues for his quest. He made this entry in his journal, “The man who having abandoned all lusts of the flesh, walks without inordinate desires, assuming and free from pride, obtains happiness. The wise man seeketh for that which is homogenous to his own nature.” Thoreau’s reading led him to become a Yogi. According to him the Yogi is free in this world as the birds in the air, disengaged from every kind of chains. Those who practice yoga gather in Brahma in. In Walden Thoreau described the state of the mind that has a close resemblance to the experience of the yogic Samadhi. It is similar to the transcendental self of the Upanishads, the Sakshi or the spectator who merely looks on without participating in the pageant of the world. At one place he noted, “I realize what Orientals mean by contemplation where the divine absorbs the human.” The Orient thus became a part of his life, his thought process and his expression. Similarly, Thoreau sought the sanction and authority of the Hindu ascetic ideal for his life in the woods. Even his contemplative mixture of the Ganga and the Concord waters retain a strong flavor of the Protestant ethic. Thoreau’s real motive was not renunciation as the Hindu savants did and still do, but a bracing immersion in the life- force.

Like Emerson and Thoreau, Walt Whitman, a great American poet, was highly influenced by the Bhagvad-Gita, e.g. Immortality of soul, the world is an illusion, theory of Karma, Rebirth, Renunciation and Salvation are beautifully expressed in his magnum opus, the Leaves of Grass. It is also Asia that Whitman turned for his ultimate spiritual quest. It is through the symbol of Asia that he found the ultimate poetic handling of his subject-interest and some familiarity with real Asia and rather fanciful East which tickled American to him” the handkerchief of the Lord.” Thus, he becomes all-inclusive, all embracing. All is Truth. All goes onwards. Nothing collapses. Man’s inner self is his living Church. Man should commune with the immortal self within him: “Bathe me, O god, in thee” becomes the refrain of his prayer. In his early thirties, Whitman began to have

experienced that transformed him almost completely. In 1855, when he was 36, he published his collection of poems *Leaves of Grass*. The poems seemed so radical in form and content that he became a revolutionary figure in American Literature. In fact, he was initially acclaimed more as a prophet of democracy and of the “common man” in the western world than a poet. Whitman is clearly describing an experience of transcendence. The experience, he tells us is, “independent, lifted out from all ease.” It is unbounded---“It expands over the whole earth, and spreads to the roof of heaven.” It is highly abstract, the “most spiritual” and vaguest of earth’s dreams”. Yet it is the ultimate reality, Whitman asserts.

All the three- Emerson, Thoreau and Whitman- were interested in the concept of selfhood and found in Hindu scriptures an elaborated doctrine of the self. It tells that *antaratma* (the core of the self) is identifiable with the *Brahman* (the cosmic soul). As soul is in all, there is a fundamental and basic unity in all living creatures. Emerson’s *Over soul* is an idea from the *Bhagvad-Gita*. *Over soul* is the eternal soul. Thoreau found in the Hindu Scriptures a way of life for these Scriptures Address to what is the deepest and the most abiding in man. Whitman’s *song of myself* is an expression of selfhood in Vedantic mysticism.

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Post-Colonial Study Of Amitav Ghosh's "The Sea Of Poppies"

Rema V

Amitav Ghosh, an Indian anthropologist, historian, and novelist who lives and teaches in New York and India, is the author of ten books. His new novel, *Sea of Poppies*, which is the first in a projected trilogy and has been shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize, is set in India in 1838, in the days leading up to the Opium Wars. Ghosh tracks the lives, and the language, of an unlikely collection of men and women -- princes, sailors, merchants, pirates, peasants, and runaway girls -- all of whom eventually converge on an American schooner called the *Ibis*.

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It is a rollicking tale, or rather collection of tales -- politically forceful, historically fascinating, and rarely subtle. Ghosh may not be a stylistically exciting writer, sentence for sentence, and the discipline and freshness of his earlier, less extravagant books seem to have been abandoned; nevertheless, this new work is a linguistic triumph. For if the prose is sometimes commonplace, the dialogue never is. Ghosh has taken all of his considerable historical knowledge and passion and funneled it into the language of his characters. They themselves may occasionally fail to come completely to life, but their words are alive. Ghosh has given to each of the many disparate characters a patois, an idiom, a poetry that is utterly irresistible (Bibhash Choudhury, 169). The novel presents itself as a tale of opium and pirates and cruelty and love, but at its best, *Sea of Poppies* is a celebration of language -- its idiosyncrasies, its prejudices, its humor, cruelty, freedom, and, finally, its generous, open-armed invitation to escape. This aspect of post-colonial writing is evident throughout the novel.

Sea of Poppies is the novel set prior to opium war, on the bank of the Ganges and in Calcutta. The author compares the Ganges with the Nile, the lifeline of the Egyptian civilization attributing the origin. He portrays the character, as poppy seed is emanating in large numbers from the field to sea, where every single seed is uncertain about its future. The main characters in the novel are Deeti, a mulatto American sailor, Zachary Reid, an Indian raja or zamindar called Neel Ratan Halder and a venerator opium trader, Benjamin Burnham. Deeti is a simple and ordinary village woman, who comes from a poor family, wife of a drug addict person, Hukam Singh. His lascivious brother, Chandan Singh, who was eying on her, when failed to succeed in his goal, wanted her to be cremated alive with her husband's funeral pyre. Meanwhile, a low-caste Oxen-driver, Kalua, who has a secret affection towards her, is rescued, and fled away.

A historical novel, densely packed and wonderfully written, Ghosh skillfully crams in as much information as possible without sinking the story under its own weight. The main subject is migration, of indentured servants. The forces that propel their lives; the British occupation; the opium trade; the caste system are portrayed in depth. The novel throws light on the time period when the East India Company forced the peasants, to turn over their fields to opium production, for amassing unimaginable wealth, which causes poverty and hunger among the people. British merchants exported opium to China illegally and as a result the opium trade spreads rapidly, and a big mass of China's population became habitual users of drug. In order to end the opium trade a war was waged between the United Kingdom and the Qing Dynasty of China. It's 1838, and Britain is set on maintaining the opium trade between India and China as its buttress. Through a number of incidents and through the words of his characters, Ghosh highlights the much-hated superior feeling of the colonisers.

Figures like Deeti, merely hinted at in the official record, have long preoccupied Ghosh — as in his elegant travelogue "In an Antique Land," which shifted between Egypt and India, the 12th century and the 1980s, as he hunted for the story of a slave mentioned in letters between an Arab-Jewish merchant in Mangalore and his associates in Cairo. The reference astonished Ghosh because of its medieval date, "when the only people for whom we can even begin to imagine properly

human, individual existences are the literate and the consequential . . . the people who had the power to inscribe themselves physically upon time.”

The language very typical of post-colonial writers who employ all aspects to project the post-colonialists' feeling is portrayed in this novel. However, there was no diary of the coolies on which he could fall back on to represent their life and language. So, Ghosh is forced to imagine them, based on the limited sources available, but he does so with the instincts of an anthropologist more than a novelist. (He is, in fact, an anthropologist by training.) With the aid of out-of-print dictionaries, he recreates obscure dialects (Hobson-Jobson, Hinglish, Chinglish and the salty argot of sailors, to name a few). His penchant for meticulous detail — the innards of an opium factory, the organization of a coolie ship — impedes the progress of his various plots and subplots. Ghosh obviously wants to make the novel a literary excavation, digging up the stories of people lost to history, very typical of post-colonial writers.

At a more everyday level, Ghosh creates an encyclopedia of early 19th-century Indian food, servants, furniture, religious worship, nautical commands, male and female costume and underlinen, trades, marriage and funeral rites, botany and horticulture, opium cultivation, alcoholic drinks, grades of clerk and non-commissioned military officers, criminal justice, sexual practices, traditional medicines and sails and rigging.

His technique is to supply the maximum information that the story can support. For example, he has read the description of the great Sudder opium factory at Ghazipur published in 1865 by the factory superintendent, JWS MacArthur. Given that there are probably not 20 copies of MacArthur's Account of an Opium Factory on earth, Ghosh is amply justified in using it. His device is brilliant. He has Deeti rush in terror through every single shed of the factory in search of her dying husband. Yet whereas MacArthur wanted to show how the factory operated in each season, Ghosh makes all its activities simultaneous. Poppy flowers, sap and trash are processed before Deeti's terrified village eyes. The inhuman treatment meted out to the workers is portrayed in this post-colonial writer's work smeared with anti-colonial feelings.

Indian writers in English of an earlier generation, such as the late RK Narayan or VS Naipaul, aspired to a pure metropolitan or "Oxford" English. Ghosh, like Salman Rushdie, introduces words from the Indian languages, and from the various creoles, pidgins and slangs that have arisen in India and the Asian seaports since the 18th century. He has combed the colonial-era dictionaries and lexicons for nautical speech, barrack-room slang and all sorts of thieves' and whores' argot (The New York Review, 1988). Some readers may be perplexed by such sentences as: "Jodu had been set to . . . stowing pipas of drinking water, tirkaoing hamars, hauling zanjirs through the hansil-holes." Even those who have spent years labouring at eastern languages may be baffled by Anglo-Indian transliteration and not recognise Mrs Burnham's cubber, meaning "scandal", from the Arabic khabr, meaning "news".(Sea of Poppies,)

Deeti's husband is a victim of the British two times over: a sepoy who served them in campaigns overseas, crippled by his battle wounds, he has turned to opium for the pain, which has crippled him further. "You should know," he tells Deeti of his cherished opium pipe, "that this is my first wife. She's kept me alive since I was wounded: if it weren't for her I would not be here today. I would have died of pain, long ago." Ghosh's description of the opium factory where Deeti's husband works is terrifying: it is filled with ominous horror, a sickly, sluggish inferno. Opium is literally the air Deeti breathes:"The sap seemed to have a pacifying effect even on the butterflies, which flapped their wings in oddly erratic patterns, as though they could not remember how to fly" (Sea of Poppies, 9)

Burnham, the pious and ambitious merchant from Liverpool, speaks the Queen's English. He is projected by Ghosh as an abhorrent character, who stands for the British imperialism. Ghosh's

anti-colonial outlook is characteristically evident through the portrayal of the character of Burnham and the words he spews very often. A lively discussion of free trade takes place during a night on the houseboat. Free trade is a "right conferred on Man by God," Burnham says, explaining that the free trade of opium is particularly holy, for it allows the natives exposure to the superiority of the British; and it is the enormous profits from opium, in some years reaching almost the level of the yearly revenue of the United States, that are the only reason that Britain can sustain its rule in a country as poor as India. "And if we reflect on the benefits that British rule has conferred upon India, does it not follow that opium is this land's greatest blessing?" Burnham asks Zachary. "Does it not follow that it is our God-given duty to confer these benefits upon others?" This self-congratulatory tautology is topped off by an entertaining consideration of the medical benefits of opium:

So you would do well to bear in mind that it would be well nigh impossible to practise modern medicine or surgery without such chemicals as morphine, codeine and narcotine -- and these are but a few of the blessings derived from opium. In the absence of gripe water our children would not sleep. And what would our ladies -- why, our beloved Queen herself? -- do without laudanum? Why, one might even say that it is opium that has made this age of progress and industry possible: without it, the streets of London would be thronged with coughing, sleepless, incontinent multitudes. And if we consider all this, is it not apposite to ask if the Manchu tyrant has any right to deprive his helpless subjects of the advantages of progress? Do you think it pleases God to see us conspiring with that tyrant in depriving such a great number of people of this amazing gift? (Sea of Poppies, 267)

Burnham, the religious fanatic, sexual pervert, ruthless and vindictive businessman, and hypocrite, stands for everything *Sea of Poppies* condemns. He is, in one way or another, the catalyst of almost every horror that befalls Ghosh's victims. He is, in addition, the weakest character in a literary sense, a villain as easily recognized by the modern sensibility as the mustachioed evildoer to the audience of a silent movie.

The period, the place, its trials, and the different idioms Ghosh creates become the real beings who populate these pages, and they can have a strong presence. It is Burnham who, with Nob Kissin's advice, catches Neel in a financial trap, frames him for fraud, then strips him of his lands, his wealth, his family, his caste, and his freedom. Neel, the fastidious aesthete, winds up scraping crusted vomit off his cellmate, a Chinese opium addict withdrawing painfully from the drug. Together, they are shipped off on the *Ibis*. Deeti, too, ends up on the ship she envisioned in the novel's opening passage. She has lost her daughter now, lost everything of the little she had, and is, like the other passengers, escaping one life for another. After her husband's death, Deeti is rescued from the flames of sati by Kalua, a man of lower caste, a solitary giant who has always loved her from afar. Together, she and Kalua sell themselves into indentured servitude in order to escape Deeti's enraged in-laws. They find themselves, with Neel, in the dark hold of the *Ibis* on their way to the island of Mauritius.

As the novel draws to a close, the reader sympathizes with the inmates of *Ibis*, the symbol of the colonized Indians, and the language used by the writer draws one close to the post-colonial reality that Amitav Ghosh intends to present through this novel, *Sea of Poppies*.

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A Feminist Reading of Angela Carter's "Our Lady of the Massacre"

Dr. Ritu Pareek & Dr. Preeti Bhatt

Women have been relegated to an inferior position in society since times immemorial, and have had to fight for their rights and for respectability. In societies where slavery was widespread, the situation of women became all the more difficult, since they were marginalized on two counts – as women and as slaves. The possibility of women leading a respectable life in such societies was drastically reduced and their entire efforts were focused on the means of survival where their life itself carried no meaning or value. The present paper focuses on Carter's short story "Our Lady of the Massacre", with an emphasis on Carter's portrayal of a strong and determined heroine, who leads her life like a slave but manages to survive, and establishes her own identity.

Angela Carter's story "Our Lady of the Massacre" first appeared in *The Saturday Night Reader* as "Captured by the Red Man" in 1979. It was later included in the collection *Black Venus* (1985) as the title "Our Lady of the Massacre". Angela Carter's story reveals a similarity with the plot of Daniel Defoe's novel *Moll Flanders* (1722). Daniel Defoe's novel portrays a young woman Moll Flanders who was born in a poor family in Newgate in London. She was seduced at an early age and during her life, married five times. Defoe's protagonist does not believe in enduring social stability and aims at achieving financial prosperity in her life.

Carter's story focuses on the protagonist Sal, who narrates the events of her life. The story is told in the autodiegetic mode of narration, the term autodiegetic is defined by David Herman as a narrative mode: "in which the narrator does not only participate in the action being recounted but is also the main character in the story world evoked by the text" (66). Sal is portrayed as a girl born in a poor family and is orphaned at an early age. Sal states, "my father a poor farm servant, and me mam and he both died of plague when I was a little thing" (18). Remembering her childhood, she states: "I could do a bit of sewing and keep a place clean so when I were nine or ten years of age they set me up as a maid of all work to an old woman that lived in our parish" (18). After the death of the old woman, Sal is banished by the relatives of the woman and she is forced to move to London. Sal bears many hardships and settles with the tribe of Red Indians.

Carter in the story reveals a marked difference between the two worlds presented. On the one hand there is the civilized English world to which Sal belongs. In this civilized world Sal wishes to make her fortune, for she states, "I take into my head to go to *London*, where I persuade myself I can make my fortune" (19). However, Sal's hopes for a prosperous life in London were soon shattered, when she is raped by a man in a hotel after she is caught stealing a "penny loaf" (19). Carter here presents the circumstances which compel a woman to become a prostitute. In order to save herself, from the overseer in the tobacco field, Sal "picked up the big carving knife and whacks off both his ears" (20). Carter satirizes the urban world where a single woman like Sal, is not safe. On the other side there is the uncivilized society of the Red Indians, where Sal reaches after injuring the overseer and feels herself to be safe. Carter, through her narration exposes the reality of the civilized pseudo society where despite the law and order, people face several risks.

Living with the illiterate tribes, Carter's narrator realizes the importance and meaning of living together and matures as a person. Carter in the form of Sal portrays a strong character who adapts to the circumstances she faces in her life. Though Sal belongs to the western culture, she gradually learns the Indian ways of living. Sal is accustomed to a different life-style where in order to survive she had become a prostitute and stole money but when life gives her an opportunity to lead a better life, she readily accepts it. She becomes fluent in the Indian language, adopts their eating habits and learns to coordinate with the people around her, and states: "you would have thought she whom I called my 'mother' was my own natural mother and I was Indian born and bred" (24). Sal rejects the self she was born with and creates a new identity for herself.

The character of Moll in Defoe's novel is shown as marrying five times in her life for the sake of money. Sal reflects the spirit of the contemporary woman who believes in the institution of marriage and does not like to share her husband with many wives, as is the custom of the tribe. The protagonist is offered a marriage proposal by one of the "*brave*" men of the tribe, while living with the Red Indians. Sal's foster-mother informs her, "that Tall Hickory you know of would like you for his wife" (25). This is a turning point of Sal's life for a good man wishes to marry her, which can further enhance her chances of a good life.

The marriage proposal leads Sal to self-introspection, she tells her foster-mother, "How can I be that good man's wife, mother, for I was a bad woman in my own country" (25). Sal's confession, in fact, is a patriarchal statement which adjudges women as "good" or "bad" depending on whether they follow the strict norms, imposed upon women by men about their sexual conduct. For Sal, an offer for marriage by a respectable man is a shocking surprise which she cannot easily accept. Yet, to ensure a dignified married life, Sal also places a condition, "I would be his only wife or never marry him" (25). Though her mother tries to convince Sal that many wives will reduce the work pressure and will give her a better life, Sal does not agree with her.

Sal's firm decision regarding marriage highlights her awareness of the position which women deserve in society. Elaine Showalter, supporting the rights of the women in society asserts, "society as a whole would be improved when women became the equals of their brothers, husbands, and sons – when they were self-sufficient in every way" (27). Patriarchal attitudes have always tried to marginalize women and do not give them liberty to make their own decisions in life. Gerda Lerner has observed, "women have shaped their lives and acted under the umbrella of patriarchy, specifically a form of patriarchy best described as paternalistic dominance" (217). This subordinate position of women was a patriarchal construct which was unquestioningly accepted by women.

Carter in her narrative describes the clash of two different cultures. It is the clash of the whites and the Red Indians, and as historically proven, the winners in the story are the whites. Sal can be seen as the representative of the whites because of her birth and upbringing. Sal throughout the narrative is portrayed as one who knows how to survive in difficult situations. Towards the end of the tale Sal cleverly adopts the traits which are required in order to survive in the world. She comments, "Taking my cue from his, I fall to my knees, for I see that repentance is the fashion in these parts and the more of it I show, the better it will be for me" (30).

Carter's narrator switches to different names just like Defoe's Moll Flanders. The protagonist of Defoe's story uses different names, similarly as the situation changes Carter's protagonist also uses different names, which suit her requirement. In the beginning of the tale, the narrator calls herself Sal as per her British origin, and towards the end of the story the protagonist is addressed as Mary. The protagonist's strategy of switching names becomes a reason for her survival at the end. Sal's life thus completes a full circle from where she has started. The manner, in which Sal narrates her own story, shows the recurrence of events with a slight change of culture and circumstances where she finds herself at the end. When she was with the Indians she could not speak of her past as a western girl and at the end when is in England she will never speak of her life with the Indians. But at the end the protagonist's choice of the "Indian language" expresses her freedom and her determination in the choices she has made (31).

Carter in "Our Lady of the Massacre" brings in the issue about the position and rights of women in society. As a strong and active woman, the protagonist of Carter's story actively wishes to participate in whatever is happening around her. In their village the general calls for a meeting to settle the complications with the English and Sal comments, "the women did not go to the counsels but were accustomed to let their husbands give their messages – I sent word by him" (26). Sal's suggestion of forming a large army is rejected by the counsel and "they took no notice of me, and could not agree about the manner" (26). If the villagers had agreed with Sal's proposal of building a

large army, then there could be some chances of saving the inhabitants from the evil desires of the English. Women's suggestions are thus ignored while making collective decisions, and the men have to bear the serious repercussions of their prejudices decisions.

After the massacre of the Red Indians by the Englishmen, Sal is the only person who succeeds in saving herself. Sal, the protagonist of the story is a representative of the whites and it is her origin which helps her to survive. After living for a long period with the Red Indians, Sal's life has again taken her into the world of whites. This is the world whose memories have constantly hurt Sal as the whites have judged her merely as a thief and a prostitute and now will add to their list as Sal being the mother of a half-breed boy. Sal, now called Mary, claims, "I was Our Lady of the massacre and I do think my *half-breed* child will bear the mark of *Cain* for the scar above his left eye never fades" (30). Sal believes that this history of violence and brutality will continue with her son who has been witness to the brutal killings of the Red Indians by the whites.

The protagonist at the end of the tale is saved by the minister and his wife. Sal claims that she has been completely changed by the Indians, who have forced her to lead a morally correct life: "the Indians had damned me for a good woman once and for all" (31). Carter does not portray the narrator as helpless and she is still not dependent on others, rather to earn her living the narrator, "scrubbed the minister's floor, cooked the dinner, washed the clothes" (31). The protagonist gets an offer for marriage as the Minister's wife tells her, "You are still a young woman, Mary, and Jabez Mather says he will have you for a wife since his own died of the flux but he will not take the child so I shall keep him"(31). Sal refuses this offer as she does not want to part with her son. Carter with the portrayal of Sal highlights the selfless love and feelings of a woman as a mother. Sal can easily accept the marriage proposal, which undoubtedly will raise her status in society but she refuses it for the sake of her son and is ready to earn her living by serving the minister and his wife throughout her life.

The protagonist Sal in "Our Lady of the Massacre" is portrayed by Carter as a powerful and strong woman, who, forced by circumstances, takes up prostitution at an early age. Sal, a white woman faces hardships and difficulties and soon, is adopted by a Red Indian woman. Living with the Red Indian woman, Sal marries a man from the tribe and has a son. The events of Sal's life take a change and a massacre by Englishmen with the Red Indians creates a devastating effect in the village, which compels Sal and her son to be again with the whites. Through the portrayal of Sal, Carter wishes to awaken the spirit of women in the contemporary patriarchal society. The phallogocentric world always denies women their rights, but as Sal chooses her own way of life, be it her decision regarding marriage or saving her son, Carter seems to urge women to be aware of their position, role and rights in society.

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Absurdity in Eugene Ionesco's The Leader: A Critical Study

Md. Saquib Abrar

Eugene Ionesco (1909-1994), a Rumanian-French playwright, has been recognised as one of the most celebrated Absurdist Playwrights in the literary history for his dramatic works, notes and explanations on theatre. His significance as a playwright has been rightly summed up by Guicharnaud:

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[Ionesco] is now one of the established playwrights of the twentieth century signifies that the avant-garde or "new theatre" or "antitheatre" of the fifties has quite simply become the theatre of our times. Sketchy characters being carried away by words, changing identities, having three noses, laying eggs, talking without communicating, becoming to organised disorder, murder, or the most grotesque cruelty, living out directed dreams, being transformed into rhinoceroses, flying in the air and disappearing into the hell of the future, being brainwashed by the monks who are not really monks – none of that seems baffling any longer. Despite the direct language and the somewhat dreary settings, Ionesco's works are above all, poetic, in the modern sense of the term (216).

A group of European playwrights – Samuel Beckett, Arthur Adamov, Jean Genet, and Harold Pinter along with Eugene Ionesco share certain characteristics that suggest a sense of panic, fretfulness, and doubt in a world devoid of man's strong feeling and emotional bond. They are from different countries and they have developed independently as Esslin argues "the Theatre of the Absurd is not, and never can be, a literary movement or school, for its essence lies in the free and unfettered exploration, by each of the writers concerned, of his own individual vision. . . . the dramatists of the Theatre of the Absurd are, each in his own way and independent of the others, engaged in establishing a new dramatic convention (265)." They have been identified as the practitioners of the "Theatre of the Absurd" by Martin Esslin who coined the term "Theatre of the Absurd" and wrote a book with the same title in 1961. Highlighting the origin of the plays of this genre, Martin Esslin aptly states, "The Theatre of the Absurd springs from the same tradition and is nourished from the same roots. An Irishman, Samuel Beckett; a Rumanian, Eugene Ionesco; a Russian of American origin, Arthur Adamov, not only found in Paris the atmosphere that allowed to experiment in freedom, they also found there the opportunities to get their work produced (27)."

It is interesting to note that the "Theatre of the Absurd" was not a deliberately conceived movement or school as mentioned earlier; however, it captured the attention of scholars and academicians and enjoyed vast popularity. It came as a reaction against Realism, Naturalism, Expressionism, Surrealism, Symbolism, Epic Theatre, and Poetic Plays practised by a number of European playwrights like Ibsen, Shaw, Emile Zola, Strindberg, Chekhov, Kaiser, Pirandello, Brecht, Eliot and Yeats. Schechner suggests "Much of the so-called Theatre of the Absurd is now far enough behind us to be of marginal interest. It has blended with earlier movements – dada, surrealism, varieties of existentialism – and exerts its influence as part of a large mass of literature protesting the dehumanization of the spirit and the encroachment of mechanization, and it regards modern civilization as a threat to liberty and an object of ridicule (36)."

A cursory glance at the absurdist plays and playwrights suggest the experimentation of unusual actions and situation in unusual language with ambiguity. This ambiguity invites a wide range of interpretation on the part of the readers. These plays do not have logical plot and the characters are not well-depicted. They simply present absurd situations with absurd characters. Characters are placed in the midst of society but they stand alone in an unfamiliar world. They do not have their own identity and there is no one with whom they can communicate. Focusing on these aspects of the Theatre of the Absurd, Doubrovsky has rightly remarked, "The characters, absent from themselves, become as interchangeable as the lines they speak . . . There could not be

any story or plot, in usual sense, since these presuppose a linear progression (14-15).” He further remarks, “Instead of using language to think, we have language thinking for men. The mask must be torn from their faces. Thus is the “anti-character” comedy completed by “anti-wit” witticisms and speech-destructive speeches. . . . the fetters of ordinary language are broken (Doubrovsky 17).” About their language Esslin’s comment is to be worth noted, “The Theatre of the Absurd . . . tends towards a radical devaluation of language (26).”

Irrationality and unreasonable aspects of life is set around the Theatre of Absurd. Esslin suggests “the Theatre of the Absurd has renounced arguing *about* the absurdity of the human condition; it merely *presents* it in being – that is, in terms of concrete stage images (25).” The preoccupations of the Absurdist dramatists were to find out an individual’s role in society. Senselessness of life herein and hereafter forms the background of their plays. They consider life or existence of human being as irrational and illogical. Thus, they have discarded the perception of life after death. Absurdist captured the feeling of isolation and a sense of loneliness. Here we are reminded of the great philosopher Albert Camus who has propounded his existential philosophy that depicts and questions the futility of man’s existence in this universe. In *The Myth of Sisyphus* (1942), he says:

. . . in a universe suddenly divested of illusions and lights, man feels an alien, a stranger. His exile is without remedy since he is deprived of the memory of a lost home or the hope of a promise land. This divorce between man and his life, the actor and his setting is properly the feeling of absurdity (6).

Absurdity is a key word in Ionesco’s dramatic writings like his contemporaries. Ionesco himself says “Absurd is that which is devoid of purpose. . . . Cut off from his religious, metaphysical, and transcendental roots, man is lost; all his actions become senseless, absurd, useless (Esslin 23).” Guicharnaud suggests “. . . by giving absurd fantasies the concrete and obvious properties of ordinary reality, Ionesco’s theatre shows reality to be equally absurd. Our world is neither more nor less justified than what unfolds onstage and can be considered quite as ridiculous (217).” Further, he adds “. . . by giving absurd fantasies the concrete and obvious properties of ordinary reality, Ionesco’s theatre shows reality to be equally absurd. Our world is neither more nor less justified than what unfolds onstage and can be considered quite as ridiculous (Guicharnaud 217).” Ionesco’s writing appears to be compelling and the basic reason behind this has been highlighted by Gaensbauer when he says “it is fundamentally about the difficulty of comprehending anyone, not least oneself, given in an existence which, the more we learn about it physically, becomes more problematic metaphysically (3).”

Ionesco too considered the rational plot and character development of traditional drama to be useless and, therefore, devised his own radical form of playwriting as in the essay “Eugene Ionesco and the Metaphysical Farce” Lamont states “Ionesco’s retort reveals how far removed his theatre is from the traditional well-made play. In his drama there is to be no explanation, or exposition, no logical development of character and events. A dislocation of reality is effected before reintegration can be achieved (154).” He did so in order to express the failure of people to communicate and relate to one other in meaningful ways. His plays like *The Bald Soprano*, *The Lesson*, *The Chairs*, and many others show the absurdity of language to depict this meaninglessness. Almost all his plays express the complexity of language. Wellwarth suggests that the meaning of Ionesco’s plays is difficult to be understood. “The meaning of his [Ionesco] plays is never explicit. His work is characterized, instead by what may be termed a purposeful vagueness. His plays, in other words, are full of possible meanings, but void both of specific polemic purposes and of solutions. Ionesco is not committed to a point of view because he realizes that all points of view are useless. His plays are demonstrations of the incongruity between the human condition and the human being’s desires (Wellwarth 57).” Ionesco admits in *Notes and Counternotes*:

All my plays have their origin in two fundamental states of consciousness: now the one, now the other is predominant, and sometimes they are combined. These basic states of consciousness are awareness of evanescence and of solidity, of emptiness and of too much presence, of the unreal transparency of the world and its opacity, of light and of thick darkness (169).

Pronko points out:

Ionesco's theatre, like that of the other experimental dramatists writing in France today, the so-called theatre of the absurd, constantly mixes the tragic and the comic, and in such a way that there is no clear distinction, for we are meant to shudder at some of the comedy, and to laugh at the tragedy of man's situation, which is treated in derisory terms. This laughter at our own tragic situation gives us certain objectivity, and is perhaps the only reaction possible in a world that has destroyed our faith in absolutes (11).

In the plays of Ionesco, dramaturgy of language has been presented in considerable detail. The language no longer conveys any significant point. As Lamont says:

The language of Ionescoland is intentionally made up of clichés. Like proverbs, the latter reflect popular wisdom, but, as they pass from mouth to mouth, they lose their initial pungency. The trite expressions used and misused by the concierges and the petty bourgeois of Ionesco's plays wave an aural tapestry, the monotonous music of popular culture. The protagonists of the plays are surrounded by these flat utterances. Although they themselves do not use clichés, they are being used by them, manipulated by ambient platitudes. The subsidiary characters who come in contact with the protagonists are embodiments of hackneyed thoughts (18).

Like his contemporary, he has rejected the old trends of morality and religion and has focussed upon man's futile effort to find meaning in a completely disjointed world. Besides, his plays highlight meaninglessness of life, alienation, isolation, estrangement, loss of identity, victimisation, death, breakdown of communication and depersonalisation. His play *The Leader* (1958) depicts all these ideas in a very effective manner. The plot of the play appears to have no logical integrity. The situation and the dialogues sometimes appear to be somewhat incomprehensible and inexplicable to the audience and the reader. Language does not serve the aim of communication among the characters because it has lost its power to convey proper message. Characters appear to be isolated in the world. All these create a sense of depersonalisation and loss of identity that is one of the most important characteristics of the Theatre of the Absurd.

The Leader presents six nameless characters – the Leader, the Announcer, Young Lover, the Girl-Friend, the Admirer and the Girl Admirer. Thus, there are two couples. In the beginning of the play they appear to be distinguishable from one another. But towards the end of the play they are collapsed. They even change partners without any change in their feeling and emotion. Naming the characters only by the titles shows the absurdity of human condition at the very outset. The plot of the play hinges around The Leader for whom other characters are waiting. Mostly, he is offstage, and one couple repeatedly tries to get a look at him as he wanders through the city on parade. On the other hand, an Announcer keeps them back and informs them about whatever The Leader is doing. The Announcer goes along with the couples to find the Leader. Alternately, the other couple adores each other. All this happens very quickly and all of them start shouting at one another.

The Leader can be classified as an absurdist play. The play opens with the words of the Announcer who excitedly reports the arrival of The Leader for whom the Young Lover, the Girl-Friend and the two Admirers are waiting.

Announcer: . . . There he is! There he is! At the end of the street! . . . There's the leader! He's coming, he's coming nearer! . . . It's better if he doesn't see us . . . Watch out! . . . Hurrah! Hurrah!

The Leader! The Leader! Long live the leader! . . . The leader! The leader! . . . Hurrah! Hurrah! . . . Hurrah! Bravo! (Plays, Vol. IV, 109).

Meanwhile, the stage is empty for a short duration. And it is here that Young Lover and his Girl Friend are destined to meet. But their behaviour points out that they are totally alien to each other. The loss of identity comes on surface the way in which they are communicating and this is one of the essential elements of the Theatre of the Absurd.

Young Lover: *Forgive me, Madame, or should I say Mademoiselle?*

Girl-Friend: *I beg your pardon, I'm afraid I don't happen to know you!*

Young Lover *And I'm afraid I don't know you either!*

Girl-Friend: *Then neither of us knows each other.*

Young Lover: *Exactly. We have something in common. It means that between us there is a basis of understanding on which we can build the edifice of our future.*

Girl-Friend: *That leaves me cold, I'm afraid (110).*

The above quote aptly demonstrates that there is something wrong that creates an impediment in recognizing each other although they are living together since a long time. This incident reminds us of Ionesco's play *The Bald Soprano*, where husband and wife are living together since a long time but they cannot recognize each other and they behave as if they had just met. Similarly, here, both of them – Young Lover and Girl Friend, never exchange names, despite the fact that they do assert their love for each other. They leave the stage and the Announcer and two Admirers appear on the stage. Lamont suggests:

The young Lovers, however, are not yet aware of impending death; they flirt offstage, eager for marital bliss. They are replaced by the Announcer and the Admirers who return, still running. Their frantic exchanges translate their fear that they might miss the appearance of their hero. From a distance comes a great roar, that of the approaching mob. Once again the Announcer assumes his centre stage position: his back is turned to the theatre audience, his attention riveted to the meandering procession. His shouts of "Long live the Leader!" seem to bring the latter closer and closer, to summon him to this empty spot (181).

The Leader's entrance is expected by everyone. The Announcer broadcasts each thing The Leader does. "He's putting his tie on! He is reading his newspaper and drinking his morning coffee! He's still got his hedgehog . . . He's leaning on the edge of the parapet. The parapet breaks. He gets up . . . he gets up unaided! (112)." The Announcer's words are listened carefully by all of them. Lamont suggests ". . . the Leader knots his tie, reads the paper while sipping his morning coffee, climbs on a stepladder. An accident breaks the monotony of his existence when a parapet he leaned on caves in under his weight-this is the only indication we have of his great bulk-he falls, but phoenixlike, rises again. This list is no more absurd than the usual reports on a president's daily round of activities. What is absurd, Ionesco suggests, is to attach importance to trivia (181)."

The Announcer and the two Admirers of the Leader are uncomplainingly waiting for the arrival of the Leader but the very existence of the Leader is at stake. No one is sure whether the Leader exists or not and that whether he will arrive or not. A sense of uncertainty grips their mind. It is reminiscent of Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* where two tramps are waiting for the arrival of Godot although the very identity of Godot is confusing. Just like the tramps in *Waiting for Godot*, both the Admirers in *The Leader* want to ascertain about the appearance of the Leader. Thus, the male Admirer asks "did you actually see it yourself and hear it with your own eyes and ears? (110)." The Announcer informs them that he has heard this news from "someone else (110)." Interestingly, they are not certain about the identity of this so called "someone else". They want to substantiate the identity of this "someone" but they cannot do so because the identity of this man is mysterious. However, the Announcer says he is "a friend of mine who I know very well (110)" but

Girl-Admirer adds “was it a reliable person? A friend of yours? (110)”. During their waiting period, the characters are several times offstage and again they come back and join the group. Gaensbauer says “The comings and goings of the Announcer and the Admirers, who repeatedly rush offstage each time they are confronted by the Leader’s failure to arrive, are duplicated by the taglike mating game of two other characters, the Girl Friend and the Young Lover (86-87).” In the meantime, the sound of “Hurrah” and “Long live the Leader” is heard and this clarifies the fact that the Leader has arrived: “That’s him now! There he is! Hip! Hip! Hurrah! There he is! Hide yourselves! Hide Yourselves! (111).” Further, he tells us about the arrival of the Leader in the clichés that is totally devoid of meaning. This loss of meaning is fundamental element in absurdist plays. Words are meaningless as Ionesco says “a crisis of language – in words that no longer mean anything, in whole system of thoughts that are reduced to monolithic dogma, an architecture of clichés whose elements are not only words like ‘nation, national independence, democracy and the class struggle’ but also ‘God, socialism, matter, mind, personality, life, death etc.’ (NCN 256).” At other place he says “all language appear to lose their articulation, to disintegrate and collapse, so what possible reaction is there left, when everything ceased to matter, but to laugh at it all? (NCN 170).” In *Fragments of Journal*, Ionesco says:

Of course, words say nothing, if I may express myself thus: at most, an unexpected gesture, an image, an incident, a word come from nobody knows where may propel one into the unutterable experience. Whether I express myself with precision or without, whether my metaphors are apt or inadequate, lost in a flood of confused and rambling verbiage, it doesn’t matter; in any case the deepest meaning is lost in explanations. There are no words for the deepest experience. The more I explain myself, the less I understand myself. Of course not everything is beyond the reach of words, but the living truth is. Words only say exactly what can be said, which has been known for a long time (72).

Further, he says:

Words no longer demonstrate: they chatter. Words are literary. They are an escape. They stop silence from speaking. They deafen you. Instead of being action, they comfort you as best they can for your action. Words wear out thought, they impair it. Silence is golden. It ought to serve as guarantee for speech. Alas, we’ve got inflation. That, again, is just another word. What a civilization! No sooner do my anxieties withdraw a little than I start talking instead of trying to grasp reality, my reality, the realities, and words cease to be an instrument of search; I know nothing at all; and yet I teach. I’ve got a word a word or two to say, too (Fragments of a Journal, 73).

In this play, we also notice that words are devoid of meaning. It is so because characters are not paying attention to the words of others. Instead, they are trying to present their own argument. Contradictory statements are presented side by side and this creates a problem in understanding the words of the Announcer.

Announcer:: *The leader’s coming. He approaches. He’s bending. He’s unbending. . . . He’s jumping. He’s crossed the river. They’re shaking his hand. He sticks out his thumb. Can you hear? They’re laughing. . . . Ah . . . ! they’re giving him a box of tools. What’s he going to do with them? Ah . . . ! he’s signing autographs. The leader is stroking a hedgehog, a superb hedgehog! The crowd applauds. He’s dancing, with the hedgehog in his hand. He’s embracing his dancer. Hurrah! Hurrah! . . . He’s being photographed, with his dancer on one hand and the hedgehog on the other . . . He greets the crowd . . . He spits a tremendous distance (111).*

. . .

Announcer:: *Keep quiet, I tell you! Didn’t I tell you he’d promised that he had fixed his itinerary himself. . . . Hurrah! Hurrah! Long live the Leader! . . . Long live, long live, long live the lead-er! . . . Hurrah! Long live the leader! (111).*

. . .

Announcer: . . . *The leader is being pressed forward, and pressed back, and now they're pressing his trousers! . . . The leader is smiling. Whilst they're pressing his trousers, he walks about. He tastes the flowers and the fruits growing in the stream. He's also tasting the roots of the trees. He suffers the little children to come unto him. He has confidence in everybody. He inaugurates the police force. He pays tribute to justice. He salutes the great victors and the great vanquished. Finally he recites a poem. The people are very moved (113).*

The powerlessness of the Announcer to communicate effectively is explicit with the above quotes. The same words have been repeatedly uttered by him clarifying the fact that there is nothing that can be communicated. His mind is totally empty and he has nothing else to say than that has already been said. Later on it has also been revealed that a little girl comes and “offers” a “bouquet” to the Leader. The Leader accepts the offer and embraces the little girl remarking “my child”! Then we find that both the admirers repeat the same words. The repetition of the same words is sometimes used to give emphasis but over repetition creates a bizarre sound and shows the failure to think and emptiness of brain. When this situation comes we cannot talk properly. The Announcer’s words are repeated by the Admirer and Girl Admirer.

Admirer: *He embraces the little girl . . . calls her ‘my child’ . . .*

Girl Admirer: *He embraces the little girl . . . calls her ‘my child’ . . . (112).*

In the meantime, the young Lovers enter “entwined in an embrace; they halt centre-stage and separate (113)” as the stage direction of Ionesco reveals. The Girl Friend wants to go to the market to purchase some eggs and the Young Lover agrees to do so. Lamont says:

Once again the Leader has shifted his appointed route, which brings about another rout. The Announcer and Admirers dash off, leaving the stage free to receive the Lovers. The latter are now happily married, and on their way to market to purchase eggs (Ionesco’s recurrent symbol for bourgeois marriage). They collide with the two Admirers, who run in again. The couples’ elaborate bows and apologies are played out in marionette ballet style (181).

They are walking hand in hand and surprisingly they have been knocked by the two admirers. Although they have been knocked down but it is not clear why they have been knocked who has knocked them down. They start begging their pardon from each one.

Admirer: *Sorry!*

Young Lover: *Oh! Sorry!*

Girl Admirer: *Sorry! Oh! Sorry!*

Girl Friend: *Oh! Sorry, Sorry, Sorry So Sorry!*

Admirer: *Sorry, Sorry, Sorry, Oh! Sorry, Sorry, So Sorry!*

Young Lover: *Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh! So sorry, everyone!*

Girl Friend: . . . *Come along, Adolphe! . . . No harm done! (113).*

Although all the characters are sorry and they say the same to one another but they themselves are not aware for what they are sorry, why they are sorry and why they are saying sorry to one another. This is another key moment in the development of the plot of the play. This attitude of the characters to one another show emptiness of language and that language has lost its proper significance. Language is no longer used as a means of communication but simply to reproduce the illusion that is there in the mind of every character. Further, the Announcer is again talking about the Leader. And the two admirers simply add “Bravo!”, “Bravo”, “Boo”! “Boo!” and so on. Then again the stage is empty for a short duration and shortly after this the young lover arrives there. When they arrive, they repeat their words again and again to pass their time.

Young Lover: . . . *You won't catch me! You won't catch me!*

Girl-Friend: . . . *Wait a moment! Wait a moment!*

Young Lover: *You won't catch me!*

Girl-Friend: *Wait a moment! (114).*

The lover's statement, i.e., "you won't catch me! You won't catch me" and the beloved's statement "wait a moment! Wait a moment!" is also devoid of meaning. They are talking to each other as if they have lost the power to communicate with each other successfully. And to pass their bored time they are simply trying to hide the lost identity. In fact this generalization unveils that they are in a search of their true identity like the other characters who are waiting for the arrival of the unknown leader and this is done simply to fill the emptiness in their memory. Again all the three characters - the Announcer, the Admirer and the Girl-Admirer join one another. They are blaming to one another but for what they are blaming is not clear. They are accusing one another for the wrongs done to them. Surprisingly, the wrongs have not been done by anyone.

Admirer: *We missed him!*

Girl Admirer: *Rotten luck!*

Announcer: *It was your fault!*

Admirer: *That's not true!*

Girl Admirer: *No, that's not true!*

Announcer: *Are you suggesting it was mine?*

Admirer: *No, we didn't mean that!*

Girl Admirer: *No, we didn't mean that! (14-115).*

As they have not reached at the conclusion why are they blaming to one another, and ultimately the play takes a turn and they reach at the point from where they have started their talk. All the three are repeating the jargon again and again "Long live the Leader!" The stage direction of Ionesco tells us that the Admirer and the Girl-Friend flatten themselves against the wall on the right hand while the Girl-Admirer and the young lover against the wall on the left hand. These two couples are in each other's arm. They are embracing each other (116). At that very moment the Announcer comes back and requests them to maintain silence. He informs them that the Leader is at hand and he will be very soon among them. Finally the waiting moment is over and the Leader appears. Lamont says "As the Leader approaches, the married couple begins to split up. She flirts with the male Admirer, he with the female one. Ionesco telescopes the process of *desamour* (the falling out of love), culminating in betrayal. The latter, however, is intimately connected with the imminent presence of the Leader. The private world collapses under the impact of the public one (181-182)."

The Leader comes on stage, passing through where the five are waiting, and then all the characters shout at the same time? "Hurrah! Hurrah! Long live the leader! (116)." Then they notice that the leader does not have a head. Everyone ignores this and remains indifferent because to them it does not matter whether their authority has a head or not and that whether he is capable to lead them or not. "As the figure of the much awaited and acclaimed Leader stands at last upon the stage, motionless, we see a headless man (Lamont 182)." However, to hide their apathetic condition they add: "he's got genius (116)."

Girl Admirer: *But . . . but . . . the leader hasn't got a head!*

Announcer: *What's he need a head for when he's got genius! (116-117).*

However, it is not clear to them that why the Leader is headless and they continue for a while to brood over the issue but all their efforts prove futile because they no longer reach at any right conclusion. Lamont suggests:

As the figure of the much awaited and acclaimed Leader stands at last upon the stage, motionless, we see a headless man. Ionesco's point comes across with a wallop; most rulers do not deserve our unquestioning loyalty, our blind obedience, since they are only figureheads. So often we find that we are governed by headless statesmen (182).

Since they do not reach at any right conclusion, they are left with no other option than to turn towards each other and ask from each other "what's yours? What's yours? (117)." All this shows that all the characters are destined to torture one another. The end is significant in that the characters still do not know each other:

Young Lover: . . . *What's your name?*

[The Young Lover to The Girl Admirer, the Girl Admirer to the Announcer, the Announcer to the Girl-Friend, and the Girl-Friend to the Young Lover:] What's yours? What's yours? What's yours? [Then, all together one to the other:] What's your name? (117).

The play ends here, with no questions answered. What are their names? What are they doing there? Why is the leader headless? The play ends with each character asking the others what their name is. At one point, the two Lovers chase each other across the stage, meeting the two Admirers in centre stage in confusion. The two couples exchange partners for a moment, embracing the other. Esslin suggests "A radio announcer and two young couples express mounting expectation to see in person in person a *great man* (the English translation reads, '*the leader*', but it is not quite clear whether the personality concerned might not just as well be a literary figure, more usually addressed as *Maitre* in France) (159)." Deborah B. Gaensbauer brings out this depersonalisation: "At the end of the play...the male Admirer embraces the Girl Friend, as the Female Admirer embraces the Young Lover. The fact that the play ends with interchangeable couples and a five-way chorus of "What's your name?" makes as forceful a statement about depersonalization as the headless leader (87)."

The Leader symbolizes mindless rhetoric used by one in power to control others. The Leader has no personality. He goes through the motions of any other politician, kissing babies' heads and shaking hands. The politics that he represents leads to the depersonalisation of everyone, symbolized by the Announcer, the two Lovers and the two Admirers. The Announcer states that The Leader "embraces the little girl...calls her 'my child'" (112). The Leader also "suffers the little children to come unto him (113)." People have all love for their leader unquestioningly and so in the case with the young lovers. But as the people are not aware who is their leader similarly the lovers are also unaware of the fact that whom they love and what they are going to achieve from each other. This makes it clear that everyone has lost their identity and they are in search of it. Throughout the play, everyone is trying to convey some message to others but they have downrightly forgotten their prime concern and in this way they have conveyed nothing. The personality of the Leader has minutely talked but they are only graphic picture and the required message remains hidden and covered. Alternatively, we can also surmise that they are blindly accepting the existence of a Leader whose very existence is doubtful as mentioned above. The complete acceptance of anything leads a nation towards dejected condition leading to the loss of the rights of choices, of aspiration, and of decision. The play asserts that majority among us do not care about the identity of their leader and that whether they can lead them or not.

The above analysis of the play clarifies that Ionesco has tried to present all the major aspects of absurdity in this play, with the use of clichés, one of the favourite tools of his plays. Clichés have been shattered in revealing bitterness. It reveals the inability of successful communication because characters are speaking only in disjointed sentences creating an emptiness of language. Throughout the play meaninglessness of language is expressed through the use of inconsistency, repetition, contradiction and so on. It can, then be safely averred that Ionesco has emphasized in this play the absurdity of human existence simply because the world is absurd. Our incapability to know about

ourselves makes the world absurd. Since time immemorial, our concern is to know the fact that from where we came and what is the purpose of our life in this meaningless world but it is impossible to know. As much we consider about life and meaning, it makes the world absurd, and this is why we do not know about ourselves and we lose our own identity. In this play Ionesco tries to convey the message that it is not possible for the leaders to decide what the truth is for mankind. No one can know such truths more so than another, therefore, allowing others to decide for us is dangerous.

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Immigration Leading To Fluid Identity in Jasmine by Bharati Mukherjee

D. Sarulatha

Introduction

Indian writing focuses on literary developments in English both in colonial and post colonial periods of Indian history. The present day novelists represent a consciousness that has emerged from the confrontation between tradition and modernity. The colonial fantasy of British India was finally dissolved in the first half of this century, only to be succeeded by another fantasy, that of the reinstated sovereign nation-state. Indian writing in English, which has received unstinted admiration in both home and abroad, is now in its full swing. It has emerged out a new path, a new vision-a-vision that is replete with an unquestioning faith and hope, myth and traditions, customs and rites. India has enshrined in her bosom from the time immemorial. The words of the Indian writing of English fiction reveal that they are not an imitation of English literary pattern but highly original and intensely Indian in both theme and spirit. Like few other women novelist, Bharathi Mukherjee also have shown her extraordinary caliber in immutable imprint in the realm of Indian fiction in English. They have shown their mettle in every field. They woks of women novelists, resolve round the pathetic and heart rendering condition of women in a male dominated society.

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Bharathi Mukherjee is considered to achieve her long felt desire as a writer to be mainstreamed to win recognition 'as an American in the tradition of American writing'. She sometimes flamboyantly fused her many impulses, backgrounds and selves to create a 'new immigrant' literature that embodies her sense of what it means to be a woman writer of Bengali-Indian origin who has lived in and been indelibly marked by both Canada and United States. In the process, she has broken boundaries and refused to limit herself to easy categories. She sees herself as a pioneer of new territories, experiences and literatures and coextensive with her mission to explore new worlds is her intension to disturb what came before. Bharati Mukherjee has emerged as a great literary force. In her writings, who reflects a realistic picture of immigrant women. She focuses on women's issues; she has a woman's perspective on the world. Perhaps the primary reason for Bharathi to write is that it allows her to create her own world. Her collection of stories explores, in a variety of ways themes of expatriation, alienation and immigration. Her earlier works such as 'The Tiger's Daughter' (1971), part of 'Days and Nights in Calcutta' (1979), 'Wife' (1975) are all at best to reveal her identity in her Indian heritage. Her other works such as 'Darkness' (1985), 'A wife's story' (1988), 'Jasmine' (1989), 'Holder of the world' (1993), are example of tremendous diasporic style of writing. Her recent work 'Desirable Daughters' (2002) is also a work based on immigration. Mukherjee is described as having accepted being 'an immigrant, living in a continent of immigrants'. "Jasmine" is a novel set in the present about a young Indian women Jasmine, the protagonist in the United States who was trying to adapt to the American way of life in order to be able to survive, changes, her identities several times.

Bharathi Mukherjee is a controversial narrator of Indian cultural identity in a multicultural context and this is best revealed in her novel 'Jasmine'. In this novel, the writer tries to articulate the exuberance of immigration and identity. The novel focuses on Jasmine, an underage village girl from Punjab, who ventures as undocumented women and as a widow to the United States, where her fate will be "rewritten". Jasmine's special significance to her has been acknowledged by Bharathi herself: Jasmine contains the shape of my life and my desires. But no incident is at all autobiographical". The transformations of Jasmine's different identities seem to be metamorphosed in the new other one. Identity is constantly being changed throughout the play. Jasmine develops this idea of the mixing of the East and West with a story telling of young Hindu woman who leads India for the United States after her husband's murder, only to be raped and eventually returned to the position of a caregiver through a serious of jobs.

Jasmine adopts a cinematic technique various scenes are focused on each chapter and almost every chapter is from a different stage of the protagonist's life. She produced characters that belong a class of persons. Indians in blood and color, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals and in intellect. The life of Jasmine seems to be deducted in the first chapter itself. On the opening page, the heroine tells us about an astrologer in the village of Hasnapur. When she was seven years old, he foretold widowhood and exile for her. The hint of her immigration is known from the word "exile" and the transformation of identity she has to undergo can be assumed.

"Suit yourself", the astrologer cackled. "What is to happen will happen".

The past of Jasmine's life is constructed through constant flashbacks from the baden location of narration, which function also as flash forwards. The flabula begins with the time-setting in Punjab. Jasmine is not Jasmine yet, she is called by the name 'Jyoti' and is a seven year old girl, the fifth of a long line of daughters and seventh of all the children:

Jyoti seems to an unlucky child, born as a female, too late to profit from her beauty, and intelligent. Jyoti protests against the astrologer's foretelling as mere craziness, which cannot hold her future. But he tells her, "Fate is fate". Jyoti reacts to the astrologer's attempt to reduce her to nothingness by falling down and marking a star shaped mark on her forehead which she interprets as 'my third eye' and she considers herself as a sage. But she feels guilty, when they question her about finding a husband for her with a scarred face. Jyoti starts the war "between my fate and my will" by creating her own inter space for individual growth.

Jasmine was born eighteen years after the partition riots. Her family is from Lahore and seems to have aristocratic connections. However, with the division of Punjab and their forced migration from Lahore to Hasnapur they become simple peasants. Thus Jasmine has already seemed to have inherited a tradition of exile and migration from her family. It is the period of the Sikh separatist movement, when Sikh terrorists kill Hindu men and women because they are seen as rapists and whores. Sikhs claim a separate Punjab state from India and under the protection of Pakistan, whereas India fears a total disintegration of the nation state that has been based on secular principles. Jasmine sees an exploded Punjab and feels isolated. Hasnapur is not left out of such "bloody mess". In such conditions, Jasmine at the age of fourteen marries Prakash Vijn, a twenty four year old electronic student and a friend of her brother. She fell in love first with Prakash's voice.

"Love rushes through thick mud walls. Love before first sight: that's our Hasnapuri way".

Prakash is a modern enlightened of the city. He opens out a world of opportunities to her and makes her think beyond tradition. With modern views in mind, Prakash refuses dowry and also refuses to live with his extended family and moves with her to Amritsar, the biggest city in Punjab. Prakash's aunt weeps.

"Your wife is so fancy that our place isn't good enough for her?"

Jasmine wishes to get pregnant but is rejected by Prakash, that a fourteen year old married girl is not matured enough both in mind and health to give birth to a healthy child. Prakash wants Jyoti of Hasnapur transform into Jasmine, who fills the whole world with its perfume. Prakash has taught her to look beyond the traditional horizons of Indian wife. Prakash imagines the world with the new values which can be grasped only in America. He wants to admit himself as an American college student. His docile wife, Jasmine seems to participate in her husband's determination. Prakash puts all his savings into procuring admission papers to an obscure institute in Florida. But sadly, the young couple is caught in a terrorist bomb blast in Jullundur. Prakash is shot dead by a

Sikh terrorist. Jasmine vows to proceed with his mission of reaching America, where she will burn herself along with her husband's suit as an attempt to perform Sati.

Jasmine's hopes are shattered by the treacherous captain Half-face who rapes her in a motel. Motel is the perfect site to express American mobility and transitoriness. Entering America as an illegal immigrant, she is raped by Half-face who assists her entry. She assists his exit from life in revenge. The small knife presented by the Jamaican fellow passenger helps her to avenge dishonor and defilement. The man lies asleep, under the influence of alcohol and sexual fulfillment. Jasmine tiptoes to the bathroom and slices her tongue with the tiny knife. Her decision to commit suicide is withdrawn by the sudden sense of mission that stops her. She moves towards the villain with her mouth full of blood and gives a stroke of the blade on his throat. In spite of the initial horror the land is also with its saint like men and women. The shattered Jasmine is rescued by Lilian Gordon, a kind quaker lady. Being a mother of two daughters, she serves as a savior of Jasmine from her misery. She protects a host of illegal aliens like Jasmine. Under her care and concern, she undergoes transformation and tries to abandon her Hasnapuri cloths and modesty. She manages to adapt herself to the new environment and responds to it in a better way. She adjusts with the speed of transformation, to the fluidity of American character and American landscape. Lillian calls her "Jazzy".

She is taken to the place Hayes' house hold. Kate Gordon fixes her as an attendant to look after Duff, the only child of Taylor Hayas and Wylies Hayas. She enjoys here 'a professional status' as against 'the documented rectitude' at flushing. She feels much enchanted by the Taylor's life style and their kind and democratic relation with her. Taylor rechristens her Jase which intimates her new birth. Taylor transforms her to Jase and she becomes a 'care-giver'. Taylor instructs her about America and teaches her about all the advantages of democracy. She feels the transformations of identity from Jyoti to Jasmine, Jasmine to Jazzy, Jazzy to Jase. Though her role as Jazzy does not have much significance, she hopes for the importance of other births. Having become an immigrant and an 'American', she gets rooted in the cross currents of culture. She is not caught between her Indian identity and American environment. Bharathi Mukherjee says that her characters are reborn as the change citizenship. As her husband Prakash has said, she quickens the world with her presume. The satirical changes that are noticed in her are symptomatic of her inner change. She blooms into an adventurous immigrant from a different alien. In the Taylor's place she plies up money in an easy way since she has no expenditure on food and rent. She has a rapidly growing account that boosts her with power and strength to face the white folks' attitude, in America.

Taylor arranges a part-time job for her at Columbia for six dollars an hour. She also serves as a Punjabi reader which earns her an excessive amount. She pays back professorji in a single cheque. Jasmine understands the unsteady nature of both America and Americans. Jasmine feels to Iowa on sighting her husband's assassin in Central Park, New York. The dark-skinned hot-dog vendor is Sukhwindher. She tries to get away from the sight of this Sikh terrorist, who had killed her husband. In spite of her metropolitan love towards Taylor, she ambiguously plants to move from New York to Iowa. The search for her new identity that leads to the transformation of her prevailing identity begins here.

The protagonist, Jasmine has many names which light on the many selves in her. She does not fuse into a recognizable identity. She herself is not sure or aware of whom really she is; she is constantly seeking her true self. As a result of this there arises the fluid identity. Bharathi Mukherjee's characters are with broken identities, discarded languages and the will to bond oneself to a new community against the ever present fear of failure and betrayal'. And Jasmine gives birth to new identities and loses the earlier.

Conclusion

Jasmine's idea of integration implies the transformation of Jasmine's different identities. None of which can be wiped out. Mukherjee uses the constant practice of renaming the protagonist to show the multiplying of identities, from Jyoti, the village girl in Hasnapur, to Jasmine the city woman, Jazzy the illegal immigrant to Jase the caregiver, to Jane a powerful woman who centers the story. The "J" represents the element of continuity with in transformation. In the process of her transformation, Jasmine is seized by a longing to belong. She assimilates herself with the American life through her relation with the white person. Jasmine's stars are repositioned in the new country with new hopes in accepting her marriage to Taylor. Her floating life resembles the realities of the immigrants, especially the illegal ones, face at every step. Jasmine has presented a fascinating study of the problems of a displaced person in an alien land especially, America. Bharathi Mukherjee describes the American experience as one of "fusion" and immigration a "two-way process" in which her protagonist and the whites grow by the interchange and experience. Bharathi visions Jasmine throughout her novel as a dependent in the society of the corrupted. She urges for her identity, every steps she moves on with the preparation that she could find satisfaction in her life but all through her failing she is defeated. Her identity is more or less fluid in states she undergoes agony suppression fragile gloomy physically and mentally transforms her identity as Jyoti, to Jasmine to Jase to Jane.

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Lorca's Blood Wedding: A Celebration of Erotic Passions and Rituals of Blood

Dr. Shahid Imtiaz

Introduction

Federico Garcia Lorca (1898-1936) was born in 1898 and executed in the Spanish civil war in 1936. He was a poet and a playwright of the first rank whose trilogy of *Blood Wedding* (1933) *Yerma* (1934) and *The House of Bernarda Alba* (1936) earned for him an international recognition as a playwright of great merits. Spanish folklores, traditions and tales intertwine in Lorca's plays in such an artistic way as to create a distinct dramatic world. In his works he challenged the accepted role of women in society and wrote inexhaustibly about them and their world. He rejected the conventions of drawing room comedies of his time and turned towards writing lyrical tragedies. The use of various symbols, images and metaphors in his plays has helped him to present his dramatic world and vision of life more effectively and artistically.

This article focuses the recurrent metaphor of blood and an artistic pattern of symbols and images in Lorca's *Blood Wedding* in order to analyse its dramatic world which is the world of clash of opposite principles. Lorca has very dexterously and artistically woven a pattern of symbols and images to reveal the violent and sensual world of the play. Undoubtedly, the scenes of the play do have their symbolic significance. With all the vineyards, grapes, deep green forests, olive groves, flowers and fields adding to the idyllic beauty, they ultimately create an image of a hunting ground where gory and gruesome murder of the lovers take place.

Blood Wedding

J.A. Cuddon has defined metaphor as "a figure of speech in which one thing is described in terms of another." (547). And according to Carl. G. Jung "what we call a symbol is a term, a name or even a picture that may be familiar in daily life, yet that possesses specific connotations in addition to its conventional and obvious meaning"(3). We notice in the play under discussion that blood is not simply related to hot blooded characters, human relationships, family bonds, bleeding men and bleeding hooves of horses or to the simple idea of killing the enemy in cold blood for revenge or related to simple red colour rather it goes beyond its traditional and largely accepted meaning to cover a wide range of connotations and contexts. *Blood Wedding* is an artistic blend of the opposites, vineyard and wasteland, men and women, life and death, fire and water and even the use of opposite colours, "white petticoats" and "bodice" and "black dress", "golden chain" and the "colour of ashes", but the dominant and recurrent colour is red, creates a very fine combination of tragedy and lyricism. It is only through symbols and images that these opposites are held together artistically.

The world of *Blood Wedding* is the world of family feuds, bloody rivalries and clashes over the issue of marriage, land and honour, a society which permits human relationships within the social and moral peripheries and any deviation from the established social canons of behaviour is not only prohibited but also censured and punished severely. It, undoubtedly, presents a world of clash between the two principles, the principle of order through society's old aged traditions and conventions and the principle of disorder and chaos through the revolt and rebellion of the characters motivated by their erotic passions. It is also a world where passions run very high and even love is made in a highly violent and volatile passion, a world where death lurks round hovering over the characters waiting to strike them dead. For an understanding of these opposite principles a study of symbols and images is essential.

In the play the metaphor of blood is used in a variety of contexts and references. It refers to deadly weapons, particularly daggers and knives used to bleed men to death. At the very outset of the play we encounter a frightened and terrified mother, who has already witnessed the spilling of blood of her beloved husband and son, gets freighted by the very mention of knife, “Knives, Knives. Cursed be all knives, and the scoundrel who invented them ... And guns and pistols and the smallest little knife—and even hoes and pitchforks” (Lorca, 551). The Mother further says that a knife can cut a man’s body into pieces and can foresee how her son, the Bridegroom would receive it on his body. She recalls her strong husband who could spend only three years with her after their marriage and was finished off by his enemy with a small knife. She seems obsessed with the image of knife causing death to men:

Mother: if I live to be a hundred I'd talk of nothing else. First your father; to me he smelled like a carnation and I had him for barely three years. Then your brother. Oh, is it right- how can it be – that a small thing like a knife or a pistol can finish of a man – a bull of a man? No, I'll never be quiet the months passed and the hopelessness of it stings in my eyes and even to the roots of my hair. (554)

The Bridegroom, her own son requests her Mother not to discuss his father’s murder as he intends to take up the issue of his marriage with her. He intends to marry the girl of

No. No. Let's not quit this talk. Can anyone bring me your father back? Or your brother? Then there's the jail. What do they mean, Jail? They eat there. Smoke there, play music there! My dead men choking with weeds, silent turning to dust. Two men like two beautiful flowers. The killers in jail, carefree, looking at the mountain. (551)

Prof. Razi Abedi is of the view that, “Blood is the metaphor for this society—and the blood may be rotten or it may be hot. When hot blood threatens attempts are made to put guards against it. But, when the same blood, demands sacrifice, the mother herself incites the son to an honourable death” (73).

Bridegroom (Entering) Let's go after them! Who has a horse?

Mother: Who has a horse? Right away! Who has a horse? I'll give him all I have—my eyes, my tongue even ...

Voice: Here's is one.

Mother: (To the son) Go! After them! (He leaves with two young men) No. Don't go. Those people kill quickly and well ... but yes, run and I'll follow! (Lorca, 565)

Lorca, therefore, associates the blood image with death and murder which is the theme of the play. This is developed in two ways in this play. Firstly, it is regarded the end of mortal life. It puts an end to life of men who kill one another in cold blood and leave behind women to their wretched and miserable life. Women are united in their destiny to lament the death of their men folks. They are presented as subordinated to men. And without their men they are but a picture of misery and wretchedness. They keep their memories fresh after their death and strongly safeguard the honour of their family:

Mother: No I can't leave your father and brother here alone. I have to go them every morning and if I go away it's possible one of the Felix family, one of the killers, might die and they'd bury next to ours. And that we'll never happen! Oh, no! That'll never happen! Because I'd dig them out with my nails and, all by myself, crush them against the wall. (552)

In such a society death should be accepted as inevitable and this idea is developed through the character of the Mother who laments and wails over the deaths of her husband and son killed in a family feud, but nevertheless, stoically endures the loss. The passionate bond between Leonardo

and the Bride, the lovers shapes another aspect of death. Their bond represents human life which is severed by the forces operating against it. Death, therefore, not only separates them but also puts an end to everything which makes us human. On the wedding day the Bride runs away with her paramour. Her flight proves the deepest fears of the Mother about this marriage true. She immediately realizes the gravity of the situation that once again her family confronts the rival clan and the requirement of revenge suddenly grips her. Her greatest fear is the fear of losing her son to violence. "Go! After them!" she orders her son, and then, "No! Don't go. Those people kill quickly and well ..." and then ... "but yes, run, and I'll follow! ... the hour of blood has come again" (570). When the lovers run away and chased by the Bridegroom the Woodcutters who here serve the function of the traditional chorus once again emphasizes the theme of death through the image of blood:

Third Woodcutter: But they'll kill them.

Second Woodcutter: You have to follow your passion. They did right to run away.

First Woodcutter: They were deceiving themselves but at the last blood was stronger.

Third Woodcutter: Blood!

First Woodcutter: You have to follow the path of your blood.

Second Woodcutter: But blood that sees the light of day is drunk up by the earth.

First Woodcutter: What of it? Better dead with the blood drained away than alive with rotting. (565)

The flight of the lovers precipitates the violent catastrophe. The inevitable happens in the Third Act of the play where Lorca abandons the stylized realism of the previous two acts and introduces symbolism. The greatness of Lorca as a playwright is that he never lets the dramatic tension, built up so skilfully in the last two acts, collapse. The Woodcutters in Act Three, on the one hand, give us a significant insight into the tragic situation which is about to happen and on the other; refer to an elemental instinctual force of life, erotic passion. This is another dimension of the imagery of blood. The lovers would be discovered soon but before that happens they would have fulfilled the demand of their passion:

First Woodcutter: By now he must be loving her.

Second Woodcutter: Her body for him; his body for her.

Third Woodcutter: They'll find them and they'll kill them.

First Woodcutter: But then they'll have mingled their bloods. They'll be like two empty jars, like two dry arrows. (565)

The elopement of the lovers suggests a defiance of the social boundaries and it also possesses a rebellious energy to violate the moral strictures. The lovers, therefore, are trespassing and transgressing the limitations which the society has imposed upon them to maintain order and their violation is neither desirable nor permissible under any circumstances as it would unleash the forces of chaos. Their tragic end, therefore, is inevitable. The Second Woodcutter makes it very clear that all the attempts of the lovers to escape would end in smoke, "It's hard to. There are knives and guns for ten leagues round" (565). The Moon appears on the stage dressed as a young woodcutter's wife with a white face. The forest is illuminated with blue light. He sings a ballad of death and when he disappears, an old Beggar Woman comes on the stage asking the moonlight to return so that she should see her victims. She is death incarnate. This makes the audience conscious of the fact that death has crept in to destroy everything which comes its way:

Who's hiding? And who sobs in the thorn brakes of the valley? The moon sets a knife abandoned in the air which being a leaden threat yearns to be blood's pain. (566)

Although this ballad, undoubtedly, has its lyrical quality and beauty and is a good example of Lorca's skill and dexterity as a playwright of the lyrical drama, yet it very vividly brings into focus

the theme of death suggested through the main metaphor of the play, blood. The Moon also emphasizes the point that the lovers would soon be discovered. No valleys, hills, mountains and streets would hide them from their pursuers:

Moon: But this night there will be red blood for my cheeks, and for the reeds that cluster at the wide feet of the wind. let there be neither shadow nor bower, and then they can't get away! (566)

The Moon disappears amongst the trees and the stage is once again engulfed in darkness. A barefooted Old Woman appears wrapped in thin green cloth. Although, she is not included in the cast, yet she adds to the gory and mysterious atmosphere of the play. She is followed by a Beggar Woman who indicates the fact that preparations are being made to receive the dead bodies:

The coffins are ready, and white sheets wait on the floor of the bedroom for heavy bodies with torn throats. Gathering their moans in her skirt, fly with them over back tree tops or bury them in soft mud. (566)

The Beggar Woman as a death like figure appears to encounter the Bridegroom in order to make him her prey. She asks the Moon to illuminate the path so that the victims should be seen properly. It is important to see that “the transposition of the drama on to a plane of poetic symbolism causes the spectators to see the tragic action purely as a consequence of the collision of antagonistic forces that are inevitably in opposition” (Reed, 97). The dialogue between the Moon and the Beggar Woman highlights the mad pursuit of the lovers and their struggle to escape. Neither the lovers nor the Bridegroom can escape the inevitable, death.

Moon: They're coming. One ban through the ravine and the other along the river. I'm going to light up the boulders. What do you need?

Beggar Woman: Nothing.

Moon: The wind blows hard now, with a double edge.

Beggar Woman: Light up the waistcoat and open the buttons; the knives will know the path after that.

Moon: But let them to be long time a-day. So the blood will slide its delicate hissing between my fingers look now my ashen valleys already are waking in longing for this fountain of shuddering gushes!

Beggar Woman: Let's not let them get past the arroyo. (Lorca, 566)

The death scene comes to an end with opening of her black cape as the stage is enveloped in darkness. She makes her appearance in the final scene of the play, not in the fascinating locale of the forest, but on the threshold of the house of death, a symbolic suggestion, where the women arrive to lament the deaths of the young men. The forest scene is symbolic. The fate of the lovers has been sealed by lying down the stage of death in the forest. Here Death and the Moon are the symbols of fate of the lovers. This is a scene of erotic rupture played out almost literary in the shadow of death. The lyric poetry of their final scene is at once a celebration of the lover's erotic passions and a eulogy to its inevitable termination in death. In the final scene the Beggar Woman appears and confirms to the girls the deaths of the young men. The women lament deaths together, but their experience of tragedy is individual, separating them from one another. Mother's fear about the violent death of her son ultimately comes true. She imagines that now she won't be having any fears:

Mother: I want to be here. Here. In peace. They're all dead now: and at midnight I'll sleep without terror of guns or knives. Other mothers will go to their windows, lashed by rain, to wash for their son's faces. But not I. And for my dreams I'll make a cold ivory dove and will carry camellias of white frost to the graveyard. But no; not graveyard, not graveyard: the couch of death, the bead that shelter them and rocks them in the sky. (571)

Towards the end of the play we see that the three women, the Mother, the Bride and Leonardo's wife become one. Symbolically they stand for the pain and agony of life. The Mother has lived her painful life and ultimately resigned to her situation. The Bride is a widow on the day of her marriage. She is no longer a wife and cannot be a mother of her children. Leonardo's wife falls between the Mother and the Bride. She has lost her husband, killed in the duel with the Bridegroom. "Mother, wife, lover/mistress and bride: all these roles are symbolically concentrated in this mourning group at the end." (Reed, 100)

The choral element in Act Three also assumes a symbolic significance. It suggests as well that blood refers to an elemental instinctual force of life (erotic passion) that draws two individuals together with a compulsion that is as natural as it is fatal; and in the context of the wedding of the second act, blood refers to the breaking of the virgin's hymen as the union is consummated. (100)

The title, *Blood Wedding*, therefore, becomes "a metaphoric distillation of the dramatic conflicts that are depicted in the play" (101). And the image of blood that unites people together in a family and clan undergoes a transformation to suggest entirely the opposite meaning. The blood becomes the metaphor of division, creating enmity and bringing violence and death into the lives of human beings. "This aggregation of opposed meanings constitutes the symbolic nucleus of the tragedy" (101).

Conclusion

Blood Wedding, therefore, can be seen as a product of artistically innovative and creative playwright. A playwright who has combined high seriousness, tragedy in a specific social context and lyricism on the one hand, and on the other, realism with symbolism to create a play of some great merits. It is through the metaphor of blood and various images and symbols that we penetrate deeper into the fascinating dramatic world of *Blood Wedding* and discover how Lorca has linked together the opposites in his play.

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R.W. Emerson's influential Essay "Self-reliance" and the Bhagavad Gita

Shiva Durga

Particularly it deals with R.W. Emerson's concepts of own work, genius, own nature, character, God within, Great Soul, cause and effect, truth, intuition, soul and Over Soul and their containment in the Bhagavad Gita and sameness with its likewise concepts, particularly the Bhagavad Gita concepts of Swadharm, own work, own nature, God within, Great soul, Bhakti and Karm Yog, Dharm, inspiration and intuition, truth and cause and effect. All have to compulsorily follow Dharm and the Yogas on reaching correct thought. Morals of all are required to be as per Vedic Dharm.

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Dharm:

We shall now understand the Vedic concept of Dharma. Swadharm actually means own dharm, as per Swami Vivekanand,

1. "All living beings are unexpressed Brahman. Expression of the Brahman already within oneself is the aim of life. This is mukti (Eternal freedom). It can be achieved through Karm, knowledge, control of the mind, and Bhakti Yogas. This is the same as R.W. Emerson's 'Over Soul'. I find this statement to be as per R.W. Emerson's statement "*Behold, it saith, I am born into the great, the universal mind. I, the imperfect, adore my own Perfect*".¹

2. Through Dharm animals can rise to be humans and humans can rise to merge with Paramatman (Brahman).

3. Dharm is merger of soul with Brahman, realization of soul as Brahman (according to Dvait, Advait, Vishistadvait present in the Bhagavad Gita, respectively). This is the same as R.W. Emerson's Soul and Oversoul.

4. The Universe consists of only Brahman, all being its manifestation".²

So we see that R.W. Emerson's concept of soul relating to Over Soul and all being connected to God and hence divine is actually covered by the Bhagavad Gita concept of Dharm. Swadharm is action or Karm as per Dharm by an individual and is covered by Karm Yog. As per BG 18.30- .32, "Those endowed with Satvic, ("*good or virtuous*" of R.W. Emerson and the Bhagavad Gita) Bhudhi (intelligence or mindset) are aware of Dharm and are self controlled. Those endowed with Rajasik ('passion' of R.W. Emerson and the Bhagavad Gita) Bhudhi are unable to understand Dharm and Adharm properly. Those with tamasic (vice, Abhorrent of R.W. Emerson and the Bhagavad Gita) qualities and Bhudhi understand Dharm wrongly.

The renowned Sri Chandrasekar Sankaracharya of Kanchi further describes Dharm as follows with reference from the Vedas:

1. Vedas are the root of all dharma; Dharm protected, protects³
2. All the moral and religious principles that constitute the means of fullness in life. Its practice leads to liberation.
3. Dharm is taught through the teaching of Vedas, Puranas and poetry(of Great souls).
4. Dharm is duty towards God and the world.
5. Dharm denotes virtuous deeds.
6. True happiness is earned only through Dharm.
7. Dharm is for the dualistic world of Karm.

8. Practice of Dharm leads to liberation.
9. Dharm serves us in life and after life.
10. A goal of Dharm is universal welfare. ⁴

Sanatan Dharm:

Prakriti (nature), Jiva and Brahman have been described as eternal in Chapter 11, 13 and elsewhere in the Bhagavad Gita. The Jiva is qualitatively one with God. Sanatan means eternal. As per the Vedic Saint Sri Ramanujacharya the word Sanatan means “That which has neither beginning nor end”. This is as per the view of the Bhagavad Gita above. Hence Sanatan Dharm is eternal and includes living entities. The root word ‘Dharm’ means that which continually exists with something, like heat and light with fire. Similarly Dharm joins the living entity with Brahman (Over Soul). The practice of Vedas and the Bhagavad Gita are considered practice of Sanatan Vedic Dharm and Hinduism.

Karm Yog:

As per the Bhagavad Gita everyone has to engage in activity in the material world. Actions can either lead to attachment, bondage, delusion and ignorance within Prakriti or to freedom, realization and enlightenment. By acting as per Swadharm one can attain freedom. For this actions should be performed renouncing the fruit thereof and action should be performed without attachment as per BG 3.19. Such a person becomes free from ignorance. Law of Karm means action as cause leads to an effect on the doer. It can further be understood by this narrative. “Ought one to seek an opportunity of death in defence of right, or ought one to take the lesson of the Gita and learn never to react?” The Swami was asked. “I am for no reaction said the Swami ...for Sannyasin. Self defence for the house holder!”⁵ This he corrected the understanding of the questioner on the Bhagavad Gita. One is impelled to sinful acts through desire and anger as per BG 3.36, 3.37. The living entities’ consciousness becomes covered by desire as per BG 3.38. “There is no work prescribed for me (Krishna) in Maya or Prakriti, nor am I (God) in want of anything, nor do I require to obtain anything, yet I am engaged in appropriate Karm (work and duty) for if I failed to carefully perform Karm, all men would follow my path. If I did not perform prescribed duties, all these worlds would be put to ruination. I should be causing mixture of Jatis and destruction of beings.” as per BG 3.22-3.24

“As the ignorant perform their duties with attachment to result, the learned may similarly act, but without attachment, for the sake of the welfare of the people, society and world” as per BG 3.25. “The wise man should not disturb the minds of the ignorant that are attached to work. He should dovetail their work to the entirety of work, (thus making them devoted to work in a raised perspective), he should himself perform action intently” as per BG 3.26. “Action is done in all cases by the modes of nature. Those deluded by egoism think “I am the doer” as per BG 3.27. “One who is in knowledge of absolute truth does not engage in senses, knows the difference between work for fruitive results and work without attachment” as per BG 3.28. “Always think of God and at the same time perform your (Arjun’s) prescribed duty of fighting. With your activities dedicated to me and your mind and intelligence fixed on me, you will attain me without doubt” as per BG 8.7. Swadharm is ‘Own dharm’ and ‘own work’ and is a part of Karm Yog. From ‘Self reliance’ we see R.W. Emerson believes in and accepts Swadharm and Karm Yog. R.W. Emerson’s concept of ‘own work’ is the same as that of the Bhagavad Gita, this is actually performance of Dharm within Karm Yog. Karm Yog consists of the following. Confronting and convicting the truth -BG 3.28. Knower of absolute truth follows Karm Yog- BG 3.28. Truth is path to Brahman as per BG 4.34, 13.11. Swadharm, Jati Dharm –BG 18.40-53, BG Chapter 2.

Omnipotence of the will –BG 18.49. Omnipresence of the soul – BG Chapter 2, 3, 5. Justice is not postponed but occurs within the plan of time and action-BG 13.22. Crime is punished, Virtue

rewarded –BG 13.22, 14.18. Sense gratification is to be discarded. –BG 18.51, 16.21, 5.21. Attachment is to be discarded. –BG chapter 2. Absence of Private ends -BG 18.51-53, 5.11. Welfare of society, mankind and all living beings- BG 5.25. Discarding attachment, surrendering the results of action to God -5.10. Cause and effect –BG 7.19, 13.13, 13.5. Indifferency of circumstances-BG 2.27 and 2.38. Karm Yog leads to Brahman-BG 18.54, BG Chapter 2, 3, 5. We shall see these concepts particularly in Emerson’s Essay ‘Self Reliance’ and ‘Compensation’.

Self reliance is one of R.W. Emerson’s most important essays, written in the decade when he was at his most productive- the mid 1830s to mid 1840s. We have already seen the influence exerted by this essay on American society in the sub head of ‘Influence of R.W. Emerson and through him Sanatan Dharm and Bhagavad Gita on American society’. ‘Self-Reliance’ was part of his ‘Essays’ published in 1841⁶. This essay received support and appreciation in London and Paris. This book ‘Essays’ was initially responsible for International fame received by Emerson.⁷ This shows R.W. Emerson’s influence on the culture of entire Western civilization.

R.W. Emerson’s essays are related as we have seen in ‘Nature’ and ‘Over Soul’, from the Bhagavad Gita shlokas there and also here we see ‘Self reliance’ flows from the concept of Brahman and knowledge leading to Brahman. It includes Dharm and the Yogas of the Bhagavad Gita.

Pg.26: ⁸ R.W. Emerson states, *“I read the other day some verses written by an eminent painter which were original and not conventional. The soul always hears an admonition in such lines, let the subject be what it may. The sentiment they instil is of more value than any thought they may contain to believe that what is true for you in your private heart is true for all men,—that is genius”*.

This shows there are same standards of righteous conduct for all. For example all have to confirm to Abolition of Slavery. R.W. Emerson considers these to be Vedic standards or Dharm as seen in Pg41. Hence Dharm contains R.W. Emerson’s ‘genius’. We see here ‘genius’ is ‘own thought’, hence it is a part of ‘own nature’ of the Bhagavad Gita 3.33, 18.61. ‘Originality’, or ‘own thought’ is a sentiment that is heard by the soul. This is same as the Bhagavad Gita concept of following ‘own nature’ as a part of Karm Yog in order to realize the soul.

R.W. Emerson states, *“A man should learn to detect and watch that gleam of light which flashes across his mind from within, more than the lustre of the firmament of bards and sages”*. This brings out the concept of indwelling soul or ‘God within’ which guides one through ‘own thought’ since *“The soul always hears an admonition in such lines,”* This is the same as the Bhagavad Gita 2.30,13.23 ,18.61,which contains R.W. Emerson’s concept of ‘God within’. This shows that ‘own thought’ comes from within.

Pg 27: R.W. Emerson states, *“They teach us to abide by our spontaneous impression with good humored inflexibility then most the other side when the whole cry of voices is on”*. ‘Spontaneous impression’ is a part of ‘own thought’. This is a part of the Bhagavad Gita concept of ‘Own Nature’. Like the Karm Yog of the Bhagavad Gita, R.W. Emerson too considers ‘own nature’ cannot be compromised on especially in adverse and difficult times.

R.W. Emerson states, *“There is a time in every man’s education when he arrives at the conviction that envy is ignorance; that imitation is suicide; that he must take himself for better for worse as his portion; that though the wide universe is full of good, no kernel of nourishing corn can come to him but through his toil bestowed on that plot of ground which is given to him to till.* ‘Own nature’ is a part of Swadharm. This is as per BG 3.19, .20, 18.45, .48. Own following of Dharm (this is Svadharm) through action is irreplaceable and compulsory. It is compulsory for a man to do

work required of him. Arjun too had to compulsorily consider *'his portion'* (whether or not to fight) as seen in BG Chapter 2.

The above observations of R.W. Emerson are thus seen to be a part of the Bhagavad Gita. BG18. 45 states that "by following his or her own work, every person attains the highest perfection". Now hear how this can be done." BG 18.46 states "by worshipping him who is all pervading and source of all beings a man can attain perfection through performing his own work." By this we realize own work has to be done in order to appreciate the relation of soul with over soul. We see this in this essay also, especially on Pg 36, 37. Work has to be done in this context. BG 18.47 states "It is better to engage in one's own occupation even though one may perform it imperfectly, than to accept another's occupation and perform it perfectly. Duties prescribed and executed as per one's nature are never affected by sinful reactions." This shows no perfection or realization can come to a person except through performing his 'own work.' By attaining perfection a man will become truly happy but not otherwise. The BG 3.19 states "Therefore always perform obligatory actions as a duty without attachment, for by working without attachment one attains to supreme." Swami Vivekananda explains this shloka "In this human life, one cannot help doing some kind of work always. When man has perforce to do some work, *karma-yoga* enjoins on him to do it in such a way as will bring freedom through the realization of the Atman".⁹ BG 3.20-states "Kings such as Janak attained perfection solely by performance of prescribed duties. Therefore, just for the sake of educating people in general, you should perform your work". BG 2.50.states "...Yoga is skill in work". As per the above, one has to perform compulsorily the work which is one's portion. Only by performing work and action King Janak and others attained perfection. Thus one has to perform his own work. Work is also as per the requirement of the situation according to Dharm.

This is the same as "*that though the wide universe is full of good, no kernel of nourishing corn can come to him but through his toil bestowed on that plot of ground which is given to him to till*" Emerson thus associates 'good' with Dharm and Karm Yog. This is as per BG Chapter 14 and 18 and the concept of Virtue therein.

R.W. Emerson states, "*A man is relieved and gay when he has put his heart into his work and done his best; but what he has said or done otherwise shall give him no peace*". This is explained above. In BG 2.26 Krishna addresses Arjun as 'Mahabayo'. This shows that Arjun was proficient in his work. Proficiency also requires scientific outlook. Mahabayo is the highest category of warriors. Hence Arjun could satisfy the requirement of his 'Own work'. This is a part of Jati Dharm. Hence Arjun has '*put his heart into his work and done his best*'. Thus a man becomes '*relieved and gay*'. This is true happiness as per BG 18.46,54.

R.W. Emerson states, "*Trust thyself; every heart vibrates to that iron string. Accept the place the divine providence has found for you, the society of your contemporaries, the connection of events. Great men have always done so, and confided themselves childlike to the genius of their age, betraying their perception that the absolutely trustworthy was seated at their heart, working through their hands, predominating in all their being*". This brings out the concept of "God within". This shows '*Providence*' is as per the Vedic concept of Destiny which is dependent upon past actions of Karm. This is explained in 'Fate'. Providence is explained clearly by BG 13.22 and can be inferred from BG 14.6-14.19. As per these the Jiva (Conditioned soul or individual) is itself responsible for its place, position and society, its contemporaries and also events. This is as per Prarabdh Karm. This is the Karm which has coalesced for present life. The amount by which one can change circumstance depends the nature of Karm. Dhridh is Karm which can be changed only with great effort. Adhridh is the Karm which is easily changeable. Hence "*Accept the place the divine providence has found for you, the society of your contemporaries, the connection of events.*" BG 6.5 states "Raise yourself by yourself; don't let yourself down, for you alone are your friend and you alone are your enemy." This brings out R.W. Emerson's belief of "*Trust thyself*",

“imitation is suicide” and the importance of “*Our spontaneous impression*”. This is also as per Swami Vivekanand’s observations on the above Shloka- “One must save the self by one’s own self –by personal prowess.”¹⁰ “Jati Dharm, that is, Dharm enjoined according to the different castes, the Swadharm, that is, one’s own Dharm, are set of duties prescribed for man according to his capacity and position- which is the very basis of Vedic religion and Vedic society”.¹¹ From this and BG 18.45-47 we realize that we must “*accept the place divine Providence has found for you*”, and this belief rises from the perception of ‘God within’ as stated in BG 2.30, and R.W. Emerson’s relation of the Soul to Over soul, “*absolutely trust worthy*” that we see in BG 18.46. “*betraying their perception that the absolutely trustworthy was seated at their heart, working through their hands, predominating in all their being*”. This brings out ‘*God within*’. It is as per BG 9.7, 10.39, 13.16 and 15.15 which show this as is an aspect of Brahman. Hence ‘*absolutely trustworthy*’ is Brahman. BG 18.46 further states “Worshipping him through his own duty (Own work) a man attains perfection”. It is only through following ‘Own Nature’ that one can perform ‘own work’. The aim of Jati Dharm is not to bind a person to a fixed work through birth. This is nowhere mentioned in the Bhagavad Gita. Instead it is for attaining perfection as stated in BG 18.49 and for realizing Brahman as stated in BG 18.54. Swami Vivekananda states on BG 18.41- 45 “It is therefore our duty to do that work which will exalt and enoble us in accordance with the ideals and activities of the society in which we are born.”¹² As per BG 18.41 Jati Dharm is as per the individual’s ‘own nature’. Genius here is the requirement of the age which is the same as Dharm. This is as per the Bhagavad Gita. It was the requirement of the age for Arjun to follow Dharm by destroying the forces of Duryodhan who was inflicting injustice. Hence all are required to perform work as per the requirement of the society according to Dharm and own qualities. This is Jati Dharm.

Swami Vivekanand states “Try and understand this, that if Jati Dharm be rightly and truly preserved, the nation shall never fall”.¹³ BG 18.41-48 describe Jati Dharm and Swadharm. This essential concept is realized by ‘*Great men*’ or ‘*great souls*’ according to R.W.Emerson’s quotation above. We can include R.W. Emerson and Swami Vivekanand in this category from my above observations. I consider it an honour that “*divine Providence*” has ‘*found for me the place*’ of researching and comparing these two ‘*Great Souls*’ and bringing out the influence of the Bhagavad Gita within them.

Pg 29 R.W. Emerson states, “*Who so would be a man, must be a nonconformist. He who would gather immortal palms must not be hindered by the name of goodness, but must explore if it be goodness. Nothing is at last scared but the integrity of your own mind. Absolve you to yourself, and you shall have the suffrage of the world*”.

A non conformist in the sense that he should follow not others but his ‘own nature’ in his place allotted by ‘*Providence*’ is as seen in Pg. 27. R.W. Emerson’s non conformist thus follows Svadharm. We shall see at Pg. 41 that he also mandatorily follows Vedic duties. Here thus R.W. Emerson brings out the necessity of absolving oneself to ones ‘Own Nature’. ‘*the integrity of your own mind*’ is thus following ‘own nature’ and Swadharm. Thus you can ‘*Absolve you to yourself*’. This is as per BG 18.41 seen above.

R.W. Emerson states, “*I remember an answer which when quite young I was prompted to make to a valued adviser who was wont to importune me with the dear old doctrines of the church. On my saying, “What have I to do with the sacredness of traditions, if I live wholly from within?” my friend suggested,—“But these impulses may be from below, not from above.” I replied, “They do not seem to me to be such; but if I am the Devil’s child, I will live then from the Devil*”.

As we see in this essay and we will further see in ‘Compensation’, R.W. Emerson’s ‘Own Nature’ like the Bhagavad Gita embraces virtue and shuns vice. The Sanatan Vedic Dharm with its complete and wholesome sight has no place for the Devil. ‘Own Nature’ of the Bhagavad Gita

refers to Dharmic natures which uphold virtue. However, it encompasses within 'own nature' the modes of nature which are Sattva (which awakens one to Self realization and knowledge, sense control), Rajas (desire for fruitive results, the happiness of sense pleasures) and Tamas (delusion and blindness to self realization) as per BG 18.41. This includes all beings as per BG 18.40 and thus even the devil if any is included unlike the Abrahamic religions where the devil is excluded. In Sanatan Vedic Dharm all sorts of beings within Prakriti have realized God by following 'Own Nature'. This includes beings of the Higher Worlds (Devatas) such as Indra, of Bhulok (Humans) like Arjun, King Janak and others and of the Nether Worlds (Asuras) like Bali Maharaj Prahlad and others, by following their 'Own Natures'. Their paths were different and individualist, hence they were 'non conformists'. This is precisely what is intended by R.W. Emerson here. This view is not possible for Christianity. Christianity stumbles on and is limited by the concept of Devil. The Devil's followers may not realize God. R.W. Emerson here stresses the importance of following 'own nature' which is the same as, *'if I live wholly from within?'* Swami Vivekanand also similarly expresses "Each one sees God according to his own Nature".¹⁴ This also includes R.W. Emerson's concept of 'God within' and 'self trust' explained as part of the Bhagavad Gita.

R.W. Emerson states, "No law can be sacred to me but that of my nature". This is as per BG 3.33, 18.41. R.W. Emerson's concept of 'Own nature' is same as the Bhagavad Gita concept of 'Own Nature' seen above. As per BG 11.51, Arjun assumes his 'Own Nature' on viewing the Universal form and consequently being freed from delusion and bigotry. Thus showing the sacredness and vitality of 'Own Nature'

BG 18.60 shows that though Arjun was under illusion, he was still sufficiently enlightened to act as per his 'own nature' which still pointed him in the correct direction.

R.W. Emerson states, *"If an angry bigot assumes this bountiful cause of Abolition, and comes to me with his last news from Barbadoes, why should I not say to him, 'Go love thy infant; love thy wood-chopper; be good-natured and modest; have that grace; and never varnish your hard, uncharitable ambition with this incredible tenderness for black folk a thousand miles off. Thy love afar is spite at home.'*

R.W. Emerson skillfully uses slave treatment of 'Blackfolk' in exposing behavior of Bigots. Thereby he indirectly embeds the idea of Abolition of slavery into his concept of 'Self Reliance', which is the 'Self Reliance' of the Bhagavad Gita-whereby no one can be possessed as a slave. BG 18.41- 18.47 clearly show that Svadharm and Jati Dharm have no place for slavery. Arjun could not have avoided the War and practiced righteousness elsewhere. It was compulsory for him to fight; personal calling and conduct and duty cannot be avoided for righteousness elsewhere. Hence Bigotry is anathema or impediment to Svadharm.

"Bigotry"(Pg. 29) and "hypocritical intentions" (Pg. 41) have to be discarded for 'Self Trust' and 'Self Reliance', so R.W. Emerson too considers them anathema to these concepts of his. This is the same as the Bhagavad Gita, as shown above.

Pg 30:R.W. Emerson states, *"I shun father and mother and wife and brother when my genius calls me. I would write on the lintels of the door-post, "Whim". I hope it is somewhat better than whim at last, but we cannot spend the day in explanation".* Swami Vivekanand sees in the Bhagavad Gita, chapter 2 the same view. "His love (of his relatives) made him forget his duty towards his country and king. That is why Sri Krishna told him that he was a hypocrite ... (and) a coward; therefore stand up and fight!"¹⁵

Arjun realizes 'Own Nature' on seeing the Universal form in the Bhagavad Gita 11.51 and thereby shuns his attachment to his relatives, friends and elders in order to follow his 'Own Nature', of which fighting is a part. The Bhagavad Gita 18.60 also brings out this aspect of 'Own Nature'.

We have seen genius to be part of 'Own Nature'. We see here 'Genius' is following Swadharm which Arjun is required to do. Further on Pg 36 we see R.W. Emerson's 'Genius' is an aspect of Brahman (Over Soul). R.W. Emerson further says in his essay "Conduct of Life: Worship" "*What is vulgar; and the essence of all vulgarity, but the avarice of reward?... T'is the difference ...of genius and talent, of sinner and saint.*"¹⁶ This is as per the Bhagavad Gita 5.10-11. A Karm Yogi performs his duties without attachment or reward, surrendering the results to the Supreme Lord. Thus he attains unadulterated peace and perfection. A person who is greedy for the fruits of his labour is not in Union with the Divine, and becomes entangled. We see here R.W. Emerson's 'genius' is a part of and follows Karm Yog. R.W. Emerson further says in his Essay "The Transcendentalist" "*The popular literary creed seems to be, 'I am a sublime genius; I ought not therefore to labor.' But genius is the power to labor better and more availably. Deserve thy genius: exalt it*"¹⁷ 'Genius' thus makes one "*labor better and more availably*".

In the Mahabharat Arjun was a Maharati (in the category of Great warriors) in BG Chapter 2. Sri Krishna addresses Arjun as 'Mahabayo' which shows that Arjun was adept and proficient in his work, for which he '*labored better and more availably*' 'Genius' thus means to become proficient in ones work, '*exalt it*', and thus not shun or discard the '*labour*' involved, thus one can '*Deserve thy genius*'. This is a part of Swadharm as seen. R.W. Emerson states, further in his essay 'The Transcendentalist' "*Let them obey the Genius then most when his impulse is wildest; then most when he seems to lead to uninhabitable deserts of thought and life; for the path which the hero travels alone is the highway of health and benefit to mankind. What is the privilege and nobility of our nature, but its persistency, through its power to attach itself to what is permanent?*"¹⁸ We see in the Bhagavad Gita Chapter 2 that Arjun is deluded by attachment and grief and so in '*uninhabitable deserts of thought and life*'. Through which he can come out by following his 'Own Nature' (or genius), the path has to be travelled alone by the hero since "Own Nature" is individualist and personal hence private; 'own work' is for '*benefit to mankind*'. 'Own nature' (as a part of Swadharm and Karm Yog) and 'God within' make us work for '*benefit to mankind*' as per BG 5.25. Swadharm and Karm Yog are permanent, valid for all time hence; this is '*the privilege and nobility of our nature*' to '*attach itself to what is permanent*'. We see here "Genius" is actually a part of "Own Nature" which makes us do "Own Work" and this is Swadharm.

R.W. Emerson posits here that his 'Self Reliance' concept is universal and open to all, so implying that none may be kept as a slave, as per him. This is as per BG 9.32. "For, taking refuge in me, they also O son of Pritha, who might of inferior birth, as well as woman, Vaishyas, as well as Sudras-even they attain to the supreme goal". Swami Vivekanand states on BG 9.32, "Breaking the bondages of all, the chains of all, declaring liberty to all to reach the highest goal, come the words of the Gita, rolls like thunder the mighty voice of Krishna".¹⁹ We see here all categories of Jati Dharm (all of which are free individuals) are at liberty to reach the highest goal. (of merger with Brahman). So no human may be a property of another (this is a prerequisite for slavery) since then he cannot have this liberty.

Hence the Bhagavad Gita rules out slavery as legitimate or Dharmic. BG 10.32 states "Of creations I am the beginning and the end as also the middle, O Arjun; of sciences I am knowledge of the soul and I am the constructive reasoning of the controversialists". We are seeing here that R.W. Emerson's "*knowledge of the Soul*" expressed in this essay and also in 'Circles', 'Over Soul' is as per that of the Bhagavad Gita. Also R.W. Emerson's use, at various places, of 'you', 'we' and his concept of '*God within*' bring out the universality of his concepts. We are seeing here linkages and the sameness of R.W. Emerson's concepts constructing 'Self Reliance' to the concepts of the Bhagavad Gita, especially Brahman.

Pg.31:R.W. Emerson states, '*What I must do is all that concerns me, not what the people think*'. This is Swadharm, 'own work'. Swadharm is covered completely in BG.3.35, 18.47, .48, 18.41-.46,18.7-.9, 5.15-.17,2.47,3.24.

R.W. Emerson states, *“The objection to conforming to usages that have become dead to you is that it scatters your force. It loses your time and blurs the impression of your character. If you maintain a dead church, contribute to a dead Bible- society, vote with a great party either for the government or against it, spread your table like base housekeepers,— under all these screens I have difficulty to detect the precise man you are: and of course so much force is withdrawn from your proper life”*. This is as per the Bhagavad Gita Chapter 2. Confirming to social norms and righteousness apart from Swadharm or “Own Nature” or “genius” is futile.

“But do your work, and I shall know you. Do your work and you shall reinforce yourself.” This is Svadharm or ‘own work’ as brought out in the Bhagavad Gita 18.48, 18.45. R.W. Emerson states in his essay, ‘Power’ *“You must elect your work;”*²⁰ This is Swadharm which includes ‘Own work’ as seen above. *“...you shall take what your brain can, and drop all the rest :”*²¹ Working according to one’s abilities is inherent in Swadharm and Jati Dharm as per BG 18.41, to attempt another’s work is in fact a defect, as per BG 18.47. This is as per the observation and view of R.W. Emerson above *‘and drop all the rest’*. It is very relevant that R.W. Emerson states this in the context and meaning of ‘Power’.

R.W. Emerson states, *“A man must consider what a blind man’s buff is this game of conformity. ...Do I not know that with all this ostentation of examining the grounds of the institution he will do no such thing? Do I not know that he is pledged to himself not to look but at one side, the permitted side, not as a man, but as a parish minister? He is a retained attorney, and these airs of the bench are the emptiest affectation. ...This conformity makes them not false in a few particulars, authors of a few lies, but false in all particulars. ...we know not where to begin to set them right”*. This also shows confirming to social norms and Institutions blocking out independent examination is farce and falsity and so *“examining the grounds of the institution”* and *“looking at all sides”* is not possible. It also brings out hypocrisy and discarding of truth in the type of “conformity” to various sects of religion observed by Emerson in the West. We observe in the Bhagavad Gita Arjun “looks on all sides” and independently examines his doubts and questions Krishna on them. Hence Arjun is a non conformist. The non Vedic view of the soul is also examined though rejected by Krishna in BG 2.26. BG 4.34 stresses on questioning as a means to reach Brahman. This is a part of Gyan Yog of the Bhagavad Gita.

Pg 33: R.W. Emerson states, *“In your metaphysics you have denied personality to the Deity, yet when the devout motions of the soul come, yield to them heart and life, though they should clothe God with shape and color. Leave your theory, as Joseph his coat in the hand of the harlot, and flee”* Emerson here talks of a stage *‘when ‘the devout motions of the soul come’*, (hence this is a stage which every person has to rise and develop to encounter) we should *“yield to them the heart and life”* and see God of Name and form. This is Bhakti. R.W.Emerson here links and describes his belief in the Diety, or Personal God, devotion (bhakti) to them and the Soul. This is the exact same concept in the Bhagavad Gita Chapter 12. It is also covered in BG Chapter 7 and 9, 14.26, 15.19 and elsewhere. This explains the Personal God of the Vedas which is also called Sagun Brahman and is *‘Deity with personality’* as stated above by Emerson.. We see in ‘Circles’ that Emerson is a believer of Lord Vishnu and Krishna and Krishna’s divine play with the Gopis. Thus R.W. Emerson was aware of and believed in the Vedic and Bhagavad Gita concept of Deity. The rise of Bhakti in the conditioned soul exposes its denial as a hypocritical behaviour and bigotry like the example of *‘Joseph, his coat and the harlot’* given by Emerson here. Thus Emerson understood Bhakti. I see here that Bhakti is an integral part of R.W. Emerson’s ‘Self Reliance’. Hence we understand that Emerson understands the Vedic concept of God as personal and impersonal which I have explained in the sub head of “The influence of Vedas, BG on Emerson” and ‘Circles’ and also here.

R.W. Emerson states, *“With consistency a great soul has simply nothing to do.”* and *“I suppose no man can violate his nature”*, A ‘Great Soul’ has to follow his ‘own Nature’ and not be consistent. This is as per the Bhagavad Gita. This is brought out in the Bhagavad Gita 18.59, 18.60 with respect to Arjun. This is an essential part of Svadharm. This is brought out by the Bhagavad Gita 3.33 *“Even a man of knowledge acts according to his own nature; for everyone follows the nature he has acquired from Prakriti. What can repression and suppression accomplish?”* So no one can violate his ‘own nature’. So a ‘Great Soul’ has to act not with consistency but ‘Own Nature’. ‘Great Soul’ also appreciates the personal God (which is a Vedic Concept) as brought out above.

Pg: 34 :R.W. Emerson states, *“Ordinarily, everybody in society reminds us of somewhat else, or of some other person, Character, reality, reminds you of nothing else; it takes place of the whole creation, The man must be so much that he must make all circumstances indifferent”*. This view on character is the same as expressed in the essay “Circles”. This brings out connectedness in R.W. Emerson’s Essays.

This description of character is contained in BG 12.13 *“He or she who hates no creature, and is friendly and compassionate towards all, who is free from the feelings of “I and Mine”. Even-minded in pain and pleasure, forbearing”*. BG 12.15 states *“One by whom the world is not agitated, and who also cannot be agitated by the world, who is freed from excessive joy, intolerance, fear and anxiety-such a one is dear to Me”*. So I find R.W. Emerson’s character is Dharmic as they both make *‘all circumstances indifferent’*. *“That highly Sattvic man, the great soul, has no longer to work as we do with hands and feet- by his mere willing only all his works are immediately accomplished to perfection. That man of predominating Sattva is the Brahmin, the worshipped of all. Has he to go about from door to door, begging others to worship him? The Almighty mother of the Universe writes with her own hands in golden letters on his forehead, “worship ye all, this great one, this son of mine” and the world reads and listens to it and humbly bows down its head before him in obedience. That man is really “He who has no enemy, and is friendly and compassionate towards all, who is free from the feelings of “Me and Mine even minded in pain and pleasure, and forbearing”*. Swami Vivekanand explains thus the BG 12.13²². Since such a person is very dear to God he will remind you or us of nothing else, but *“the whole of creation”*. As per BG 14.19-.25 such a person attains the spiritual nature of Brahman. We see in ‘Over Soul’ *“the whole of creation”* is actually a part of Brahman hence God. This is as per BG chapter 7 and 13. R.W. Emerson aimed to teach others selflessly and openly. We see here as per the view of Swami Vivekanand, Emerson according to the Bhagavad Gita is a Brahmin and a ‘great soul’ and Sattvic and has attained the spiritual nature of Brahman due to his above views on ‘Character’.

Pg:35: R.W. Emerson states, *“An institution is the lengthened shadow of one man”and all history Resolves itself very easily into the biography of a few stout and earnest persons.”* BG 3.21 tells us that common man follows the actions of a great man. This is as per the Emerson’s view of the above. BG 3.20 also shows King Janak as an example of Karm Yog which others must follow. This is as per the concept of “Great Soul” of the Bhagavad Gita and Swami Vivekanand as brought out earlier in Pg. 34. BG 2.69 brings out the difference between all living entities and great thinkers, saints. Hence all have to follow them. This is also as per BG 7.3 *“Out of many thousands among men, one may endeavor for perfection, and of those who have achieved perfection, hardly one knows Me in truth”*. Such men are very few. Swami Vivekanand also reiterates this view of Emerson and the Bhagavad Gita. *“The history of the world is made by a few dozens, whom you can count on your fingers.”*²³ Only a ‘great soul’ like Swami Vivekanand could understand the true influence of the Bhagavad Gita on R.W. Emerson and the all pervading exhaustive holistic curative and corrective influence of Emerson on Western philosophy. Swami Vivekanand’s words are especially pertinent and relevant since he is a universally acknowledged authority on the Vedas and the Bhagavad Gita, since he is a junior contemporary of R.W. Emerson and since he correctly saw

R.W. Emerson's integral contribution to his own task of planting Vedic thought in Western culture. Western culture could imbibe this Vedic concept of Swami Vivekanand because it had already been influenced and changed from within by R.W. Emerson as a 'great soul'. Other cultures such as Middle East Asia and various parts of Africa were not receptive and could not imbibe this implant of Swami Vivekanand since they had not been appropriately changed and made receptive, lacking a 'great soul' such as R.W. Emerson. It is only through the permeation of Western Culture in the World that Vedic concepts implanted by Swami Vivekanand into the Western Culture, are reaching all parts of the World. Swami Vivekanand said to Americans, "I would advice those of you who have not read that book (Bhagavad Gita) to read it. If you only knew how much it has influenced your own country even! If you want to know the source of R.W. Emerson's inspiration, it is this book, the Gita. He (Emerson) went to see Carlyle, and Carlyle made him a present of the Gita (Bhagavad Gita); and that little book is responsible for the Concord Movement. All the broad movements in America in one way or the other are indebted to the Concord Party. The central figure of the Gita is Krishna."²⁴

Pg:36 :R.W. Emerson states, "*The magnetism which all original action exerts is explained when we inquire the reason of self-trust. Who is the Trustee? What is the aboriginal Self, on which a universal reliance may be grounded? What is the nature and power of that science-baffling star, without parallax, without calculable elements, which shoots a ray of beauty even into trivial and impure actions, if the least mark of independence appear? The inquiry leads us to that source, at once the essence of genius, of virtue, and of life, which we call Spontaneity or Instinct. We denote this primary wisdom as Intuition, whilst all later teachings are tuitions. In that deep force, the last fact behind which analysis cannot go, all things find their common origin. For the sense of being which in calm hours rises, we know not how, in the soul, is not diverse from things, from space, from light, from time, from man, but one with them and proceeds obviously from the same source whence their life and being also proceed. We first share the life by which things exist and afterwards see them as appearances in nature and forget that we have shared their cause. Here is the fountain of action and of thought. Here are the lungs of that inspiration which giveth man wisdom and which cannot be denied without impiety and atheism. We lie in the lap of immense intelligence, (Brahman, "Over Soul" and Soul) which makes us receivers of its truth and organs of its activity. When we discern justice, when we discern truth, we do nothing of ourselves, but allow a passage to its beams*".

So we see the reason of Self Trust is the trustee or aboriginal self. Universal reliance is grounded on it. It is the deep force. Analysis cannot reach this last fact. All things have their common origin here. The sense of being is one with Soul, space, light, time, man and all proceed from the same one source. Truth and Justice are only a passage of the beams of this science baffling star, it giveth wisdom. From this we make out R.W. Emerson's science baffling star and Aboriginal self is Brahman as the qualities and the description of it and reaching it are that of Brahman as I am showing below. BG 7.4, 7.5, 7.6.-10 explain that '*space, light, time, life, man*' and all proceed from the same source which is Brahman. The '*sense of being*' being from the same source, is also part of Brahman. Thus it is '*one with them*'. Hence here, in Brahman, as per above, '*all things find their common origin*'. Since Jiva or the conditioned soul is eternally sub ordinate to Krishna or Brahman, the Jiva or soul or individual becomes a '*receiver of its truth*' as stated by Emerson. This is as per BG 13.13. The conditioned soul is subordinate to Brahman. Dharm, Karm Yog, Bhakti Yog and Gyan Yog are path to Brahman as per the Bhagavad Gita. Through these the Jiva or the conditioned soul merges in Brahman. Thus these Yogas are the '*truth and activity*' leading to Brahman of which '*we*' (the conditioned soul of the Bhagavad Gita) through their practice are the '*receivers*' and '*organs*'.

Justice is a part of the Law of Karm contained in BG 13.22. Krishna and Brahman as time are stated in BG 10.32, 10.33, 11.32. Wisdom as coming from Brahman is contained in BG 10.38 hence it is '*that inspiration which giveth man wisdom*'. Thought and Action caused by and leading

to Brahman is contained in the Bhagavad Gita 13.25, Chapter 2, 3 and 5. Hence Brahman is “*the fountain of action and thought*”. We see in Chapter 14 that ‘*Virtue*’ leads to Brahman. As per BG 7.5 living beings and all life is only an aspect of Brahman.

As per BG 7.9, Brahman is the essence of life. Hence ‘*that source, at once the essence of genius, of virtue, and of life, which we call Spontaneity or Instinct*’ is Brahman. Hence ‘*primary wisdom*’ and ‘*intuition*’ of Emerson is Brahman. Thus “*inspiration which giveth man wisdom and which cannot be denied without impiety and atheism*” is the inspiration or intuition which gives the wisdom of Brahman. This is also as per the view of Swami Vivekananda “There is a still higher form of knowledge which we call inspiration, which does not reason, but knows things by flashes. That is the highest form of knowledge...but in the present state of the world they are few and far between who attained to that state.”²⁵ I conclude Emerson had ‘*Inspiration*’ or ‘*Intuition*’ of the ‘*Aboriginal self*’ or Brahman and was among the few persons in the World to have it. Hence as per BG 13.32, Emerson had vision of Eternity.

As per BG 13.28, .29, .31 and .35, R.W. Emerson can be said to have attained Brahman. Teachings of other than Brahman, thus are ‘*later teachings*’ or ‘*tutions*’. This is also as per BG 7.4-10. There is thus a basic difference between that teaching of Brahman and other teachings as per both R.W. Emerson and the Bhagavad Gita. As per BG 7.12 “Brahman transcends everything. Brahman is independent. Everything is within Brahman.” Hence Brahman ‘*shoots a ray of beauty even into trivial and impure actions, if the least mark of independence appear?*’ ‘*Independence*’ hence emanates from ‘*self trust*’ and ‘*Universal reliance*’. ‘*Universal reliance*’ can only be placed on Brahman since all manifestation is created, preserved, destroyed by it. Everything emanates from and merges in Brahman. This is as per BG 7.4-7.6, 9.7, 10.39, 15.17-18, 13.14-18. This is also because the conditioned soul is eternally sub ordinate to Brahman as per BG 13.13.

‘*Intuition*’ is thus teaching of Brahman and ways to reach it. This is Dharm, Bhakti, Karm and Gyan Yogas of the Bhagavad Gita. We see this essay of R.W. Emerson also thus contains these Yogas and Dharm. Hence ‘*We lie in the lap of immense intelligence, which makes us receivers of its truth and organs of its activity*’. As per BG 7.13, ‘the world, deluded by the modes of Nature (Sattva, Rajas, Tamas) does not know Brahman, who is above the modes of Nature and is inexhaustible’. As per BG 15.7, ‘The living entities in this world of life are my eternal fragmental parts, situated in Material nature, they are struggling very hard with the six senses including the mind’. As per BG 9.7, “At the end of ordained time span all material manifestations enter into my nature, at the beginning of another time span, I treat them again’. Hence ‘*We first share the life by which things exist and afterwards see them as appearances in nature and forget that we have shared their cause*’. We have seen earlier in Page 33 that ‘*devotion*’ of R.W. Emerson is the same as devotion or Bhakti of the Bhagavad Gita which links us with the Vedic personal God. This is Sagun Brahman. Thus Sagun Brahman ‘*cannot be denied without impiety and atheism*’. ‘*piety*’ hence means Bhakti which is only applicable to Sagun Brahman as per BG Chapter 12. ‘*Atheism*’ is hence revealed as denial of Sagun Brahman which is revealed as conditioned stage of ignorance and not qualifying for Dharm and Bhakti.

‘*Universal Reliance*’ can be grounded only on Brahman, since only it satisfies R.W. Emerson’s above criteria. Hence R.W. Emerson’s ‘*aboriginal self*’ is actually Brahman. We see R.W. Emerson’s ‘*original action*’ emanates from ‘*self trust*’. This is based on the ‘*trustee*’ who is the ‘*aboriginal self*’. We have seen this to be Brahman. We have seen this Brahman is present as ‘*God within*’ and hence this is ‘*the reason of self trust*’ inspiring ‘*original action*’. ‘*Self trust*’ hence rises from the direct and integral relation of the soul with Brahman. This is also self realization as per the Bhagavad Gita. The Bhagavad Gita describes Nirgun Brahman (Brahman without attributes). This is as per BG 13.15, 13.16, 14.27, 15.18. Since as per BG 15.18 Nirgun Brahman is beyond the fallible and infallible and unknowable to the material senses and as per BG 12.3 Nirgun Brahman is beyond perception of the senses all pervading, inconceivable, unchanging and

impersonal, hence Nirgun Brahman is the *'science-baffling star, without parallax, without calculable elements'*. This Bhagavad Gita concept of Nirgun and Sagun Brahman is also called the 'personal' and 'impersonal' God of the Vedas. This explains R.W. Emerson's relation of the soul with Brahman as described above. This explains R.W. Emerson's above concepts. So we see the Bhagavad Gita concept of Nirgun and Sagun Brahman is described here and permeates R.W. Emerson's 'Self Reliance' essay. In fact the essay is understandable without this understanding of Brahman.

Pg 37: R.W. Emerson states, *"When we discern justice, when we discern truth, we do nothing of ourselves, but allow a passage to its beams"*. We will now see truth and justice to be elements leading to Brahman. The philosophical pursuit of truth, perception of truth as knowledge will lead us to Brahman and so is a part of Dharm as per the BG 13.11-12. BG 4.34 states "The Supreme Brahman is known by prostrating oneself, by questioning and service to gyanis (spiritual Souls), the realized souls can impart knowledge (of Brahman) to you because they have seen truth". 'Truth' is hence revealed as Brahman realization. Since knowledge of Brahman is acquired by Dharm and the Yogas these two can be stated as 'truth'. So to *'discern truth'* is Brahman realization through following Dharm and the Yogas. The soul attaining Brahman realization is hence *'a passage to its (Brahman's) beams'*. The BG 16.1-2 mentions practice of truthfulness as a quality of divine nature which leads one to perfection (Brahman realization). The BG 10.32 describes Brahman as conclusive truth reached by logic. The BG 10.4 mentions truth leading to Brahman. We see in 'Over Soul' that as per Emerson *'truth is from eternity'*²⁶ as it is path to Brahman as per the above shlokas. So we see the concepts of 'truth' of the Bhagavad Gita are the same as R.W. Emerson's view here. We have seen above Justice is a part of Law of Karm. This is explained further in 'Compensation'. As per BG 13.22, a person encounters good or evil effects as per his actions and thought. This is justice. Hence to understand *'justice'* is to understand the Law of Karm. Cause and effect as explained on Pg.50 also bring out Justice. To *'discern justice and truth'* is thus a way of realizing Brahman, it is also a way of going beyond the body, mind and ego. Hence *"When we discern justice, when we discern truth, we do nothing of ourselves, but allow a passage to its beams"*.

R.W. Emerson states, *"The relations of the soul to the divine spirit are so pure that it is profane to seek to interpose helps"*. The BG 9.7, 10.39, 13.13, 13.16 and 17 explain that every soul rests on Brahman. *'The divine spirit'* is thus Brahman. In BG 13.25 we see that *'the relations of the soul to the divine spirit'* are without any *'inter posed help'*. In 'Over Soul' and here we see this to be the relation between the Soul and Brahman. We have already seen the direct and integral relation of Soul to Brahman on Pg 36.

R.W. Emerson states, *"Whenever a mind is simple and receives a divine wisdom, old things pass away.- means, teachers, texts temples fall; it lives now, and absorbs past and future into the present hour"*. We see in Chapter 2 of the Bhagavad Gita that Arjun has to perform action as per Dharm and Karm Yog in the present, he cannot postpone it for the future or take succor in the past. The present thus is the place where Karm Yog and other Yogas are to be performed by the Jiva (conditioned soul) through *'a mind'*. Hence *'old things'* which are not relevant to the yogas, *'pass away'*. Brahman is beyond time. We see from the above that these Yogas are the *'divine wisdom'* through which one reaches Brahman. A soul receiving *'divine wisdom'* (knowledge of Brahman through the Yogas), this is as per BG Chapter 2, 3, 5 and 12, realizes its existence beyond time as per BG 2.20, hence *'it lives now, and absorbs past and future into the present hour'*. There is no other knowledge in the past and the future besides Brahman.

R.W. Emerson states, *"The centuries are conspirators against the sanity and authority of the soul"*. This is because as per BG 2.20 the soul is beyond time being eternal. As per the Bhagavad Gita all can perform the Yogas leading to Brahman in the present. Thus one cannot

ignore the present and look for Brahman in past. Brahman knowledge being above time '*absorbs past and future into the present hour*'.

PG 38: R.W. Emerson states, "*Time and space are but physiological colors which the eye makes, but the soul is light: where it is, is day; where it was, is night; and history is an impertinence and an injury if it be anything more than a cheerful apologue or parable of my being and becoming*". This is as per the Bhagavad Gita concept that only because of the soul there is life and knowledge. History is only a record of a person's realization of Brahman, '*being and becoming*'. This is the same as the relation of the soul and Brahman as seen on page 36, 37. Anything else in history is '*injury*', since it is a part of delusion leading away from Brahman. Time (BG 9.7) and space (BG 7.4) are the manifests of Prakriti and the soul is beyond these as per BG 13.13, 2.20. Hence space and time are only inferior fragmentary manifestations of Brahman from which soul is untouched. Hence '*but the soul is light: where it is, is day; where it was, is night*'.

"*He cannot be happy and strong until he too lives with nature in the present above time*". Living in the present has been covered earlier. Ultimately with the self realization of the soul one transcends time since as per BG 2.20 soul is '*above time*'. BG 9.7 shows Brahman is beyond time. '*Nature*' in context of the above we see to be the relation of soul with Brahman as per the Bhagavad Gita. This is also as per BG 8.5. "And whoever, at the end of his life, quits his body remembering Me alone at once attains My nature. Of this there is no doubt". This shows unity of soul with Brahman (called self realization) and this is '*living with true nature*'. Hence "*He cannot be happy and strong until he too lives with nature in the present above time*". This is also because of the following. As per BG 5.21, 6.20-23, 18.37 one reaches true happiness through self realization. This is as per R.W. Emerson's observation '*happy and strong*'. Self realization is a concept of R.W. Emerson as seen in Pg 36. As per BG 14.20, true happiness is obtained by transcending the modes of nature, hence going beyond time. As per BG 14.27 true and ultimate happiness can only be obtained through relation with Brahman which is beyond time. For these philosophical reasons time travel cannot be allowed on a general and material basis as it will interfere with the authority of the present vis a vis past and future. We see also in the real world such time travel is not possible. If it were possible for any point of time in past or future, we would have had researchers, traders and other categories of persons coming into the present for achieving their aims. Hence we see the philosophy of Emerson which is as per the Bhagavad Gita is ratified and verified by the prohibition of Time travel.

R.W. Emerson's concept of '*truth*':

On page 37 R.W. Emerson's '*truth*' is revealed as Dharm and the Yogas of the Bhagavad Gita. '*Truth*' is further revealed as Brahman realization. Emerson states, "*If we live truly, we shall see truly*". From this essay we see that to '*live truly*' as per Emerson is to follow Dharm and its concepts of '*own nature*', '*own work*' and '*genius*'. This leads to Brahman. Truth is explained in the Bhagavad Gita 10.4 and 16.1-2 as a part of Dharm. It leads to Brahman. A life of Dharmic selfless work leads to cleansing of the mind. And thereby we can see Brahman. Hence '*see truly*'. R.W. Emerson states in 'Over Soul' "*The simplest person who in his integrity worships God, becomes God*".²⁷ This is Advait concept of Sri Adi Shankaracharya and the Bhagavad Gita. It is stated in BG 12.3, .4, 13.15, .16, 14.27, 15.18. We see thus Emerson's concept of '*integrity*' is to follow this Advait philosophy.

In the Harvard commemoration speech in 1865 after the Civil War Emerson stated "*The war gave back integrity to this erring immoral Nation*".²⁸ '*Integrity*' thus is correct view on abolition, this is as per Swadharm and Jati Dharm. It is achieved through War. This is Kshatriya Dharm. In another lecture he stated the "*true*" reason for his resignation from the Ministry in 1832 was that (similar to the above opinion of his) he wanted to preserve the state of "*Integrity*" in his inner

Heart.²⁹ *'Integrity'* thus is acting as per correct state of thinking revealed through this essay as Dharm and the Yogas of the Bhagavad Gita. This is as per the philosophy of Sri Adi Shankaracharya which links Truth to Brahman and hence a state of realization. This is as per his often repeated statement, 'Brahman Satya, Jagat Mithya' which means, Brahman is truth. The world is temporary, fleeting. Since Brahman is to be achieved through Dharm and the Yogas, they are *'truth'*. Brahman realization is hence called *'truth'* as per BG 4.34 and seen on Page 37. As per BG 13.11, philosophical pursuit of truth, perception of truth as knowledge, is knowledge which will lead us to Brahman, so truth is knowledge of following Dharm and the Yogas. Hence truth is method of living. BG 17.23 describes Brahman as truth (Sat). BG 17.26-27 describe truth as Dharm. BG 17.15 states "*Penance in speech consists of speaking words that are truthful*". This differentiates speaking truth from other aspects of truth as Dharm and the Yogas. R.W. Emerson too makes the differentiation as seen here and on Page 41. Here he covers other aspects of truth which are as per Dharm and the Yogas of the Bhagavad Gita. On Page 41 he covers speaking the truth.

As per BG 8.7 "Therefore, Arjun, you should always think of Me (Brahman) in the form of Krishna and at the same time carry out your prescribed duty of fighting. With your activities dedicated to Me and your mind and intelligence fixed on Me, you will attain Me without doubt". This brings out Karm Yog and Bhakti Yog. It shows that *'living truly'* (as per Dharm which includes the Yogas) will enable us to *'see truly'* (realization of Brahman).

Practice of *'truth'* is both an individual and Nation's concept. Krishna encouraged Arjun to fight the Mahabharat war which had ultimate good effects like establishment of Dharm in the Nation. Dharm thus is practice of Truth through correct action (Karm) in one's life. This is the same as R.W. Emerson's *'live truly'*. So for R.W. Emerson truth is not only an objective fact, it is a method of living. It as per R.W. Emerson means correct action for the sake of truth as a method of living. This is as per the Bhagavad Gita concept of Swadharm, Dharm and the Yogas. *'we shall see truly'*, hence means attaining Brahman realization.

R.W. Emerson's concept of *'truth'* is as per that of Sri Rama Krishna who illumined on this Vedic Bhagavad Gita concept. "It is said that truthfulness alone constitutes the spiritual discipline of Kaliyuga. If a man clings tenaciously to truth he ultimately realizes God. Without this regard for truth, one gradually loses everything...After my vision of the Divine Mother, I prayed to Her, taking a flower in my hands: 'Mother, here is Thy knowledge and here is Thy ignorance. Take them both, and give me only pure love (Bhakti Yog)... I gave up everything (except Bhakti Yog) at her feet. (Divine Mother Goddess Kali) but could not bring myself to give up truth".³⁰ Everything (except truth) as per Sri Rama Krishna does not include Bhakti Yog (since he was asking for it from the Divine Mother at the time of giving up 'everything') and renunciation of desire and lust (since he did not give up renunciation). Hence Renunciation and Bhakti Yog are part of truth as per Sri Rama Krishna. Truth hence also includes Sri Ramakrishna's 'life of truth' which is renouncing desire and lust, following Bhakti Yoga hence to live according to Dharm and the Yogas, along with speaking the truth. Bhakti Yog is a part of truth as per the above shlokas of the Bhagavad gita. R.W. Emerson further states in his essay 'Manners' "*No rentroll nor army list can dignify skulking and dissimulation; and the first point of courtesy must always be truth, as really all the forms of good-breeding point that way*".³¹ This brings out *'truth'* as correct action according to Dharm, this here is shown as shunning *'skulking and dissimulation'*. This is as per Kshatriya Dharm.

R.W. Emerson's opinion of dignity in the Army is the same as Krishna's view as expressed in Chapter 2 of the Bhagavad Gita as Kshatriya Dharm. As per BG 2.31-33, herein lay no scope for Arjun to sulk owing to grief and attachment, thus abandoning the War. R.W. Emerson's description of truth here is the same as the Bhagavad Gita. Practice of *'truth'* is the culmination of

Good manners and breeding. R.W. Emerson thus brings out their importance as per the Kshatriya Dharm and Karm Yog concept of the Bhagavad Gita in following 'truth'. In 'Over Soul' we see truth to be path to Brahman. This is as per BG 4.34, 13.11. In 'Experience' Pg 230, we see Emerson considers 'life of Truth' to follow 'Own Work'. This is a part of Swadharm. In Pg 216 we see the 'seeker of absolute Truth' actually seeks Brahman. This is as per BG 13.11. The Bhagavad Gita considers truth as a means to reach Brahman. This is also as per the view of the Vedic Saint Sri Ramakrishna as quoted above. Hence practice of truth is Vedic Dharm and this is the same as 'Good manners' and 'good breeding' of R.W. Emerson. R.W. Emerson's morality is thus as per the morality of Vedic Dharm.

In "Compensation" Pg 51 R.W. Emerson states "to those bright intuitions in which this truth is sometimes revealed to us", Thus 'this truth' is revealed through 'intuition'; hence it is a transcendental idea. It is not just a fact. R.W. Emerson there refers to Bhakti Yog and Karm Yog as 'this truth'. Hence 'this truth' is the yogas of the Bhagavad Gita. We have seen in Pg 36 that both as per the Bhagavad Gita and Emerson 'intuition' and 'inspiration' give wisdom of Brahman and Dharm. This is reiterated here by Emerson and Emerson thus considers 'truth' as path to Brahman. We see in the subhead of 'the transcendentalist' that Dharm contains transcendental concepts. I have explained above the various meanings in which Emerson describes 'truth'. I have shown this is as per the Bhagavad Gita and Vedic concepts and also the thinking of Vedic Saints such as Sri Rama Krishna.

Pg 39: R.W. Emerson states, "And now at last the highest truth on this subject remains unsaid; probably cannot be said; for all that we say is the far-off remembering of the intuition...The soul raised over passion beholds identity and eternal causation, perceives the self existence of Truth and Right, and calms itself with knowing that all things go well". The soul 'raised over passion' realizes its identity with the supreme and eternal as per the Bhagavad Gita 6.27-28. According to Dvaita Philosophy the Soul is eternally subordinate to Brahman and is miniscule (anu) compared to it. This is as per BG 13.13 and 13.28. This is the same as the view of R.W. Emerson here. We see above that truth is an aspect of Brahman. Swami Vivekanand states, "So in relative perception truth always appears various. But absolute truth is only one".³² Self existence of truth is brought out by BG 7.7, 10.4, 10.32, 4.34, 13.11. BG 4.34 also considers absolute truth to be Brahman realization. We see in Pg 36, 37 that R.W. Emerson's relation of truth with his concept of "Aboriginal Self" is the same as the Bhagavad Gita relation of truth with Brahman. Hence, being led to Brahman, "All things go well".

Emerson states that "Hindu theology (states)...Supreme good is to be attained ...by the perception of the real and unreal...and thus arriving at the contemplation of the one Eternal life".³³ Hindu Theology includes Dharm and Brahman. So Dharm leads to 'Supreme Good' and 'Eternal Life' as per R.W. Emerson. Hence it is required to be followed by all. So also 'all things go well'. All other attitudes lead away from the one 'Eternal Life'. R.W. Emerson states "Truth is the principle and the moral of Hindu Theology-as against Maya".³⁴ R.W. Emerson here understands Dharm as truth and also Brahman as truth. Moreover the concept of Maya is explained in 'illusion', it means manifested existence. Truth leads out of Maya and so cannot be discarded. This is as per the view of the Great Hindu Saint Sri Rama Krishna expressed above. Since Brahman is 'highest truth' and Brahman is beyond Maya which includes material manifestations, life and mind, as per the Bhagavad Gita Chapter13, progressive removal of Maya brings us closer to Brahman. Nirgun Brahman is beyond speech and the ability to speak. being attribute less as per BG 12.3-5, 14.27 hence 'the highest truth on this subject remains unsaid; probably cannot be said; for all that we say is the far-off remembering of the intuition'.

As per the Bhagavad Gita Chapter 14, 'the soul raised over passion' becomes Sattvic and to become Sattvic is essential to develop true knowledge. This is as per BG 14.6 and 14.17. This true knowledge is the knowledge of Brahman mentioned in BG 14.27. As per BG 12.3-4, 9.7, 14.27,

13.16, 13.32, 15.15 the only true 'identity' is Brahman. BG 9.7, 10.39, 15.7, 15.17-18 reveal Brahman to be 'eternal causation'. Hence such a soul beholds 'identity and eternal causation'. From above we see that truth is part of Brahman and Brahman is 'self existent'. The above quoted Bhagavad Gita's shlokas bring out the self existence of Brahman. As per Chapter 14 of the Bhagavad Gita Sattva, virtue which include 'right', have to be practiced and vice, ignorance and passion have to be discarded in order to develop real knowledge which leads us to Brahman. Hence 'right' is self existent. Due to the above, which brings out the concept of Dharm, Sattva and Brahman, "The soul raised over passion beholds identity and eternal causation, perceives the self existence of Truth and Right, and calms itself with knowing that all things go well", since thus it (the conditioned soul) is on the path to Brahman .

R.W. Emerson states, "This one fact the world hates; that the soul becomes; for that forever degrades the past, turns all riches to poverty, all reputation to a shame confounds the saint with the rogue, shoves Jesus and Judas equally aside. 'the soul becomes' this is as described above. Those who hate this 'confound the saint with the rogue'. This is as per BG 16.7, 16.8, 14.17. They are deluded; hence they are unable to perceive the truth or 'live truly'.

R.W. Emerson states, "Speak rather of that which relies because it works and is". This is explained in the Bhagavad Gita 3.22, 3.24. This brings out the self reliance, 'that which relies' and self existence; 'and is' of Brahman. We have seen above that both Emerson and the Bhagavad Gita consider working to be according to the Dharm and Yogas, which leads to Brahman hence 'because it works'.

PG 40: R.W. Emerson states, "Self existence is the attribute of the supreme Cause, This is explained in the Bhagavad Gita 8.20, 8.9, 8.22, 10.20 and it constitutes the measure of good by the degree in which it enters into all lower forms. All things real are so by so much virtue as they contain". It is explained in the chapter 14 of the Bhagavad Gita that the measure of goodness (Sattva) being purer than others is illuminating and gives happiness and knowledge as per the Bhagavad Gita 14.6, 14.17. Thus they are closest to Brahman. Hence things 'real are so by so much virtue as they contain'. Brahman as supreme cause is discerned from the Bhagavad Gita 9.7, 13.16-17, 15.17. God is closer to the virtuous than those with vice as explained in Chapter 14 of the Bhagavad Gita.

R.W. Emerson states, 'Power is, in Nature, the essential measure of right'. We have seen above that R.W. Emerson's concept of right is Sattva and Dharm concepts of the Bhagavad Gita. Hence we realize that R.W. Emerson's concept of 'power' is 'the essential measure of' Sattva and Dharm.

R.W. Emerson states, "Nature suffers nothing to remain in her kingdoms which cannot help itself. The genesis and maturation of a planet, its poise and orbit, the bended tree recovering itself from the strong wind, the vital resources of every animal and vegetable, are demonstrations of the self-sufficing and therefore self-relying soul". The 'self sufficing and self relying' aspect of soul are covered in the Bhagavad Gita 2.20, .23-.25, 13.32-34. R.W. Emerson sees the demonstration of this in the examples he has given above. To counter the incorrect and wrong thinking which fails on Vedic wisdom, of doubting or disbelieving these qualities of the soul, Krishna calls Arjun "Mahabayo" in BG 2.26. "Mahabayo" means mighty armed and a proficient Kshatriya (warrior). This is a part of Karm Yog Jati Dharm and Swadharm which emanates from the qualities of the soul. Being proficient in his work means also he could withstand adverse circumstances such as banishment, life in forest, war due to the 'vital resources' he thus possesses. This includes correct Vedic thinking. This is as per the examples of R.W. Emerson above. This includes a scientific outlook which is required for proficiency.

Swami Vivekanand is an ideal example of the concept of scientific outlook inherent in Swadharm and Karm Yog. In 1895 Swami Vivekanand agreed with Nichola Telsa on the oneness

and interchangeability of energy and matter. Swami Vivekanand asked Telsa to prove this through science, which he could not. However this was done in 1905 by Einstein, forever changing our perception of the Universe. '*vital resources*' also includes practicality required for survival. Hence by following Swadharm, Jati Dharm, Karm Yog and Dharm, Arjun can '*help himself*'. These concepts take us to Brahman. The connection between material nature, life and soul is the same as BG Chapter 13, 7.4-7 Hence as per both R.W. Emerson and the Bhagavad Gita, '*Nature suffers nothing to remain in her kingdoms which cannot help itself*' and this is a '*demonstration of the self-sufficing and therefore self-relying soul*'. This is an often reiterated concept of Emerson and so it is important that we understand it correctly and completely here.

R.W. Emerson states, '*For God is here within*' - '*God within*' is an integral concept of Emerson's '*Self Reliance*'. It is explained in the Bhagavad Gita 2.30, 5.24, 10.20, 13.23, 13.25, 13.28-29, 18.61. As per the Bhagavad Gita 13.24 one who understands (among others) this concept of '*God within*' attains liberation (Brahman) and is freed from taking rebirth. I conclude therefore that R.W. Emerson was such a liberated soul and a knower of Brahman. Swami Vivekanand states "Krishna spoke the Gita, establishing himself in the Atma (Soul)...this knowledge of the Atma is the highest aim of the BG...be established in the Atma...speak of this Atma to all even to the lowest...always repeat the great mantras...Tat Twam Asi (thou art that), Soham Asmi(I am that), Sarvaakhilam Brahman (all this is verily Brahman)...when Arjun saw the universal form of the Lord, and became established in the Atma, with all bondages of Karm burnt by the fire of knowledge, he fought the Battle"³⁵ This shows R.W. Emerson's concept of '*God within*' as 'be established in the Atma'.

It is widely believed that the great Vedic sentence 'Tat Twam Asi' is also brought out by the Bhagavad Gita 4.9. "One who knows the divine nature of my form and action does not, upon leaving the body, take birth again in the material world, but he does attain to me." Swami Vivekanand states "Those passages of the Gita where he (Krishna) speaks with the word "I" invariably indicate Atman. "Take refuge in me alone" means "Be established in the Atman". This knowledge of the Atman is the highest aim of the Gita".³⁶ This brings out the importance and explanation of '*God within*' in the Bhagavad Gita. R.W. Emerson has stated his concept of '*God within*' completely and exhaustively in Pg No. 26, 27,29,37,42. This also explains R.W. Emerson's '*Over Soul*' concept which I have explained as Brahman in '*Over Soul*'. BG 14.27 describes Impersonal Brahman. BG 12.3-4 describes the relating of Soul to impersonal Brahman which is as per the Vedic sentences and Shlokas stated by Swami Vivekanand above. Tat Twam Asi and other Mahavakyas bring out the relation of Soul with Brahman and are as per Emerson's relation of '*Soul and Over soul*'.

Tat Twam Asi shows above that the relation of the soul with Brahman is pure, direct, without help. This is as per R.W. Emerson's thought on Pg 37. This shows Brahman is R.W. Emerson's '*divine spirit*' and '*Over Soul*'. This is because there is ultimately no difference between Soul and Brahman. This is as per Advait philosophy and Impersonal Brahman concept stated in BG 4.9, 12.3, .4, 14.27. This is also because the Soul is Anu (miniscule) of which the superior aspect is Brahman. This is as per Vishist Dvait and Dvait philosophy and Personal Brahman concept stated in BG 12.2, 13.13, 14.26. We see here R.W. Emerson believed in these three philosophies of the Bhagavad Gita and Vedic thought.

R.W. Emerson states, '*We must go alone*'. This is as seen from the context, because we have to be guided by '*God within*' through '*own nature*' as opposed to being a mob. R.W. Emerson states, "*All men have my blood and I have all men's*". This is stated in the Bhagavad Gita 18.20. It brings out universal brotherhood. Emerson states, '*Not for that I will adopt their petulance or folly*'. This shows the aim of universal brotherhood is not to imbibe the weaknesses and defects of others. Instead as shown above, '*We must go alone*', through following '*God within*'. R.W. Emerson reiterates this '*but your isolation must not be mechanical, but spiritual, that is, must be elevation*'.

Hence as per R.W. Emerson 'elevation' can be achieved by following 'God within'. This is as per the Bhagavad Gita as I have shown above.

Pg: 41: R.W. Emerson states, "*What we love that we have, but by desire we bereave ourselves of the love. If we cannot at once rise to the sanctities of obedience and faith, let us at least resist our temptations*"; "*This is to be done in our smooth times by speaking the truth*", the Bhagavad Gita 2.70 states, "A person who is not disturbed by the incessant flow of desires-that enter like rivers into the ocean, which is ever being filled but is always still – can alone achieve peace, not the man who strives to satisfy such desires". As per BG 14.7, 14.16., 'desire manifests from Rajas. Its result is misery in the end'. Hence it does not lead to Brahman and has to be discarded in favour of Sattva. As per BG 14.6, 'Sattva is illuminating and gives true knowledge'. This is knowledge of Brahman, Dharm, own nature, God within and various Yogas including Karm Yog and Bhakti Yog. As per BG 2.44 "Those overcome by temptations and desire are not fit to practice the various Yogas and Dharm". Thus both Emerson and the Bhagavad Gita state that we must '*resist our temptations*' and discard '*desire*'. '*Obedience and faith*' are ingrained in the concept of duty and Bhakti seen above. As per BG 17.15 "*speaking the truth*" leads us to Brahman. From here we also realize that R.W. Emerson differentiates between '*live truly*' and '*speaking the truth*'. Both these are concepts of the Bhagavad Gita as seen above.

R.W. Emerson states, "*Hence forward I am the truth's.*" From Pg. 38, 39 we see R.W. Emerson considers truth to be following Dharm and also to be Brahman realization. This is also clear from his quotation below which brings out the importance of '*Own Nature*' which is required to follow Dharm. Hence '*I am the truth's*' thus means 'I am Brahman's'. This is the relating of the soul with Brahman as I have shown above on Pg 40. This is the same as the observations of Swami Vivekanand "Dharm is merger of soul with Brahman" and also realizing that "the Universe consists of only Brahman, all being its manifestations"² These stages are reached through various Yogas hence I conclude R.W. Emerson was a Yogi. As R.W. Emerson is a knower of Brahman, so he is a Brahmin. Since R.W. Emerson has correct knowledge and wisdom of Dharm and Brahman, as per BG 18.42 he is a Brahmin.

We see on Pg.36, 39 R.W. Emerson understands Nirgun Brahman. As per BG 12.3-4 'the worshipper of Nirgun Brahman reaches Brahman'. We see on Pg 37 that R.W. Emerson believed in and appreciated Bhakti Yog. As per BG Chapter 12, Bhakti Yog is directed only to Sagun Brahman or god with form or personal God. As per BG 12.2 "one following Bhakti Yog reaches Brahman." Hence too from the above, R.W. Emerson has reached and realized both Nirgun and Sagun Brahman. R.W. Emerson had Brahman realization. Hence too he is a Brahmin. R.W. Emerson states, "*Be it known unto you that henceforward I obey no law less than the eternal law. I will have no covenants but proximities. I shall endeavour to nourish my parents, to support my family, to be the chaste husband of one wife,—but these relations I must fill after a new and unprecedented way*".

By now his thought has no place for Homosexuality as a social relation. This is also barred by Emerson's statement of '*chaste husband*'. All thoughts on Homosexuality are born out of partial or incorrect thought or immaturity or association or otherwise have to be discarded as ignorance and delusion on reaching complete correct thought of Vedic Concepts. Homosexuals should not be criminalized and instead considered as other ignorant and deluded categories such as greed or lust. This is because the emphasis of both R.W. Emerson and the Bhagavad Gita is on self improvement as discerned in the essay and in BG 2.1-3 and 6.5. As per BG 7.11, sex has to be practiced as per Dharmic principles. This prohibits sex other than between man and woman as seen in Vedic Literature. Own tendencies have to be corrected as per this. Thus R.W. Emerson has eradicated his thoughts on homosexuality that existed during his early years as incompatible with his concepts developed on reaching complete (Vedic) thought and '*moments of reason*'.

In his early years at Harvard, he was attracted to a young fresh man named Martin Gay about whom he wrote poetry with sexual over tones.³⁷ In Vedic culture a great soul sometimes assumes ignorant or deluded positions which he then overcomes, thus setting an example for the whole world. King Vikramaditya doubted the qualities of Sri Shani and later corrected his opinion as per the Puranas. In BG Chapter 2 we find Arjun overcome by grief, attachment, delusion and Tamas out of which he emerges into Dharmic and Sattvic thought following the Vedic teachings of Sri Krishna. Swami Vivekananda initially considered idolatry wrong but later learnt and realized that it is correct.³⁸

R. W. Emerson's thought process and progress is as per the above '*great souls*' hence Vedic. R.W. Emerson thus imparts to the entire correct and corrected attitude on homosexuality that I have brought out above. It is an interesting coincidence or chance that 'Gay' stands for homosexuality and was also the name of the young man in the above episode. In the life of a '*great soul*' such as R.W. Emerson coincidences inevitably cause a researcher like me to pay more attention to the subject thus helping in reaching my conclusion. On observing R.W. Emerson on coincidence and chance, I find in '*Illusions*', pg. 5 R.W. Emerson states "*There is no chance, and no anarchy, in the Universe*". This is because cause and effect (Law of Karm) is all pervading, omnipotent and omniscient as per BG 13.22. This is covered further on Pg. 50. In view of this the effect of the name 'Martin Gay' will be to point the reader to the above method of behavior of '*great souls*', to set an example to the whole world. This concept only reinforces my above explanation of R.W. Emerson rejecting homosexuality in conformity with Dharmic thought.

As seen above, R.W. Emerson's '*non conformity*' means Vedic Duties have to be performed through a relation with '*Truth*' and with one's basic individuality (Own Nature). The duties mentioned are Dharmic, Vedic, as relevant and applicable personally to R.W. Emerson. R.W. Emerson's individuality '*What I am*' thus excludes that which BG classifies as delusion (Avidya Maya), such as Bigotry (Pg 29 and 41) '*Obedience*' and '*faith*' have been explained earlier as concepts of the Bhagavad Gita. As per BG 16.24 Duty is that sanctioned by Shastra (Vedic Scriptures). These are Vedas and the Bhagavad Gita. We see here and in other essays that R.W. Emerson's concept of duty is Vedic. BG 17.26 also mentions '*Prescribed duties*' referring to Vedic duties. As per BG 17.23-.28, all work, thought and actions, prescribed duties (such as marriage, education) have to be performed keeping in mind the moral aim and aim of all being Brahman which is also described here as Om Tat Sat.

This means God or Brahman is absolute truth and all above actions and thought must be performed keeping in mind that we belong to truth or Brahman, this is Emerson's "*I am truths's*". This is accordingly reached by following Dharmic duties as stated by both Emerson and the Bhagavad Gita above. The '*unprecedented way*' is by following '*Own Nature*'. Hence R.W. Emerson's '*eternal law*' is Dharm concept of the BG as this includes '*own nature*'. Seen above in context of '*truth*' we realize '*eternal law*' is the law of Brahman. This is Dharm and the Yogas. I have shown in '*Over Soul*' Pg. 139 that R.W. Emerson considers '*eternal ONE*' to be Brahman. Further in '*Over Soul*' Pg 142 I have shown that R.W. Emerson's concept of '*moral beatitude*' is Dharmic. Hence '*eternal law*' requires all to follow Vedic Morals.

R.W. Emerson states, "*If you can love me for what I am, we shall be the happier*". This brings out the importance of '*Own nature*'.

R.W. Emerson's "*Own Nature*" or "*What I am*" (Pg 41) is achieved by "*resisting our temptations*" pg 41 by '*speaking the truth*' Pg 41, by belonging to truth, '*I am truth's*' (pg 41) by considering '*Supreme cause*' or Brahman, through one's '*virtues*'; (Pg 40), by '*raising ones soul over passion*' (Pg 39) and thus '*perceiving self existence of truth and right*' (Sattva), and practices self reliance, does his '*own work*' (Swadharm). It springs from the relation of the soul to the Over Soul (Pg 36, 40) '*we lie in the lap of immense intelligence which makes us receivers of its truth and*

organs of its activity'. This is the same as the relation of Soul to Brahman and so is Dharmic. I have shown these are concepts present in the Bhagavad Gita and a part of Sanantan Vedic Dharm. It also perceives *'identity and eternal causation'*, Pg 39 this is explained as the relation of Soul with Brahman or R.W. Emerson's *'Over Soul'*, discerning *'justice'* and *'truth'* (Pg 37).

We see that R.W. Emerson's morality is the same as per Dharm. We see R.W. Emerson's *'eternal law'* (pg 41) is Dharm leading to unity of soul with Brahman.

R.W. Emerson states, *"I will not hurt you and myself by hypocritical attentions... Besides, all persons have their moments of reason, when they look out into the region of absolute truth; then will they justify me and do the same thing"*. We have covered hypocrisy and bigotry as failing on the standard of Vedic Dharm. All persons *'on looking'* *'into the region of absolute truth'* on having their *'moments of reason'*, will realize R.W. Emerson's thought was correct and justified and follow him by *'doing the same thing'* which we have seen as reaching and following Sanatan Vedic Dharm and the Bhagavad Gita concepts. All persons have to rise and develop to *'their moments of reason'*. On reaching true knowledge all have to *'do the same thing'*, that is follow Dharm as stated in the Vedas and the Bhagavad Gita. This is brought out above. There is no scope for any different view at this stage. This is the observation of both R.W. Emerson and the Bhagavad Gita. Thus R.W. Emerson has shown that Vedic path requires universal compliance by all. This is as per the view of the Bhagavad gita where all are required to follow Dharm. In view of this R.W. Emerson's influence is the greatest event by far in American culture and philosophy. It is also permanent unchangeable and unsurpassable since so is Vedic thought. It is for all time.

Pg.42: R.W. Emerson states, *"But the law of consciousness abides. There are two confessionals, in one or the other of which we must be shriven. You may fulfil your round of duties by clearing yourself in the direct, or in the reflex way. Consider whether you have satisfied your relations to father, mother, cousin, neighbor, town, cat, and dog; whether any of these can upbraid you. But I may also neglect this reflex standard and absolve me to myself. I have my own stern claims and perfect circle"*. R.W. Emerson here refers to his concept of *'Circles'* and so connects with his essay *'Circles'*. This is another example of *'Connectedness'*. Lower duties are discarded for higher *'perfect circle'* and *'stern claims'*. Similarly Arjun discarded lower duties to his relatives and associates for following Svadharm. Hence Svadharm is *'stern claims and perfect circle'*. *'the law of consciousness'* which enables this is hence Dharm. Arjun and one following Svadharm (which includes own nature) *'may also neglect this reflex standard and absolve me to myself'*. As per BG 18.59 this is the direction of God and Brahman. As per BG 3.33, 18.60 others, though not realizing this are still forced to follow *'own nature'*. R.W. Emerson undoubtedly was a *'great soul'* who understood and appreciated this doctrine of the Bhagavad Gita.

R.W. Emerson states, *"And truly it demands something godlike in him who has cast off the common motives of humanity and has ventured to trust himself for a taskmaster."* This is as per BG 2.3. This brings out the concept of *'God within'* as seen in *'something godlike in him'*. *'to trust himself for a taskmaster'* is a part of Svadharm as explained earlier, as per BG 2.3, 6.5. *'common motives of humanity'* thus are lower duties which have to be discarded to follow higher duties. Common *'motives'* also include sense gratification, nescience and ignorance which engross the vast majority of people as per BG 7.3 hence those who do not wish to or who do not work to realize Brahman. R.W. Emerson too holds the same view. I have explained this in *'Fate'* Pg 3.

R.W. Emerson states, *"High be his heart, faithful his will, clear his sight, that he may in good earnest be doctrine, society, law, to himself, (this can only be achieved by following 'own nature') that a simple purpose may be to him as strong as iron necessity is to others!"*. Thus by following *'own nature'* one reaches a stage where *'High be his heart, faithful his will, clear his sight'*, this is as per BG 18.60-.62.

Rejection of *'reflex standard'* is not rejection of all standard (as per Emerson) instead it is replaced by *'direct standard'*. "*Absolve me to myself*" means holding one responsible to oneself through *'own nature'*. R.W. Emerson follows *'own stern claims and perfect circle'*. This is as per to *'own work'* (Pg 31) by venturing to *'trust himself for a taskmaster'*. We see this contained in the BG 2.3 and 6.5. As per Swami Vivekanand, this indicates *'Thou art Atma imperishable, beyond all evil'*. *'You should draw his (a man's) attention to the omnipotent power that is in him'*. *'Arise, awake, and manifest the divinity within!'* ³⁹ BG 6.5 states *'Raise yourself by yourself; don't let yourself down, for you alone are your friend, you alone are your enemy'*. This is also *'self trust'* seen on Pg 36 and 43. This is part of Swadharm (Own Dharm). Such a man may dedicate himself to *'a simple purpose'* now seen as *'own work'*. Thus he follows the *'Law of consciousness'*. We now see this to be Dharm and Karm Yog. And this demands *'something God like in him'*. This is the concept of *'God within'*. This is as per the Bhagavad Gita 2. 3, and 6.5 and as seen on Page 40.

Pg: 43 : R.W. Emerson states, "*with the exercise of self-trust, new powers shall appear'*. The *'self trust'* here is in relation with *'God within'*. We have seen *'God within'* to be Atma or soul and an aspect of Brahman. *'Self trust'* is seen on Pg 36 as realization of Brahman (self) and relation of soul with Brahman. Hence *'exercise of self-trust'* is efforts towards self realization or Brahman realization. *'new powers shall appear'* since Brahman is the source of all power.

R.W. Emerson states, "*It is easy to see that a greater self-reliance must work a revolution in all the offices and relations of men*". We have seen *'Self Reliance'* consists of *'God within'* and *'self trust'* and other concepts which are the Bhagavad Gita concepts also. It consists also of Swadharm and Dharm. We see that the Bhagavad Gita agrees with Emerson that this *'must work a revolution in all the offices and relations of men'*. Arjun was initially attached with his relatives and felt pity. Sri Krishna calls Arjun in this state a coward and deluded due to Tamas. After imbibing the teachings of the Bhagavad Gita from Sri Krishna, Arjun follows Swadharm and Dharm. He gives up his attachment and pity. He assumes Sattvic mode of thinking. This is being equally calm in all circumstances, victory, or defeat, or death, prosperity and lack thereof. Thus Arjun is raised from the level of a deluded soul. Arjun ultimately assumes *'own nature'* as per BG 11.51, 18.59, .60. As seen above *'Self Reliance'* includes proficiency, requirement of work and hence a scientific outlook.

R.W. Emerson states, "*But prayer as a means to effect a private end is meanness and theft. It supposes dualism and not unity in nature and consciousness.* This is as per BG 6.20-6.23, in this state of Samadhi there is no *'prayer as a means to effect private end'*. This also brings out *'unity in nature and consciousness'* which is realized in Samadhi. This is also as per BG 3.18, 3.19. This is as per Karm Yog and Swadharm. Emerson states, *'As soon as the man is at one with God he will not beg'*. Being *'one with God'* is unity with Brahman. This is a state achievable in this world as per R.W. Emerson's statement here and also as per the BG shlokas stated below. Unity with Brahman is explained in BG 4.9, 12. 2-4, 3.13, .25, .29, 14.26, .27. This is as per the Advait, Vishistadvait and davit philosophies of Vedic thought. At this stage there is no desire or *'private ends'*, so no chance of *'begging'* for *'private ends'*. The *'dualism'* referred to here by Emerson is not Dvait concept of Vedic thought. It is in connection with *'private end'*. It does not see *'unity in nature and consciousness'*. Hence it does not see Karm, Bhakti or Gyan Yog but actually sees the desires of the deluded soul. Hence use of the words *'meanness and theft'*.

Pg 44 :R.W. Emerson states, "*Another sort of false prayers are our regrets. Discontent is the want of self-reliance*".

"Welcome evermore to gods and men is the self-helping man". Swami Vivekanand explains in relation to BG 2.3, "Coming under the influence of Jainas, the Buddhas, and others we have joined the lines of those Tamasic people. During these last 1000 years, the whole country is filling the air with the name of the Lord and is sending his prayers to him; and the Lord is never lending

his ears to them. And why should he? When even man never hears the cries of the fool, do you think God will? Now the only way is to listen to the words of the Lord in the Gita, “Yield not to unmanliness, O Partha!, therefore do thou rise and acquire fame.”⁴⁰ Here Swami Vivekanand and BG explain Krishna asking Arjun to become a ‘self helping’ man. This is as per the views of R.W. Emerson above. As per Swami Vivekanand, the down fall of India occurred precisely due to neglecting this Bhagavad Gita teaching and thus becoming Tamasic, as seen above. Hence the ‘discontent’ was due to ‘want of self-reliance’. In fact inculcating ‘Self Reliance’ concept of the Bhagavad Gita among Indians is an achievement of the ‘Great Soul’ Swami Vivekanand. As per the great Indian freedom fighter Subhash Chandra Bose, “Our countrymen have gained unprecedented self respect, self reliance...from his (Swami Vivekanand) teachings”⁴¹ This is as per the views of Emerson above.

Pg 46: R.W. Emerson states, “*The soul created the arts wherever they have flourished*”. This is another outcome of the relation of Soul with Over soul as everything arises from ‘God within’.

“*Insist on yourself: never imitate*”. This is covered by BG 2.3 and is a part of ‘own nature’ and Karm Yog as explained earlier.

“*Every great man is unique*”. These bring out the concept of ‘own nature’ and ‘genius’ included in Swadharm.

Imitation is misleading and opposed to self reliance. Arjun did not imitate. Krishna, but instead tried to discern his ‘own work’ or Swadharm. These views of Emerson are as per the Bhagavad Gita.

Pg:49: R.W. Emerson states, “*And so the reliance on Property, including the reliance on governments which protect it, is the want of self-reliance*”. This is as per BG 2.71 “...who has given up all sense of proprietorship...he alone can achieve peace”.

R.W. Emerson states, “*He who knows that power is inborn, that he is weak because he has looked for good out of him and elsewhere, and so perceiving, throws himself unhesitatingly on his thought, instantly rights himself*”. This is the core description of Emerson’s ‘self-reliant individual’ who knows ‘*God within*’ stands in the erect position, commands his limb, and works miracles; just as a man who stands on his feet is stronger than a man who stands on his head.” The views of Swami Vivekanand on BG 2.3 is the same “As I always preach that you should not decry a man by calling him a sinner, but you should draw his attention to the omnipotent power that is in him, in the same way does the Bhagwan speak to Arjun “It doeth not befit thee”. “Thou art Atmah, imperishable, beyond all evil. Having forgotten thy real nature, thou hast, by thinking thyself a sinner, ...thou hast made thyself so... Know that any work which brings out the latent power in thee is punya (Virtue) that which makes thy body and mind weak is, verily, sin ...There is no sin in thee, there is no misery in thee; thou art the reservoir of omnipotent power. Arise, awake, and manifest the divinity within!”⁴² “In these (BG2.3) and similar passages in the Gita the Lord is showing the way to Dharma”⁴³ These thoughts of Swami Vivekanand are derived from the Bhagavad Gita 2.1-2.3 and are as per the thoughts expressed by Emerson, This is also the way of Dharm as shown by Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita. Since the soul is an aspect of Brahman and is in fact non different from it, which is the same as Emerson’s ‘Over Soul’, hence a man knows that power is ‘inborn’ from ‘God within’. Hence I conclude here R.W. Emerson is stating the concept of ‘*God within*’ which is a part of Dharm and man must compulsorily follow it.

Pg 50: R.W. Emerson states, “*But do thou leave as unlawful these winnings, and deal with Cause and Effect, the chancellors of God*”. This is as per the Bhagavad Gita 7.19, 13.5, .13 Cause and effect are Chancellors of God since only God (Brahman) is beyond cause and effect; everything

else is controlled or governed by Cause and Effect. As per BG 13.5 the Rishis have in Vedic writings and especially in Vedanta completely covered cause and effect. The Law of Karm is explained in BG 13.22. It states that the living entity meets with good or evil (effect) according to his 'Ways of Life' which includes his thought and action (cause). Hence all are covered by karm (thought and action). Those following Karm Yog and other Yogas will be united with Brahman. Those not following the Yogas will be bound more firmly in material manifestation. From the above we discern that the effect is the result of cause which manifests within Prakriti and circumstance affecting everything. This contains R.W. Emerson's observations '*for every effect, a perfect cause*'.⁴⁴

Brahman (Over Soul) is the cause of all as such, all are its effects. Material manifestation is bound by cause and effect, which can only be overcome through Swadharm and principles of Sanatan Vedic Dharm and various Yogas of the Bhagavad Gita. In BG Chapter 2 Krishna exhorts Arjun to follow Karm Yog which includes following correct action discarding consequential result or '*winnings*'. '*winnings*' here can be described as the fruits of action. This has to be discarded as per both R.W. Emerson and the Bhagavad Gita. We see below that we have to deal with '*cause and effect*' through '*principles*'. I have shown these '*principles*' to be Sanatan Vedic principles and thus we reach '*peace*' which is beyond cause and effect. Hence peace is actually the unity or merger of soul into Brahman as per Advaita, Vishitadvaita and Dvaita concepts seen in BG 12.2-4, 14.26-27 and elsewhere.

Swami Vivekanand says "The Atman (Soul) is self illumined. Cause and effect do not reach there" "As an effect freedom has no real value."⁴⁵ "Cause and effect are all maya".⁴⁶ Maya is Emerson's concept of illusions as I have shown in 'Illusions'. Brahman and the soul being the only things beyond maya, they are also beyond cause and effect. "Thus we find that effect is never different from cause. It is only that this effect is a reproduction of the cause in a grosser form".⁴⁷ "Effect is only cause in another form".⁴⁸ We see here the relation and domain of cause and effect through which they control all manifestation hence are '*chancellors of God*'. I have shown here the views of Emerson are as per the view of Swami Vivekanand and the Bhagavad Gita.

R.W. Emerson states, "*Nothing can bring you peace but yourself. Nothing can bring you peace but the triumph of principles*" I have shown through the essay these '*principles*' referred to by R.W. Emerson to be Dharm, Sanatan Vedic Dharm, following Karm, Bhakti Yog and other Yogas, following these a person (Jiva) can attain '*unity*' with Brahman. An aspect of this is '*peace*'. This is as per BG 5.12 'One in unity with Brahman surrenders the result of all actions to me (as per the practice of Karm Yog) attains Shanti (peace) whereas a person not in unity with Brahman, who is greedy for the fruits of his labour ('*winnings*') becomes entangled'. Thus a person not in unity with Brahman will not attain '*peace*'. This is also stated in BG 2.66. BG 2.66 states peace as a pre condition for true happiness. BG 12.9-12 bring out that '*peace*' is attained through following various Yogas of the Bhagavad Gita. R.W. Emerson here highlights '*peace*' as a high and ultimate aim. The responsibility of peace is on '*yourself*' alone. This is as per BG 2.66 and 5.12. BG 18.42 states peace to be a Brahminical quality. A knower of Dharm (correct knowledge) is considered to be a Brahmin as per BG 18.42. Since the Yogas lead to Brahman hence their follower is Brahmin. On Brahman realization a person is a Brahmin as per BG 4.34, 14.19, 18.42, 18.54.

I have shown in the essay that R.W. Emerson possessed this correct knowledge and was a follower of Dharm and the Yogas of the Bhagavad Gita. I conclude therefore that R.W. Emerson is a Brahmin. From the above we see that both as per Emerson and the Bhagavad Gita all have to follow the '*principles*' of Vedic Dharm and all have to reach the stage of Brahminness. Swami Vivekanand states that Brahminness is the '*ideal*' of the Hindus, Brahminness is to kill all selfishness⁴⁹ or '*private ends*' as expressed by Emerson. Swami Vivekanand also states "We read in the Mahabharata that the whole world was in the beginning peopled with Brahmins...they will go

back to that Brahminical origin".⁵⁰ This is as per R.W. Emerson's view above. I have shown R.W. Emerson's concept of 'Self Reliance' contains and is based on the Bhagavad Gita concepts of Swadharm, Jati Dharm, Own Nature, Karm and Bhakti Yog, truth, Brahman and its relation with the soul, God within and other aspects seen above as its integral components.

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‘The world does not go by necessity alone’ - The Truth of Multiracial Societies with Reference to Contemporary Thought

Shubha Tiwari

Is conflict of cultures necessary? The obvious and immediate response is, ‘No’. But conflict of cultures and identities is a reality. From Gandhian benevolence to xenophobia, we have a whole spectrum of emotions before us. Thinking souls have settled the issue as per their inclination, background and thought processes. Identity is largely decided by culture. Among cultures, there should be nothing like a superior culture or an inferior one. But the fact remains that consciousness of ‘the other’, the feeling of ‘otherness’ does not die. In this ocean of ‘otherness’ the personal question ‘Who am I’ becomes important. My several identities as a woman, a professor, a mother, a Hindu - do these identities exist parallel or are there priorities to them? Do my identities change with place and time? Is there a fixed identity? My identity is decided by my own perception or view of others is equally important? These questions become very significant when we see the desire for civilization dominance in the world. When one culture proclaims superiority over the other, the question of individual identity comes to the center of consciousness. ‘Who am I?’ becomes an important question especially for the floating population of the current world. Can an individual change her/his identity in her/his life time? Convergence of technologies brings convergence of people. The globe trotter, the world citizen or simply the migrant often faces this self humiliating question, ‘Who am I?’ A person of African origin living in America or England or an Indian living in Canada or Australia nurtures very deep sentiments of heart when it comes to questions of self identity. It becomes painful when you do not know which country to love as your own. It gets even more pathetic if the country you love does not love you back. Confusion prevails in the minds of migrants. In an ideal situation, convergence of people would have brought unity of hearts and blending of identities but in reality it seems that it does not happen that way.

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The two novels Small Island and The Help project a contemporary world which is full of hostility as well as marginalization. They have effectively brought out the turmoil of ‘the other’. Andrea Levy's Small Island portrays internal exile within the British society. With her multi-vocal narratives, Levy presents an unflinching critique of inequality and anxiety. We get a glimpse of the politics of dislocation. The parents of the protagonist come to England by the great vessel Windrush after World War II. Coming of African labors in a vessel might seem to be trivial to a general reader. But the children of those migrant labors know exactly the magnitude of such an arrival. A straight and blatant statement like ‘migrants and their children are ill-treated’ does not reflect the truth. In such an approach, we lose hopes and anxieties of transition of both the migrant community as well as the dominant, native community. In this poetics of dislocation, writers explore various possibilities of shared culture and even play a disruptive role in contemporary culture. This kind of writing gives more questions than answers. With her style of testimonial accounts of lived histories, Levy narrates challenges of migration. Levy's concern has everything to do with her personal past. Her father, a black Jamaican labor came to England in 1948 on MV Empire Windrush ship. Her mother followed six months later. Those were the times when the name-plates of some English homes read a warning ‘No Dogs, No Niggers’. There are multiple layers of irony in this act of migration of Andrea Levy's father.

‘Identity! Sometimes it makes my head hurt - sometimes my heart. So what am I? Where do I fit into Britain, 2000 and beyond? My dad came to this country in 1948 on the Empire Windrush ship. He was one of the pioneers. One of the 492 people who looked around the old British empire colony of Jamaica, saw that there were no jobs, no prospects, and decided to chance his arm in the Mother Country. His identical twin brother had been in the RAF, stationed in England during the war was returning to do a further round of service. My dad accompanied him, leaving behind in Jamaica his new bride, my mum who waited impatiently for the call to join him.

I don't know what my dad's aspirations were when he arrived in Britain- he certainly didn't realize that he was making history at the time. But I do know that when he boarded the ship, he knew himself to be a British citizen. He traveled on a British passport. Britain was the country that all Jamaican children learned about at school. They sang 'God Save the King and Rule Britannia'. They believed that Britain was a green and pleasant land- if not the centre of the world, then certainly the centre of a great and important empire that span the globe linking all sorts of countries into a family of nations. Far from the idea that he was traveling to a foreign place, he was traveling to the centre of his country, and as such he would ship-in and fit-in immediately. Jamaica, he thought, was just Britain in the sun.

There was a point when my mum had doubts about this emigration; on hearing stories of the treatment the first travelers had received she wanted my dad to return. But it was too late; he already loved England by then. On the passenger list, the twin brothers are put down as having different ages, which might have been a clue. My dad wanted to be his own man and England was the place to do it.'

Anyone who thinks for a moment will realize that racism, resistance, terrorism, cultural dominance and violence are related phenomena. Reading books like Small Island and The Help is an intellectual way of dealing with these troubling issues of our times. The truth of multiracial societies must be analyzed. Declared history is often different from lived history. The process of assimilation of migrant communities and their claims to equal rights are sensitive and highly emotional subjects in literature. Literature that touches concepts of power and exploitation and literature that negates blanket tagging of communities should be studied to understand the times in which we live. These authors should also be studied as the literary canon often avoids unconventional and disturbing writers from the marginalized communities. Small Island is about interaction between migrants and the colonial powers. Their citizens find it difficult to come to terms with post imperial equality. The multiple facets of racism are unemployment, under-employment, violence, apathy, poor living conditions and even repatriation. It is essential to study these works because official history and mainstream consciousness often tend to forget the mental marginalization of the migrant population. Shifting of individual from one place to another is a compulsion and a reality of our times. The migrant community as a whole and the individual in particular - both are continuously evolving by their interaction with native communities. These communities are also sites of new challenges and new possibilities. The word Diaspora brings '*the imagery of traumas of separation and dislocation and this is certainly a very important aspect of migration. But diasporas are also potentially the sites of hope and new beginnings*'.

These ongoing processes influence the identity of an individual and a community. It is important as to which social class a person is perceived to be belonging to. A vast body of literature, literature of transformation has been produced by travelers, migrants and dislocated people. It is to be noted how an author positions her/himself and how her or his position is perceived by the readers. Black identities in Britain as well as America have been woven out of a number of factors. The novels Small Island and The Help delineate some of these factors. Andrea Levy sticks to history in her fictional narration. She is involved and yet she is not involved in many ways. She is writing about herself and at the same time she is creating fictional characters. In this way she has been able to record some ugly and disturbing aspects of society. The novel Small Island runs in four voices. These first person voices of four individuals bring a mosaic of viewpoints. Queenie and Bernard are white and English and Hortense and Gilbert are black and are of Jamaican origin. Hortense's case is perhaps the most touching. She was brought up in her homeland as a highly sophisticated lady being readied for the teaching profession. Once she is in England, she loses that sense of being special. She faces the biggest challenge a human being can face – to resist a forced change of self perception. The repeated rudeness to which Hortense is humiliatingly subjected is enough to break anyone's heart. Hortense was brought up in a very fine manner. Her tastes, liking

and behavior are very fine but ironically the behavior that she receives from the so called superior race is disgusting. In fact she does not meet anybody as refined and as well mannered as herself. Levy has a unique way of bringing out the sense of difference between what one expects and what one gets. Hortense dreams of England:

'In the breath it took to exhale that one little word, England became my destiny. A dining table in a dining room set with four chairs. A starched table cloth embroidered with bows. Armchairs in the sitting room placed around a small wood fire. The house is modest nothing fancy, no show- the kitchen small but with everything I need to prepare meals. We eat rice and peas on Sunday with chicken and corn, but in my English kitchen roast meat with two vegetables and even fish and chips bubble on the stove. My husband fixes the window that sticks and the creaky board on the veranda. I sip hot tea by an open window and look on my neighbors on the adjacent and opposite dwelling. I walk politeness, 'A fine day today', and refinement 'I trust you are well?' A red bus, a cold morning and daffodils blooming with all the colors of the rainbow.'

But once she comes to England the scene is:

'Three steps would take me to one side of this room. Four steps could take me to another. There was a sink in the corner, a rusty tap stuck out from the wall above it. There was a table with two chairs - one with its back broken - pushed up against the bed. The arm chair held a shopping bag, a pajama top, and a teapot. In the fireplace the gas hissed with a blue flame.'

Thus this? I had to sit on the bed. My legs gave way. There was no bouncing underneath me as I fell. 'Just this? This is where you are living? Just this?'

'Yes, this is it.' He swung his arms around again like it was a room in a palace.

'Just this? Just this? You bring me all this way for just this?'

The man sucked his teeth and flashed angry eyes in my face. 'What you expect, woman? Yes, just this! What you expect? Everyone live like this. There has been a war. Houses bombed. I know plenty people live worse than this. What you want? You should stay with your mamma if you want it nice. There been a war here. Everyone his like this.'

He looked down at me, his badly buttoned chest heaving. The carpet was threadbare in a path in the middle and there was a piece of bread lying on it. He sucked his teeth again and walked out the room. I heard him banging down the stairs. He left me alone.

He left me along to stare on just this.'

It is not only that the physical conditions were dismal. There was actually no acceptance for a black, young lady who was trained to be a teacher, who was educated, sophisticated and refined. Andrea Levy has very skillfully brought out the concept of self perception. Self perception is perhaps the most important factor in determining the identity of a person. Self perception is all that matters. The most important thing is how a person views herself or himself. Hortense saw herself only and only as a very fine teacher. She had undergone extensive training to be a teacher. Her self-perception was that of a teacher.

After all the initial shock, she goes to the office where teachers are supposed to go and apply for jobs. She is confident because she carries letters of recommendation with her. But she realizes that she cannot get the job of a teacher because she is a Jamaican black. In her typical ironical style Andrea Levy portrays an extremely smiling white lady who keeps smiling at Hortense and throws her out of office.

'Her comely smile belied the rudeness of her tone. And I could not help but note that all gladness had left her eye and remained only at her mouth.'

I trained at the teacher training college in Constant Spring, under the tutelage of Miss Morgan.

'Is that in Jamaica?'

'Yes'

It was relief that she tipped her head to one side while she let out a long breath. I eased myself believing everything was now cleared between us. Until leaning all her ample charm forward, she told me, 'Well, I'm afraid, you can't teach here', and passed the unopened letters back to me.

I was sure there had been some misunderstanding although I was not clear as to where it had occurred. Perhaps I had not made myself as understood as I could. 'If you would read the letters,' I said. One will tell you about the three years of training as a teacher I received in Jamaica while the other letter is concerned with the position I held as a teacher at _____'

She did not let me finish. 'The letters don't matter', she told me. 'You can't teach in this country. You're not qualified to teach here in England'.

'But...' was the only sound that came from me.

'It doesn't matter that you were a teacher in Jamaica', she went on, you will not be allowed to teach here', she shook the letters at me. 'Take these back. They're of no use'. When I did not take them from her hand she rattled harder at me. 'Take them', she said, so loud she almost shouted. Her smile was state as a gargoyle. My hand shook as it reached out for the letters and all I could utter was 'But _____'

Miss, I'm afraid there really is no point your sitting there arguing with me.' And she giggled. The untimely chortle made my mouth gape. 'It's the decision of the education authority. I can do nothing to change that. And, I'm afraid, neither can you. Now, I don't mean to hurry you but I have an awful lot to do. So thanks you for coming'.

Every organ I possessed was screaming on this woman, 'What are you saying to me?' She went back about her business. Her face now in its normal repose looked as severe as that of the principal at my college. She picked up a piece of paper, wrote some thing at the top. She looked to another piece of paper then stopped, aware that I was still there. 'How long is the training in England?' I asked her.

'Good bye' she said pointing a finger at the door. 'Must I go back to college?'

'Really, Miss, I have just explained everything to you. You do speak English? Have you not understood me? It's quite simple. There is no point you asking me anything else. Now, please, I have lot to do. Thank you'. And she smiled on me again! What fancy feigning. I could not stand up. My legs were too weak under me. I sat for a little to redeem my composure. At last finding strength to pull myself up, I told this woman, 'I will come back again when I am qualified to teach in this country.' 'Yes', she said, 'You do that. Good bye.'

In this state of extreme pain Hortense walks into a wrong door and goes into a dark cupboard. No one helps her. When she comes out, all the three white 'superior' women giggle at her. It is a very sad picture. Her whole being is full of pain. Her self-perception has been trashed. Her husband Gilbert suggests that she should take up 'regular' jobs of sewing, washing or cooking. Her husband watches her:

'Tears were dropping into her tea. Out comes the Sunday handkerchief. A shaking hand dabbing once more at her eye. I thought to apologize but feared what could might fall from my careless mouth. It was a timid hand I stretched across the table to place over her. I waited for her to slap it away. But she did not.'

Every atom of Hortense's being hungers to get dignity, recognition and respect that she duly deserves. But it is never going to be that way. Her poetic justice comes in strange ways when her white land lady Queenie gives birth to a black baby boy who has been fathered by Hortense's husband Gilbert. The white lady weeps before them to take the boy into their caring. The scenes are brutally clear. The scene of birth, the scene of pleading - all leave the reader dumb. This is what

cross-culturalism is all about. This is what it comes down to be. The mingling of human souls, that flow of human warmth which unites the human race, that force which we call universal humanity and all such lofty ideals are missing. Queenie is not a racist but her husband Banard is a die-hard racist. Gilbert, the black man is almost a fool and does not understand the nuances of the situation. Hortense, the thinking lady is the lone sufferer. Human civilization has come to a point where interaction of races is inevitable but the novel raises questions on the dynamics of this interaction.

Kathryn Stockett's The Help is a deeply psychological work which describes the inner life of black domestic maids. The novel works at various levels but the novelist's exploration of interactions between black sub-ordinates and their white employees is worth noting. The novel has a whole range of characters from sympathetic Skeeter to high-headed and racist Miss Hilly. Aibileen is a domestic maid who looks after a toddler Mae Mobley. The mother of the baby Mrs. Leefolt does not care much about the child. She somehow wants a maid to take care of the baby so that she may continue to lead her fanciful life. Aibileen, on the other hand, is a very spiritual and thinking person who has suffered a severe tragedy of losing her son. Aibileen is black; she is always at the receiving end of social treatment. To forget her own personal loss and unspeakable pain, Aibileen merges herself in Mae Mobley. She loves the child intensely. She wants to forget her pain by showering all her motherly love on the child. The child starts crying in the lap of her mother but becomes happy as soon as Aibileen embraces her. The mother is skinny but Aibileen has lots of fat. Aibileen says,

'Here's something about Miss Leefolt: she not just frowning all the time, she skinny. Her legs is so spindly, she look like she done growed em last week. Twenty three years old and she lanky as a fourteen years old boy. Even her hais is thin, brown see-through. She try to tease it up, but it only make it look thinner. Her face be the same shape as that red devil on the redhot candy box, pointy chin and all. Fact, her whole body be so full a sharp knobs and corners, it's no wonder she can't soothe that baby. Babies like fat. Like to bury they face up in you armpit and go to sleep. They like big fat legs too. That I know.

By the time she a year old, Mae Mobley following me around everywhere I go. Five o'clock would come round and she'd be hanging on my Dr. Scholl shoe, dragging over the floor, crying like I weren't never coming back. Miss Leefolt, she'd narrow up her eyes at me like I done something wrong, unhitch that crying baby off my foot. I reckon that's the risk you run, letting somebody else raise you chilluns.

Mae Mobley two years old now. She got big brown eyes and honey-color curls. But the bald spot in the back of her hair kind a throw things off. She get the same wrinkle between her eyebrows when she worried, like her mama. They kind a favor except Mae Mobley so fat. She ain't gone be no beauty queen. I think it bother Miss Leefolt, but Mae Mobley my special baby.

Life is full of unspeakable truths and The Help tries to capture the essence of some of these truths. Aibileen is not the real mother of Mae Mobley but she is more than her mother. Miss Leefolt is the mother of the child but that bonding between the mother and the child is missing. The blank woman full of motherly instinct is bringing up children of other people but has lost her own child in an accident. The lives of blacks are hazardous. The services of the blacks are unrecognized. Their goodness is often unsung. There are many good white people also. Miss Skeeter is one such person. She has a sympathetic attitude towards black maids. She wants to pen down their experiences and sensibilities. These efforts of Miss Skeeter become a kind of movement. Unknowingly and perhaps unintentionally, she becomes the champion of the cause of African-American maids. Her personal relationships suffer due to this. In a way she becomes alien and unattractive for the white community. There are many layers of segregation in the society. Vision of different people do not match. Miss Skeeter and her lover do not share the same vision. Miss Skeeter and Miss Hilly are

again poles apart. The forces are pulling people apart. Amidst these contradictions, the novel develops.

The novel is about racism but it is not only about racism. It is about humanism, counter-racisms; it is about feminism. Skeeter is a passionate white woman determined to better the lot of African American maids, penning down their memoirs. Her search begins with the sudden disappearance of her childhood maid Constantine. Skeeter is emotionally entwined with Constantine. When she pursues the case of her lost maid, her comfort zone is broken and she realizes that African-American maids live and work in extremely hostile circumstances. Skeeter develops a very deep and spiritual bonding with Aibileen Clark and Minny Jackson. After many rejections, their project to publish memoirs of these maids catches pace.

Within this narrative, there are multiple layers of concepts of racial superiority, physical human beauty, civilization dominance, master-subordinate relationship and the idea of trust. Can people of two different races trust each other? Will society allow this trust? Miss Hilly is a strange example of being a very compassionate mother but a very cruel landlady to her African-American subordinates. How do we solve these contradictions? Can these contradictions ever be solved?

When we study novels such as The Help and Small Island, we have to equip ourselves with adequate psychological, social, political and intellectual tools in order to understand the phenomenon. Racism or residual racism can be more traumatic in today's post-racial era. It becomes all the more difficult to understand and explain the situation when everybody is politically correct.

Apart from physical living conditions, desire for recognition, bondage and affection are crucial. We live in a much heralded post racial era. But if we are ready to scratch the surface of reality, we will find many challenges. The biggest challenge is recognizing the persisting racial inequalities. Ignoring the real issues and supposing that everything is perfect is perhaps the most absurd form of present day racism.

Apart from the official and formal systems, race and identity are psychological, somatic and civilization issues. In The Help, Skeeter suffers simply because of her humanitarian attitude towards the African-American maids. It is strange that even today, discriminatory incidents are reported from places considered to be fountains of new knowledge. On February 20, 2014 The New York Times reported:

'On the campus of the University of Mississippi, a few hundred yards from a monument honoring confederate soldiers, a statue of the university's first black student, who enrolled in 1962 amid rioting that left two people dead, stands as what administrators call a powerful symbol of progress.

But when two unidentified men placed a noose around the bronze neck of James Meredith this week and left behind a flag with the confederate battle emblem, it set into motion a new round of soul searching in a place where past and present restlessly coexist." (Racist Episodes Continue to Stir o/e Miss Campus).

Individual responses to discrimination are different. Hortense reacts differently from Gilbert. Queenie is different from her husband Bernard. In The Help Aibileen is different from Minny and Skeeter is different from Hilly. The novelists have effectively shown identity splitting in cases of victims of discrimination. Confusion, vulnerability and erratic behavioral patterns often emerge. Someone has beautifully said that it gives a strange feeling to the member of a minority community to love the country of her/his residence. It is like a loving a father who declares, 'You are not my favorite child.' Andrea Levy in her subtle ways has stressed the importance of recognizing black diversity. All Africans are not the same just as all whites are not the same. Levy's pain is that her

education, her sophistication, her training and her mental elevation were not recognized simply because she was an African. It is an extremely complex situation where beyond all efforts, the binaries exist. 'We' comprises of white, male, heterosexual and citizen. 'Them' comprises the other race, women, homosexual and immigrant. Howsoever polite, howsoever sympathetic, the discourse is divided between "We" and "Them".

Being politically correct is a necessity of our times. But as intellectuals we cannot be satisfied with just that. Open and honest debate, analysis and discussions are essential. Papers such as this one are not aimed at hiding identity crises resulting from racism; these papers are about actual healing, love and humanism. Race is a reality and it has to be addressed. The world does not go by necessity alone. It's true that cultural dominance is an unnecessary phenomenon. The chances are that this tendency is not going to die soon. As long as color of skin, region, religion will continue to decide an individual's identity, the related discourse will go on. Both the tendencies seem eternal- the tendency to dissolve differences and call us one humanity and the tendency to demarcate and differentiate. Our thought processes give weight to the just side by some degrees. The process must go on.

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Past and Present: Edwidge Danticat's "*Farming of Bones*" as a memory text

M.D. Suman Prasad

In the Latin American dictator novel, archetypal figures of power, representing collectivist or individualist positions define, organize and polarize the meaning of the story as well as the characters within it. This paper considers the historical and spatial effects of thinking the Caribbean through the presence or absence of these fundamental archetypes. By removing allegorical figures of power from her dictatorial narratives, Edwidge Danticat questions the role these type of characters and what they represent in relation to transnational contexts as well as what are their discursive effects for notions of cultural identity. The characters in Danticat's dictatorial narratives interact in both their tangible and intangible capacities to defy notions of time, space and power and negotiate their identity beyond their socio-historical and geographical constraints.

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Edwidge Danticat pulls the whispers and murmurs of the past out of their silenced state and gives them voice and power in the present. These whispers reveal memories, both institutional and personal, and the traumas linked to these memories. The characters within her works are not, however, limited to an unending cycle of trauma. Instead they are given the ability to heal the traumatic wounds of the past through acts of commemoration. Commemoration in her work comes in the form of pilgrimages, memory objects, and vocalization or listening.

The performance of commemorative acts shows the significance of personal remembrance in the face of national denial. The combination of physical, oral and cognitive acts makes the term loosely defined in this work, but valuable in understanding Danticat's attempts at understanding the trauma and memory in the Haitian people and Diaspora. The acts of commemoration within her novels are often inter-generational and unending. This, however, should be distinguished from the act of healing. Healing, in Danticat's fiction, occurs upon a return to the home and an acceptance of past traumas so that the character can move on. The distinction between commemoration and healing is important in Danticat's work, because it is a difference linked to two different traumatic moments in Haitian history and the affects of these moments. These moments are the Parsley Massacre of 1937 and the Duvalier Regime in the mid-20th century.

It is important to understand the historical moments in making the distinction between commemoration and healing. Danticat's work in recording the historical traumas of Haiti functions to record the voices of those who survived the traumas that permeate her literature. These traumas have gone largely unrecognized by the state and yet still exist in the Haitian collective memory. It exists through the traumatic memories of those who experienced it. Danticat records those experiences, immortalizing that history forever in her fiction. An understanding of the important moments in Haitian history is therefore important contextual information for this paper, as Danticat unlike others (Junot Diaz, Julia Alvarez) does not always provide political or historical context to the traumas that her characters are dealing with.

The first historical moment that is important to understand is the Parsley Massacre, which occurred in October of 1937 on the Dominican Republic-Haiti border. Called as the Parsley Massacre, because of the Dominican soldiers faced "harassment and condemnation of Haitians because of their pronunciation of the Spanish word for parsley—*perejil*." If they were unable to roll/trill the "r" then they were perceived as Haitian and killed. Tens of thousands of Haitians were killed in this violent manner, in many cases with machetes and knives. The ramifications for both countries were the return of Haitians into Haiti and a rise in the tensions between the two countries for the rest of the 20th century. The massacre also provided a physical manifestation of the racialized national boundary that has divided the two Hispaniola countries. The violence committed

in this massacre is horrific and results in the trauma that Danticat attempts to capture in *The Farming of Bones*, although echoes of it are felt throughout her texts.

The trauma surrounding the 1937 Parsley Massacre in the Dominican Republic is the subject of Edwidge Danticat's *The Farming of Bones*. One of the key facets to this trauma is collective memory and how it contributes to healing, mourning, commemoration and, ultimately, to history. An additional aspect of the novel, as Amy Novak points out, is its treatment of "the paradoxical process of remembering and forgetting in the narration of individual and cultural trauma" (93). What is important in the novel is that not all remembrance is positive and not all mourning is negative. The very act of individuals participating in this remembrance of a painful past and mourning for those they have lost contributes to their eventual healing. Thus, throughout the work individuals struggle against their memories and their emotions only to ultimately give in to the reality that one cannot avoid the past, or the collective memory that was formed in all that experienced the trauma. The novel ultimately brings the past into the present through memory and the act of mourning.

The techniques that Danticat uses in this novel work to reveal the collision of past and present within this novel and the importance of memory and mourning are in the lives of those who have experienced trauma. Novak states that the novel is "an act of memory" that is "attempting to translate the silences of trauma through the shifting, fragmentary voice of memory" (95). This act of memory that is also utilizing the voice of memory produces unique narrative structures. One function of this is the two narrative lines, as delineated by the shifting typefaces. Another act of memory in the novel is the referential nature of the epigraph. The chapter breaks also strategically participate in the construction of the "fragmentary voice of memory" and are linked to the two narrative lines of Amabelle in the present and Amabelle in the past. Finally, the character choices are also links to a past that lives in Amabelle's present through her memories and the memory-narrative line.

The Farming of Bones follows a young woman, Amabelle Desir, through her experience of the Haitian massacre and her escape from the Dominican Republic. It also takes the reader into Amabelle's memory as she struggles with her past despite, or perhaps because of, the obvious difficulties of her present reality. Many of these memories include the loss of Amabelle's parents, during her childhood prior to the massacre, who drowned in the river that separates the Dominican Republic and Haiti. This loss haunts Amabelle throughout her life in the novel. In the present tense of the novel, other characters include Amabelle's lover Sebastien Onius, who was supposed to accompany her on her escape into Haiti but is lost in the confusion. Amabelle spends the rest of the novel searching for him. She travels instead with Sebastien's friend Yves. Along the way they meet other Haitians trying to escape, including a Haitian woman named Odette. Amabelle makes it to the Haitian side of the River and starts a new life there. She does return to the Dominican Republic once to see her former employer Señora Valencia. This pilgrimage of sorts gives Amabelle the chance to tell her story one more time and to pass it on to the Señora's new Haitian maid. The passing of her story is important because it indicates that the memories contained in one woman's mind are not stopped there but spread, woman to woman, across generations (*Krik? Krak!*). The sharing of these stories is how women remember and heal from their trauma.

The first of Danticat's formal strategies for communicating the importance of remembrance and its relation to trauma is her differing typeface for the main character's dreams and memories. The typeface for the sections where Amabelle is in the present day, experiencing the trauma as it is occurring to her in plain typeface. As Novak points out these sections "weave together as a point/counterpoint" (95) allowing for the past, or her memories to coexist with the present narrations. The typeface for the sections where Amabelle is escaping into her dreams and memories is bold. These differing typefaces are also associated with differences in tone and voice. In the sections where the typeface is plain and Amabelle is in the present day she is much more

straightforward, dialogue is present and the realities weigh much more heavily. Novak emphasizes this as “Amabelle's first-person, linear testimony” stating that it “emphasizes the significance of testimony and witnessing” (95). In the bold sections Amabelle is reminiscing and is therefore more circular in her thoughts, there is much less dialogue, and the trauma of the current reality seems to be a distant reality. Novak describes these sections as “more difficult to understand...possess a temporal quality, as if they have been cut loose from the ties that bind them to a linear narrative. These are composed, of dreams and memories of Amabelle’s missing lover and dead parents.” (109). The “point/counterpoint” or interplay of these sections works to disrupt the narrative of the massacre and “produce a traumatized text” (Novak 109). The constant experience of trauma, both in the past and in the present, because of this textual interplay creates this sense of trauma in the text itself.

The first place where we find an example of the differing typeface and the associated narrative storylines is in the first chapter, in which Amabelle is relating a memory of Sebastien Onius, her lover. By beginning the novel this way the reader is instantly plunged into a world where past and present coexist but are segregated. The novel cannot seem to exist without bringing together the two because it opens with a memory. For the rest of the journey through the novel the reader must figure out which world Amabelle is truly living in and which she would prefer. Her constant reminiscing about her parents reinforces this. She alludes to her desire to join them and to the day at the river as being a moment of rebirth into a new life. The reader is faced with the question of whether or not this life is better than the life her parents are living in their watery graves. It is the question that plagues Amabelle, especially in her return to Haiti when she crosses the same river that claimed her parents.

The switching of the typeface is largely kept to discrete chapters with some notable exceptions. For example, a breakdown in this rigid dichotomy between past and present (the font, the discrete chapters) is found in “Chapter 30,” a chapter laden with traumatic imagery and recollection. The trauma in this chapter is the result of the graphic details Danticat provides of the massacre being perpetrated. It is particularly traumatic because the details are provided in the present tense and in the first person and they put the reader in Amabelle’s shoes, feeling her pain. However, the chapter also contains Amabelle’s memory of her mother. Thus, in this chapter the past and present co-exist side by side within the confines of the chapter. The lines written in plain typeface, which represent Amabelle’s present, convey the horror of her current situation: “I heard the moan of a man trying not to scream, saw Odette’s dying face, and drifted back to sleep.” There is then a chapter break followed by a passage in bold typeface, the typeface that represents Amabelle’s memories and dreams: “In my sleep, I see my mother rising, like the mother spirit of the rivers, above the current that drowned her.” The typeface differs between the two passages but the barrier is broken. Both exist within the same chapter and the same few moments of Amabelle’s life. The trauma present in the narrative at this moment may be seen as responsible for this break and for the collision of past and present in the life of Amabelle.

A second formal strategy may be found in the epigraph. The epigraph states:

Jephthah called together the men of Gilead and fought against Ephraim. The Gileadites captures the fords of the Jordan leading to Ephraim, and whenever a survivor of Ephraim said, “Let me cross over.” the men of Gilead asked him, “Are you and Ephraimite?” It he replied, “No,” they said, “All right, say „Shibboleth.” If he said, “Sibboleth,” because he could not pronounce the word correctly, they seized and killed him at the fords of the Jordan. Forty-thousand were killed at a time” (Judges 12:4-6).

The incorporation of this passage from the Bible extends the reality of massacre and trauma across time. The memory of that massacre lives on today through the writing found within the Bible. This justifies Danticat’s project by reflecting the massacre she is about to detail because of

the remarkable similarities between the massacres of the Ephraimites by the Gileadites to that of the Haitians by the Dominicans in the Parsley Massacre. By making this her epigraph Danticat is simultaneously noting the presence of massacres throughout time while also bringing this past present into her novel and her character's present. In another way the incorporation of this epigraph could signal a critique of organized religion's failure to protect individuals from massacre. By including a biblical passage about a previous massacre it seems as if massacre is relentless or that religion is insufficient. A third effect that the incorporation of this epigraph has is to create an imagined solidarity amongst oppressed people and the victims of massacre and genocide across history. This works to make the story one that not only chronicles an event in Haitian history but also champions' commemoration, memory and healing in the face of trauma across time and space.

The second epigraph strengthens the notion of colliding past and present within the novel: it takes the ancient trauma depicted in the biblical epigraph and incorporates similar themes but on the level of our main character's individual story. The second epigraph states, "In confidence to you, Metrés Dlo, Mother of the Rivers." The theme of rivers connects the two epigraphs as well as the presence of trauma, because the subtext of the second epigraph is a reference to Amabelle's mother who drowned in the fatefully named Massacre River that divides the two nations. Metrés Dlo is a goddess and is the female spirit of the river (Novak 108). Voudoun is the syncretic religion of Haiti practiced pervasively throughout the country. It co-opted Catholic idols during slavery so that African slaves could hide their indigenous religious practices from slave owners. After the War of Independence, Voudoun came to be recognized as the religion of the Haitian people. By linking her mother to Metrés Dlo, Amabelle is drawing on this history of slavery and rebellion: "...I see my mother rising, like the mother spirit of the rivers..." Here, past and present collide in a way that highlights Amabelle's personal trauma in losing her mother and links her past trauma to the future trauma of the massacre at Artibonite River. It also serves to highlight the ways in which Haitian spirituality in the form of the goddess Metrés Dlo is more comforting to those experiencing trauma than institutionalized religion. The first epigraph is linked to the institutionalized religion of the island, Catholicism and the second to its spiritual practices, Voudoun. When Amabelle imagines her mother it is as Metrés Dlo, the Haitian Goddess, rather than as the Virgin Mary. The failure of institutionalized religious to support and protect the victims of massacre is therefore emphasized in both epigraphs.

The epigraph may also be read as Amabelle's dedication of her testimony to the reader. When read this way, the epigraph/dedication changes the end of the novel in significant ways. As Novak states, "Amabelle's immersion in the river at the end of the novel, suggests that when she enters the river, she takes up the narrative that becomes her tale (the tale the reader is reading)...narrates it to the river" (109). This reading changes the tone of the second epigraph from past-orientation to future-orientation and to a goal of passing one's story on. Because Amabelle has no one else to tell her story, she dedicates her narrative to Metrés Dlo. The narrative is continuous: "If the novel is read as a narrative act begun by Amabelle at the end of the linear narrative when she enters the river, then the story does not lead to closure of the past. Rather the narrative act is ongoing: arriving at the end the reader arrives back at the beginning" (Novak 110). Novak's reading of this ending indicates that the work of cultural remembrance that the novel is undertaking is never ending and that the task of commemorating trauma is ongoing. This cultural remembrance is present in much of Danticat's work, giving strength to Novak's interpretation.

The third technique that Danticat uses is the chapter breaks. This technique is a strategic means by which the past is interjected into the present. Danticat's incorporation of the past is not in an organized, repeating style. The past inserts itself into the narrative of the present in seemingly random but ultimately significant times. Through observing the chapter breaks it becomes easy to track both the narrative progression in the present and the past while also recognizing that the past increasingly inserts itself in times of personal stress or trauma for Amabelle. One example of this can be found after the death of Rafi, the son of Señora Valencia, who dies in infancy. A significant

line ends the chapter in the present, saying, “At least she could place her hands on it, her son’s final bed. My parents had no coffins (93).” After this the past abruptly inserts itself as Amabelle reflects on a memory with Sebastien. We don’t know how long ago the night she is thinking about took place, but the chapter is brief, the recollection only one paragraph. It ends with Amabelle reflecting on her own sadness and personal loss by saying, “...there will not be a drop of liquid left in me with which to cry.” Thus, the past and present are brought together in a moment of sadness, and Amabelle utilizes the past as a means of assessing on the present trauma and of, perhaps, healing. It is also important to note that these insertions occur less and less as the novel continues and the trauma of the present seems to overwhelm the past. This is indicated by the decreased frequency of the past in the novel. The present reality that the characters are facing seems to be overwhelming, and not allowing for the past to assert itself as a presence in their lives. The past then becomes a living memory, orally transmitted by the characters in the times of stress during the massacre. However, it is no longer segregated to discreet chapters with differentiated fonts.

A fourth tool to incorporate the past with the present is found in Danticat’s character choices. The first character in whom it is important to recognize this function is Sebastien. He is the first character that may clearly be seen as working, at least in some function, as a vehicle for Amabelle’s memory. An important part of his character is the act of naming that occurs at the start of the novel, “His name is Sebastien Onius” (1). This act of naming endeavors to highlight both his and Amabelle’s humanity in the face of the approaching massacre. His subjectivity turns him into a character through which the past can come alive. He is a young man who came from the same town as Amabelle in Haiti and now works as a cane farmer in the Dominican Republic. In his relationship with Amabelle, they work together to overcome past traumas (he lost his father in the hurricane) and this work is found in Amabelle’s memories of him. He also serves as a vehicle because he allows Amabelle to talk of the Haiti she left. He knows the Haiti that Amabelle calls home, and together they allow the reader to know it. The gender dynamic is then subverted and their roles are designed to support one another in the trauma they experienced and are experiencing. The idealization of Sebastien further relegates him to a position linked to the past, a past Amabelle longs for as happier and more secure.

Another character that clearly brings the past into the present through memory is Señora Valencia. With Señora Valencia the memories that Amabelle reveals are of her original trauma, the loss of her parents. These are valuable to the reader because they explain how she came to the Dominican Republic and how her life in the present was formed. In one passage the importance of these memories is highlighted with Señora Valencia saying, “Amabelle, today reminds me of the day Papi and I found you at the river...Do you remember that day? (91).” Amabelle does. She remembers it while awake and dreams it while sleeping. It is the trauma she is dealing with throughout the novel. The fact that Señora Valencia asks the question shows her ignorance to Amabelle’s pain. Amabelle remembers the day and her constant interactions with the family that took her in will never let her forget it. The character of Señora Valencia allows this memory to thrive in the present.

Through the use of font, narrative line, chapter breaks, character devices and epigraphs, the past and the present are forced to coexist in *The Farming of Bones*. Amabelle experiences this collapsing in her psyche and in the crafting of her narrative, but perhaps the most poignant place where past and present collide is on her body: “The past is not simply written on her but, as the insistent use of the preposition “in” and the description of pain within bones and joints suggest, it has penetrated her” (Novak 106). Thus, the final location for the collapsing of past and present is in the body of the narrator. She lives with the reminder of the past trauma she has experienced everyday because it is written on her body. This is seen particularly at the end of the novel, when every day is a struggle to move. The narrative she crafts and the testimony she provides is nothing compared to her own bodily testament: “It is her body that bears the record of the past, and the story

it tells is not seamless but disfigured, flawed, even imperfect” (Novak 103). It is a body that exists in the present and narrates traumas of the past.

Thus, the final collapse of past and present occurs on Amabelle’s body itself. The text provides the framework for the past to insert itself into the present. The shifting typeface indicates to the reader when the past is being interjected. The chapter breaks also allows a jarring interface of past and present. The historical echoes provided by the epigraphs place the past in dialogue with the present from the start of the novel. Finally, in a leap off the page, past and present collide on Amabelle’s body. The traumas that she experienced in the past live in the present through her body. She is the living testament, just as Danticat’s work is the written testament. In her last move she passes the story on to the new house-girl at the Valencia house, just as Danticat has passed the story onto the reader. The pain is unending and therefore the telling of it must also never end.

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Multifaceted Perspectives of Shashi Deshpande's women in 'The Binding Vine'

Vasanthi Vasireddy

Introduction:

Every woman surrenders herself to the societal set up, self sacrifice. Childhood images or imaginations affect the woman's lifestyle - acceptance of the suppression it may be of her thoughts or may be of her natural desires. It creates a deep struggle inside, especially in her sub conscious.

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Shashi Deshpande's writing Style:

The change in the woman's, a wife's attitude is portrayed with a greater awareness in the novels of Shashi Deshpande. A powerful revelation of woman's subconscious mind is seen in her characterization. Shashi Deshpande's exploration of female conquest in patriarchal family structures takes on a large dimension than the inner psychological world portrayed by other women writers. Her vivid portrayal of the typical dilemma of middle class educated and employed Indian women reveals that the problems depicted in other Diaspora are different from those of urban women in India. Here protagonists are modern, educated young women, compacted in the traditional male – dominated society. Her knack in giving the picture of their anguish, disillusionment and discontent makes her novels subject to treatment in feminist angle.

Women in 'The Binding Vine':

Urmi - Urmila is been portrayed very bold. Despite her own tragedy, she tries to understand other people's misfortunes. She takes initiative in solving the problems. She fights on behalf of others. She is a clever, educated middle-class woman, who is employed as a lecturer in a college. She is married to a man of her choice, yet she is distressed by her married life. She craves for her husband's attention. She enjoys financial freedom and blissful marital life but she always feels that her husband doesn't understand her. She undergoes emotional insecurity. Amidst this agony she has to face a problem which makes her muse in her sub consciousness. She laments over the death of Anu, her one-year old daughter. Her own tragedy makes Urmi respond to problems of others – Kalpana , Mira, Shakutai and so on. Kalpana, a teenager becomes the victim of rape. She is been molested by an elderly person who is her relative.

Shakutai, Kalpana's mother expresses her anger against the disgusted situation; blaming her daughter for being outward, alluring the males. She displays a traditional ideology. Mira, Urmila's long-dead mother-in-law is a victim of her husband's ill-treatment. She expresses her grief in her poems, written in the solitude of her unhappy marriage. It becomes evident that relations in the family cannot be taken for granted against the sexual liability.

Multifaceted attributes of women:

The strength of a woman is made known through Mira's character, who alleviates her suffering, using her intellect. She finds solace in writing poetry and being recognized.

She is discouraged – expressing her views in writing, by famous male writers. Venu discourages Mira's poetry, he says, 'Why do you need to write poetry? it is enough for a young woman like you to give birth to children. That is your poetry. Leave the other poetry to us men.' But she continues fulfilling her desire of intellectual exploration.

The empathy of a woman is well demonstrated – Urmi's compassion and collaboration in accomplishing the needs of other women. She fights for their rights.

Shakutai's sister, Sulu, is an example for the resourcefulness. Despite her own tragic life she is very supportive, affectionate to her sister and her family. She is ready to take care of Kalpana. But pitifully commits suicide when she comes to know about her husband's evil deed - Kalpana being raped by him. Sulu is a symbol of love, innocence and submissiveness.

Women's belief in human relations is well portrayed by the author. Dr. Bhaskar wonders why women await their daughters' marriages when they themselves are not satisfied with their marriages. It reveals women's unconditional love and trust on human beings. Page | 184

Conclusion:

'The Binding Vine' is an exemplary novel which establishes the trend through the strengths of the characters - that one can do wonders by being honest to oneself, by being open expressing their desires, by being bold - responding to situations when needed, by being resourceful supporting others; suggesting re-assessment and redefinition, they can formulate a conscious which can perhaps ultimately bring about a constructive change in the society.

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Chronicles of the Oppressed: the activist writings of Mahaswetha Devi

Dr. B. Vijaya

Mahaswetha Devi, the Bengali novelist, short story writer, playwright, essayist, columnist, editor and above all a socio-cultural activist has relentlessly worked for decades highlighting the problems of the rural poor and tribals. The tribals and their history have become an integral part of Mahaswetha's life and mission. Her empathy for the rural poor and tribals coupled with her intense anger against their exploitation has made her a committed activist writer. She is with the downtrodden and therefore the exploited and the persecuted find their voice through her works. Mahaswetha believes that every writer is answerable to the people and therefore it is his/her responsibility to create awareness among the people about the misery of the least privileged, the dispossessed.

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The quality of Mahaswetha's literary works as well as the nature of her corresponding social action makes Mahaswetha a distinguished writer among not only her Indian contemporaries but also among the most illustrious writers and intellectuals representing different languages the world over. More than two hundred years of tribal struggles for human dignity inform her fictional and non-fictional works. Thus, humanism forms the most important ethic of Mahaswetha's oeuvre. She faithfully documents the heroic grandeur of the indomitable tribal will with artistry and passion which make her work truly inspiring saga. By means of subversion, she places the dauntless struggle of the exploited people on top of her fictional agenda. As M. Asaduddin points out, "she presents the rare combination of an activist and a writer who has been leading a spirited crusade against social injustice meted out to disenfranchised and the dispossessed." (34). Hence her fiction has been variously categorized as "aesthetics of subversion", "rhetoric of subversion", "chronicles of the oppressed", "literature of protest and/or resistance."

The volume, *Dust on the Road* is a collection of activist writings of Mahaswetha Devi between 1981 and 1992. It includes several articles published earlier in journals and newspapers like "Economic and Political Weekly", "Business Standard" etc. In her articles, "Back to Bondage" Mahaswetha narrates the story of Mangru, a young man in his thirties and how she is shocked to see his gums and teeth broken. The reason is that he is freed from his bondage and given 80 decimals of barren rocky land, far away from the village, on the slope of a hill, where it is impossible to attempt soil reclamation even with good irrigation facilities. One of the bonded labourers said that Ayodhya Pande, a landlord asked Mangru to work again in bondage, but Mangru bravely refused to work. Then "Ayodhya crushed his face repeatedly with his shoes. Mangru vomited blood and prayed for water. Ayodhya's son Ramaballav urinated on his face." (4) There is another cruel form of bondage in practice called 'dharumar' system. Under this system, it is an obligation that people are forced to give free labour. So people prefer to enter into debt bondage rather than being trapped into 'dharumar' bondage. Mahaswetha also mentions how the bonded labourers wish to go back to their bondage of their own will for their bellies are at least quarter filled by being bonded labourers. "The poor of Palamau have no choice. Between death by slow starvation and bondage, they will choose the latter." (26)

On May Day, in 1981, Mahaswetha's group meets about 30 bonded labourers at Semra Village. And they come to know from them that they had been freed but again they went back in bondage out of necessity and for sheer survival. Among them, many borrowed Rs.80 and were serving their maliks for over 3 to 4 years. "There was Sitaram, a young boy of 18 who was still under bondage for Rs. 500 borrowed by his father 38 years ago ... The wages of a 'harawaha' are two and a half seers of kutchra paddy a day, 5 cottahs of Palhatu land after 1 year. Palhatu land is given to a 'harawaha' as long as he is in the maliks. When the husband and wife both work, the malk gives foodgrain for 1 person only." (7-8) The camp is busy to free the labourers from

bondage. Jwala Pande was the Mukhia of the village, Semra, at that point of time. The camp, gives hope to the lives of the people who are in bondage by providing agricultural equipments, land, domestic and agricultural cattle but all these come through the Mukhias and Sarpanchs who are the real tormentors of the labourers and therefore the bonded labourers sell all those equipment and some prefer to go back to bondage for their survival.

In the article called “The Slaves of Palamau” Mahaswetha writes about how the bonded labourers including, men, women and children from 50 villages who gathered in the district town of Daltonganj, Palamau, speak out courageously about their problems and exploitation over centuries by the landlords. “To unite the bonded labourers and urge them to come forward jointly and fight against exploitation needs courage. Such a task is best achieved by individuals or organizations with dedication. Palamau is fortunate to have the editor of ‘Ishuman’, Rameshwaram, a true friend of the bonded labourers.”(10) And therefore Rameshwaram comes forward with an organization called Palamau Bandhua Mukti Morcha (PBMM). Under the guidance and support of this organization, Bandhuas come forward courageously and share their misery with others. Tetri Bhuuuuuyin, a woman from Pathalgarwa, narrates how she has been working for the last 10 years for a meal a day and some foodgrain. She had once borrowed Rs.12 from Chamru Sahu. And Tetri Bhuyin is terribly beaten by her master for attending the ‘Choupal’ (meeting). Mohammed Kasim, an old man, and one of the 32 bandhuas owned by Taramoni Singh of village Solay, narrates his story by mentioning how his father had once borrowed Rs.10 or Rs.15 from Jagga Singh, and died after 45 years of bondage; how, he, too, has been a bandhua for the last 32 years, and between father and son they had given 77 years of their lives, yet the debt remains unpaid. The organization PBMM has brought some awakening among the bandhuas as they exhibited the courage to speak about themselves. Mahaswetha points out: “Palamau is, in reality, a mirror of true India ... see Palamau with an outsider’s eye and you will see that the district machinery, the landholders, the contractors, all think that the poor are born to serve them. It is as natural to the exploiters as the sky and the hills they spot.”(5)

Palamau is the least developed district in Bihar inspite of its rich mineral resources and vast forest area. The bonded labour system, though abolished, is prevalent in the state of Bihar especially in the district of Palamau and other parts in states like Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Karnataka, Rajasthan and Tamilnadu. Under this bonded labour system, a person is ‘owned’ by an employer and he is neither free to work for wages under any other employer nor has he the right to sell his produce products in the open market. The loan taken by the bonded labourers invariably happens to be ridiculously meager amount which may be a few hundred rupees. And the whole family is required to labour under landlords until the loan is repaid. The landlord sees to it that the loan is never repaid. It is always multiplied and the interest is compounded to the principal amount which is beyond the means of the labourer. It could not be repaid in his lifetime. If the debtor does not repay in his lifetime, the next generation of the family has to work hard under the landlords. They cannot bargain for their wages but have to accept the wage fixed by the landlords as customary price. The vicious circle goes on and the labourers find no way out of the cruel designs of the landlords. Most of the parents leave property for their heirs in the form of land, real estate, cash etc but the bonded labourers of Palamau leave their heirs in bondage. Mahaswetha says, “Anyone who thinks that the Zamindari system has been abolished should visit Palamau.” (14)

Douloti is one of Mahaswetha Devi’s Palamau stories. A closer look at the novella reveals Mahaswetha’s care and concern for the tribal people and her sense of commitment to the most oppressed sections of the Indian society. Mahaswetha Devi writes about the exploitation of women especially the tribal women and makes the readers see that tribal history is a long and continuous story of exploitation and betrayal first by one master and then by another even after independence. Her fiction has several layers of meaning but her chief concern with the personality of woman

especially of the tribal woman as marginalized being remains the focus of her fictional world of which “Douloti” offers a good example:

Filling the entire Indian Peninsula from the oceans to the Himalayas, here lies bonded labour spread-eagled, kamiyawhore Douloti Nagesia’s tormented corpse, putrefied with venereal disease, having vomited up all the blood in its desiccated lungs. Today on fifteenth of August, Douloti had left no room at all in India of people like Mohan for planting the standard of the Independence flag. What will Mohan do now? Douloti is all over India.(94)

The passage clearly shows how Douloti dies of venereal disease coughing out blood on 15th August, 1975 falling over the map of India in the village of Bohri, where Mohan Srivastava, a school teacher has been preparing for the celebration of Independence day by having a huge map of India drawn in the courtyard. Douloti dies of venereal disease when she is just twenty seven years old. ‘Death’ is the sole reward she gets for fourteen years of merciless exploitation in Mishras brothel and her body has been ploughed only for three hundred odd rupees and the yield of her labour is taken by her owners. Thus Douloti once beautiful is now left alone, used, exploited and abandoned. Douloti’s death on the map of India signifies the terrible truth that Independent India is not meant for the Ganoris’ and Douloties’. It is only meant to serve the designs of the masters and the exploiters.

Mahaswetha Devi attempts to show how an adivasi woman is exploited, a phenomenon not confined to one part but all over India. Douloti represents the whole of India embodying within herself the poor, the voiceless, the landless and the marginal workers. Even after completing 66 years of Independence we see exploitation of woman in one way or the other and the word ‘Independence’ is meaningless to the vast majority of people in India. She stresses that nothing has changed in the situation of tribal women over the years. The novella describes not only about Douloti’s exploitation but there are many Doulotis and Ganoris spread all over the nation:

Different names in different regions.

The system is slavery.

The marginal, the harijan, the tribal is its sacrifice. (62)

When some people in our country are ignorant of the term ‘Independence’ some like Ganori Nagesia, father of Douloti in the novella *Douloti* are aware that they got Independence which is no use to them.

When the law protectors themselves are involved in helping manipulators and exploiters what would be the fate of the poor and the illiterate? A real-life incident can be cited to substantiate the exploitation of tribal women in different parts of the country. On 17th of August, 1997, Chandru, a lambada youth is arrested by the excise police, Warangal in Andhra Pradesh on the allegation that he was brewing illicit liquor. From 17th to 20th of August, he was in sub-jail of Parkal mandal receiving blows from the excise police culminating in unbearable physical torture. Then Chandru was sent to Parkal Government hospital, then to Central jail and later on to M.G.M hospital at Warangal headquarters.

Sammu, the wife of Chandru, starts searching for him in the nearby thandas. After knowing that he was arrested, she met him on 19th August in Parkal Excise police station. Chandru expresses his fear of being killed by the Excise police and asks her to try for a bail. But before she comes with bail, Chandru dies and the corpse was shifted to mortuary and two jail constables are waiting to hand over the dead body to her. These two dehumanized police persons insult her and forcefully take 500 rupees from her. They force her to sleep with them and ask her to come to cinema with them. Further, they beat her relatives who try to prevent them. This gruesome affair clearly brings

out the inhuman nature of guardians of law. Here, Sammu is subjected to this heinous act just because she happened to be a tribal. (B.Ramulu and K. Seetha Ramarao, 119-120)

Mahaswetha enlightens the fact that there is triple marginalization involved in the plight of a tribal woman- being a woman she is at the mercy of the male members, being a tribal she is at the receiving end of the upper caste communities and being a member of the economically underprivileged section, she is the object of exploitation by the rich and the powerful. She faces oppression on account of being a woman, being poor and above all being a tribal. The process of exploitation involves class, community and gender. As Gabrielle Collu remarks:

Tribal women are oppressed on several levels. Firstly, because they are women in a patriarchal and patrilineal society and later as a tribal woman. Rape torture and forced prostitution are the means landowners and police employ to humiliate, punish and establish control over an entire community which is economically and materially dependent.(49)

In the Inaugural speech delivered by Mahaswetha Devi on 28-3-1998 at the Department of English, Kakatiya University she talked about the exploitation of the tribals: “The entire tribal world is like some, what shall I say, a great continent that was handed over to us. All over India, who is paying a price for just being born as tribals? I ask you can you name who is the exploited class of people in India today? They are the people who in 1871 and after subsequent acts of 1920 and 1921, the British just selected these tribes who did not cultivate and they say that from vedic times they are wandering singers, wandering dancers, snake charmers, acrobats, fishermen, drummer, things like that and they were notified as criminal tribes. No land for them. Forest was absolutely cut. So they did not have any livelihood left. And then what happened was they initiated them into crime, because if they do not steal, how can the police officer make a double storied house and political dadas can make so much property and how the receiver of the stolen goods can make so much money.”(98)

At this juncture it is necessary to point out a real incident that took place in the district of Adilabad. Bharatibai, a Gond adivasi woman, belongs to a remote village in Adilabad district. She had to go into the forest for work though she was a ‘Balintha’ (a mother having a just born baby at that time). The Anti-Naxalite-Squad (ANS) were conducting combing operations in the forest villages to weed out Naxalites from the area. When she was going through the forest Bharatibai had to face the ANS police. “Have you seen Naxalites going this way?” asked the police. “I do not know” was the answer from her. “No, you are going to my home to give milk to my baby.” The cops, who disbelieved the words of Bharatibai, said: “If you are a ‘Balintha’ your breasts should contain milk, therefore you show us your breasts” and then pressed her breasts. Further, the police dragged her to home and verified the situation. They realized that the baby of Bharatibai was really crying for milk to be fed by her mother. Why should this inhuman treatment be meted out to Bharatibai? What is the reaction of civilized society towards this incident? Why should they disbelieve the words of Bharatibai? Is it because she is a tribal that she belongs to an oppressed community? (KJES, 118-119) These are the questions, which each one of us has to put to ourselves.

Another incident in Manipur that took place in 2004 can be cited to prove that what Mahaswetha portrayed in the story is not out of the ordinary life or an entirely fictitious one. The murder of 32-year-old Thangjam Manorama Devi, alias Henthoi, allegedly a member of the people’s liberation army substantiates her fictional writing. She was picked up on a suspicion of being a terrorist by the Assam Rifles and was killed by the army. The Central Government did not take any protective measures about the incident. It remained passive and chose to just “wait and watch” the developments. The people of Manipur especially women started agitating strongly against the attack. By observing the angry mob, the Assam Rifles tried to manipulate the situation with a quick statement saying, Manorama was shot when she tried to run away. The false statement

of the army made the angry mob to be more aggressive because Manorama died with the bullets in her body when she was in their custody.

When the government failed to do justice they resorted to violent methods. A group of Manipuri women hold a banner quoting 'Indian Army Rape Us', standing naked outside the headquarters of the Assam Rifles paramilitary force in Imphal on July 15, 2004 to protest against the killing of Thangjam Manorama Devi. When citizens start losing faith in the established systems of redresses, they resort to such violent activities to show their protest. Manipur was seething with the angry mob after the alleged killing of Manorama Devi. To show the protest on this incident around 20 elderly women "marched against the might of the Indian States, using no other weapon than their naked bodies." (Deccan Chronicle, 15)

The protest had a great effect upon the nation. The sight of these women disturbed the whole nation: Flavia Agnes observes:

Only uncontrollable anguish and a deep sense of despair can drive elderly "respectable" women to it. They have won the admiration of the entire nation. They have shown the women's movement that if rape is used as an ultimate shaming of our bodies and ourselves, left with no other armour, we will use the same bodies to shame the perpetrators', this time the India State and its parliamentary forces who have been raping and killing innocents for decades. They breathed life into Mahaswetha Devi's fiction. (15)

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Indian English Short Story – An Overview

Dr. N.S. Vishnu Priya

Short story is a form of fiction short in length that can be read in twenty minutes. Brevity, economy and short length are its salient features. Though short story in its right form had its birth in India through the Chandamama Stories and Kasi Majili stories, it is found right from the Vedic ages. Gunadhya wrote Bruhatkatha and Nannaya wrote Prasannakatha. We have Janapadha stories and Panchatantra stories as well. “Though short story as a genre is present since the ancient times, it owes its present form to the Western Literature”. (Poranki Dakshinamoorthy)

Indian English short story deep-rooted in Indian tradition as folk tales and fables came into existence only during the Gandhian age. The early Indian short story writers got inspiration from Panchatantra, Jataka tales, folk tales, Brihatkatha, Dasakumara Charitam, Upanishads, Puranas, epics like Ramayana and Mahabharata. The history of Indian English short story began with the publication of Kamala Sattianadan’s Stories from Indian Christian Life in 1898. Shashee Chunder Dutt published the first short story collections Realities of Indian Life: Stories collected from the criminal reports of India. (London,1985). Shashe Chunder Dutt and Sourindra Mohan Tagore published another short story collection called The Times of Yore: Tales from Indian History (London, 1985). Almost all these stories mirrored the realities of life.

Cornelia Sorabji was a Parsi lady educated in Britain who became the first woman advocate in Calcutta in 1924. In the beginning of the twentieth century she wrote an Indian English short story with a considerable literary output. She wrote four collections of short stories where she dealt with Hindu life and Parsi life in both Princely and Plebeian circles. These stories have an undercurrent of social reform and are narrated in a Victorian manner.

Almost all the notable Indian English short story writers of that period were from south India. Hence those stories dealt mostly with sentiments and rustic life in Tamilnadu. A.S.P. Ayyar in his stories dealt with social reform and plight of women in traditional Hindu society. In his short story collection Sense in sex and other stories, he tackled some of the problems such as evils of sex and marriage faced by Indian women of the day. S.K.Chettiar’s short stories were based on the materials collected during his official tour. They had an inclination for moral instructions and social amelioration. As they didn’t have proper vision or artistic sense they ended up in a fiasco.

Manjeri Iswaran was a prolific short story writer of 1930 s with 10 volumes of short stories to his credit in the form of either anecdotes or unabashed tear jerkers illuminating glimpses into human psychology. Though he used fantasy and supernatural in his short stories, they were remarkable for the variety of character and situation. His female characters ranged from house wife to school going girl, mother-in-law to daughter-in-law and young widow to a granny. He employed a variety of narrative strategies including the observer’s point of view and the use of journals and letters, but confined himself to the life of the low and middle classes in the erstwhile Madras state. He excelled in the sympathetic revelation of female psyche with war, Indian freedom struggle, innocence of children, women’s problems and other social evils as his themes. He wrote mostly on families caught between traditionalism and modernity. But the major flaw in his short stories was prolonging the story even after the point has been made.

Then came the big three or Indian Trio - Anand, Narayan and Raja Rao. Mulk Raj Anand, the advocate of the down trodden and the under privileged voiced the concerns and predicaments of the lower classes in our society. He used crude language to convey the truth of Indian myth fused with harsh reality. In his short stories he condemned with humour and irony some of the social, political,

ethical and moral practices which resulted in the oppression of the poor, the down trodden and the women. He wrote about the pride of parents, child marriage, stubborn-ness of elders, hypocrisy, insanitation and cruelty in education attacking social evils on scientific and humanistic grounds which resulted in a rationalist analysis of contemporary taboos. His myth was to remove untouchability.

Writing in a lighter vein and style, Narayan dealt with the various facets of human life in an engaging or entertaining way or stooped to journalistic details and sensationalism. He blended practical experiences and realities of human life to evoke humour, entertainment with hidden gentle irony. His stories were characterized by Chekhovian simplicity and gentle humour. His characters were ordinary, down to earth Indians trying to blend tradition with modernization. They tried to live their simple lives in a changing world. His writing style was simple, unpretentious and witty with a unique flavour as if he were writing in the native tongue. He also delved into child psychology and portrayed children with perfect sympathy and understanding. But he did not depict many women characters. Though his women characters were few in number they were strong. But he did not make any reference to religion and belief.

Raja Rao wrote on social and political scenes around him. He tried to evoke Indian thought and tradition. His writings had a blend of innovative, experimental and dynamic prose style with spirituality pointing to the ultimate. Long before Solomon Rushdie, he introduced unique Indian literary genres such as interior monologue, retrospective narrative and symbolism into Indian English Literature. As Prof. Makarand Poranjape points out, "Raja Rao considered his writing a sadhana, a spiritual discipline. Regarding him is also a sadhana. Like great Russian writers Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, his fiction elevates the spirit, taking the reader to a higher plane of consciousness". (Quoted by Sasibala)

Khushwant Singh was the short story writer of free India. He wrote about blind belief, evils of democratic system, with a blend of irony and comic sense. Apart from the above mentioned short story writers we have K.A. Abbas, G.D. Khosla, Bhabani Bhattacharya, Bunny Reuben, Chamal Nahal, Parasu Balakrishnan, Ruskin Bond and Usha John who contributed in varying degrees to the growth and development of short stories.

Though K.A.Abbas was well-known in film industry he had created a place for himself in the niche of Indian English short story through his collections. He wrote about political problems like partition, bloodshed and refugee influx and social evils like poverty, ignorance, inefficiency, hypocrisy, selfishness and unemployment. Either enraged and furious or sentimental and melodramatic his narrative technique was coloured with a strong urge for visual cinematic effects.

G.D. Khosla was another short story writer who through his works gave us a peep into the multifaceted personality of Mother India. Through his four volumes of short stories he hit hard at social evils like untouchability and ill-matched marriage. He wrote with sensitivity and objectivity about different types of people from rickshaw pullers to businessmen, from film heroines to defiant loving ladies. Manohar Malgonkar had published three collections of short stories, which deal with the army life and hunting.

Ruskin Bond another prominent contemporary short story writer had brought out a number of short story collections like Neighbour's Wife (1966), My first Love and Other Stories (1968). The Man Eater of Manjeri(1972) and The Girl from Copenhagen (1977). But he was confined to a particular locale and the events taking place there. Manoj Das, a contemporary of Ruskin Bond wrote about the dreamy quality and the ethereality of atmosphere in his short stories. A. Madhavaiah wrote a short story titled "Kushitka" which gave importance to marriage reforms. Shankar Ram's Children of the Kaveri and Creatures All Show dealt with spiritual crises in human lives. K.S. Venkataramani wrote about the various facets of human life in his Jatadharan and Other

Stories. Through his short stories he depicted the social evils of the contemporary society. K.Nagarjan was a short story writer who wrote about the realities of human life. He had a fine sense of humour and mastery over English idiom. Margaret Chatterjee, K.N. Daruwalla and Shiv K.Kumar were the Indian English poets who had made significant name as short story writers.

Nergis Dalal published a single volume of her short stories. Arun Joshi and Anita Desai talked about deep hidden human motives and emotions. Chaman Nahal had got much reputation as a novelist rather than a short story writer. In the last two decades there has been a rapid growth of Indian women writing in English. Most of them are educated middle class women who express their discontent through their writings. They have written about the plight of women trapped in the institutions such as child marriage, dowry and prohibition of women's education, arranged marriages and enforced widowhood. Nayantara Sahgal, Shashi Deshpande, Shoba De and Namta Gokhale take us into the bedroom of their characters focusing on their behavioural patterns and the factors that account for their unconventional actions.

As Kamal Mehta puts it, "From 1960s onwards women's voice has become an inevitable part of the domain of literature. Women have become more and more conscious of their status in the society and self-identity."⁽³⁰⁾ The present day women writers have moved away from traditional portrayals of enduring self sacrificing women towards women searching for identity. Their women characters can no longer be defined in terms of their victim status. Instead of limiting the lives of women to one ideal they talk about the diversity of women from within and outside. Thus they try to make the society aware of women's demands giving way to self expression.

Anita Desai in her Games at Twilight and other stories writes about the temperamental differences in marital life, psychological complexes and social sensibilities. Shashi Deshpande is the other major prolific contemporary short story writer who has five volumes of short stories to her credit. She deals with women's problems such as marital discord, separation, depression in love, boredom, lack of understanding in marital life. Though her protagonists are not feminists they give more importance to reconciliation, stoicism and self denial. She depicts the inner trauma of her characters in such an apt manner that the readers feel as if they are sharing the agony of her characters. Except for a few stories like, "The Legacy, A Man and a Woman, A Rainy Day, A.Liberated woman" most of her protagonists are women.

The other note worthy short story writers are Vera Sharma, Gauri Deshpande, Nisha Da Cunha, Anjana Appachana, Neelam Sharma Gaur, Manjula Padmanabham, Manjukak, Rukun Advani, Kalpana Swaminathan, Subhadra Sen Gupta, Reeta Dutta Gupta, Shourie Daniels, Nina Sibal, Deepa Shah, Manorama Mathai, Anitha Nair, Esher David, Kamala Das and Lakshmi Kannan. Dina Mehta's short story "Absolution" revolves around the emotion of jealousy. Nayantara Sahgal never allows her characters to speak out. Raji Narasimham in her short story "A Toast to Herself" gives freedom to her characters.

Thus Indian English short story has traveled a long way making a break-through by exploring new areas and techniques. Though modern Indian English short story has grown in variety and vitality, most of the writers have confined themselves to social scenes and events ignoring certain other burning issues of the day such as political awakening and upheavals. Sometimes over enthusiastic and sentimental taking up word jugglery and verbosity they have added variety of themes and diversity of techniques to this art form.

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Learner autonomy in non western countries

D. J. B. Esther Rajathi

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Introduction

Learner Autonomy has become popular over the last two decades especially in the field of language learning. An autonomous learner takes an active part in the learning process. Autonomous learning is an independent way of learning a language. "Autonomy is a situation in which the learner is totally responsible for all the decisions concerned with his or her learning and the implementation of those decisions" (Leslie Dickinson). The learner depends on his own, to choose the method of learning and to decide what to learn. Phil Benson states that "Autonomy is recognition of the rights of learners within educational system". In general, the learner should be encouraged to be more independent in their learning process.

Importance of learner autonomy

In a broader sense, autonomy "is the ability to take charge of one's own ability" (Henri Holec). Autonomous learners learn on their own and they have an independent ability to execute the ideas, thoughts and knowledge. Learner autonomy is "essentially a matter of learner's psychological relation to the process and context of learning-a capacity for detachment, critical reflection, decision making and independent action" (Little, 1991:4). It is not something done to learners; therefore it is far from being another teaching method. (Ibid.). An autonomous learner effectively involves himself in the learning process. He is completely independent and does not expect others' assistance or guidance in his learning process. An autonomous learner has the accountability to discover his own capacity and talents to reach the goal. As the autonomous learners are self-motivated they can bring out their knowledge, ideas and opinion successfully and creatively. Autonomous learners do not have the tendency to rely upon others to solve the problems instead they themselves find solutions. They convey their own perceptions which enhance their skills.

Learner autonomy in non western countries

Learner autonomy is encouraged and it is established in western countries. It is true that independent learners are being valued and they do possess excellent perceptual skills. But, it is inappropriate to the non-western learners. Learners of non western countries do not take responsibility of their own learning. The system of education in non-western countries is entirely different from western countries. Knowledge reproduces information. Learning is "transmission of knowledge from one individual to another" (Benson & Voller, 1997:20). Of course teachers are filled cups i.e. cups filled with knowledge and learners are cups to be filled with knowledge by transmission. It is seen mostly in non western countries especially in India, information is just been transmitted and the inborn abilities and talents of the learners been suppressed.

Teachers play an important role in making the learners learn independently. A teacher is not an instructor but a facilitator and it is the task of the teachers to make learners' attempts simple. As English is the global language, much importance has been given to it. English plays a major role in the field of education. Employability demands language. "The concept of learner autonomy can be interpreted differently in different cultural and educational settings" (Holliday 2003; Little wood, 1999). The cultural and educational background of the learners differs in each country. The curriculum and methodology of teaching is also entirely different. Curriculum must be reframed in non western countries and priority must be given to independent learning. The system of education must help the teachers as well as the learners to distinguish the concept of learner autonomy.

Problems affect non western educational background

Learning language needs concentration and curiosity. Learners should have willingness to learn the language. They also should realize the importance of learning language. The learners do not show interest in learning the language. But, they accept themselves as they are and they do not have the intention to improve their skills. Learners should possess all four skills such as listening, speaking, reading and writing. Reading and Writing have been given more importance rather than speaking and listening. Least preference been given to speaking and listening because of the lack of time, more number of students, cramped classrooms and mixed group of learners. Apart from all these the major reason is that much importance been given to examination. Assessment tests been conducted every month and the students are anxious to fetch marks in their internals. The teachers rush up to cover the syllabus and they are very busy in evaluating the performance of the students, they want the students to get through the exams but no one cares how far the lessons been taught is useful practically to the students. Individual attention could not been given as the strength is high.

Learning language demands the involvement of the learners. The classroom has the varied group of learners. The ability of the learners differs and it is difficult to improve all four skills. At times, when speaking been practiced in the classroom the teacher find very difficult to have control over the students and the classroom becomes very noisy which leads to some discipline issues. "Promoting learner autonomy involves responsibility change between teachers and learners" (Gokgoz, 2008; Balcikanli, 2006). Students are ought to be responsible and they should show readiness and involvement in the process of learning language. People are for quantity, not quality. Quantity based education is practiced and people do not care for quality based education.

How to promote learner autonomy in non western countries

Learner autonomy encourages the learner to be self-governing and self-motivated and thus makes language learning more successful and optimistic. Holec, sees "Autonomous Learning is a double process, it entails learning the foreign language and learning how to learn". Students have more responsibility than teachers in learning process. Teacher should adapt a method of teaching which has a good reach among the students. Teacher should always be friendly with the students. They should not impose their ideas on the students. They should always be approachable and they should build a good rapport with the students. Effective activities must be conducted and it is the responsibility of the teacher to make the students participate enthusiastically. Competitions to improve the language learning can be conducted by dividing the students into groups and by naming each group to make the students take part actively. Small prizes can be given to the team which won thereby, creating an interest among the students. Teachers should give individual attention especially to the slow learners. Learners' goals and talents should be identified and they should be channelized properly. Teachers should encourage and motivate the learners to bring out their talents. The teachers be supposed to give them confidence that they can achieve their goals. Students always expect a pat on their back and teachers should be a good motivator and a facilitator. Besides, the learners should also be interactive and cooperative with the teachers to succeed in their endeavors.

Conclusion

Learner autonomy in non western countries can be promoted by encouraging and motivating the non western learners and make them understand the importance of learning language by providing them suitable environment and system of education. Creativity has to be encouraged in learning circumstances.

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The Exuberance in Teaching and Learning Languages

Geetha Venkatesh

Right from the time a child is born it starts acquiring its mother tongue by listening to the conversations around it. It listens to its mother, father, and other relatives talk to it and among themselves and tries to decipher the sounds spoken. Though the child does not have the cognitive ability then, it slowly develops with its physical growth. Thus the first step in learning a language is “Listening”. When it is about a year or two older the child begins to differentiate various speech sounds and also tries to reproduce or imitate or frame sounds of its own. It starts speaking the language spoken by its parents. It steps in to the next phase “Speaking”. Once the child starts taking formal education, it enters the next two phases “Reading” and “Writing”.

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Every language is learnt best only if the LSRW method is followed. But learning can be tiresome since application closely follows; and incorrect application often leads to ridicule and mockery. Over the years of study, scientists and researchers have found that concepts taught with a blend of fun have always been grasped at a faster pace by the students and the results were always better too. In order to make learning a fun process teaching ought to be relaxed and exuberant too. Hence the need to innovation and creativity in the process of teaching arises, so as to make learning interesting and effective.

Several games and fun activities have been designed by educationists and language experts to enable the teaching-learning process interesting to both the teacher and the taught. But over a period the fun factors have been lost due to several constraints like time, frame of syllabus, necessity to induce external factors, attitude of the students and so on. The current attitude of the students’ community is such that they have access to every possible external learning source which leaves them in no special need for a teacher. But the one thing which the modern electronic gadgets cannot supplement is the innovation factor. They do not have the power to retain the students and enable them to completely grasp the necessary concepts. Especially, learning languages is not possible without a human teacher. How much ever the electronic gadgets and softwares help in the process of learning languages, it is a human teacher who can actually test the students’ level of understanding and correct them when they go wrong. Surveys prove that language learning was effective in the yesteryears when electronic gadgets were never invented. Fact-to-face communication enabled people to grasp any new language. Reading and writing further enhanced their knowledge of the language and thus people learnt several languages. Direct contact with the teacher helped them connote concepts to practical factors and thus the learning process was faster.

Connotation always plays a very important role in the learning process. Especially in the process of learning languages, connotation, which the Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary defines as “an idea suggested by a word in addition to its main meaning”, plays a vital role. This can be substantiated with the following illustration.

Example: The teacher wants to explain the meaning and usage of the idiom “Pull the plug”.

Formal explanation:

“To pull the plug means to stop an event from happening. For example; ‘*when things started going out of control I had to pull the plug.*’”

Connotative explanation:

Teacher: *Do you like listening to songs?*

Students: *Yes!*

Teacher: *If I bring in a tape recorder and play songs now, will you like it?*

Students: *Of course, yes!*

Teacher: *Let us say I pull out the plug all on a sudden. What will happen?*

Students: *The music would not play. It would stop!*

Teacher: *If I pull the plug, music would.....?*

Students: *Stop!*

Teacher: *Good! So, the idiom "To pull the plug" means.....?*

Students: *To stop something?*

Teacher: *Yes, you are right! It means to stop something from happening or from proceeding.*

In the above illustration the teacher tries to connote the idiom "to pull the plug" with a real life situation, thus enabling the students to decipher the meaning by themselves.

Letting the students discover the answers all by themselves not only induces interest in learning but also creates a congenial atmosphere for leaning. It relieves the students off the stress and makes them relish the learning process. There are numerous ways to make learning exciting. But over all it depends on the method that the teacher employs. One of the techniques which will never fail to attract students is play-way method. A mélange of fun with studies will satisfy both the teacher and the taught.

There are several important aspects of learning languages. The most important ones are vocabulary acquisition, sentence formation, grammar and application. These aspects are most often considered too uninteresting and dry. Hence the students dislike the theoretical part of learning a language. It proves a great challenge for the teachers too to break the wall that has erupted and to bring the students back to learning process. In order to prevent such walls from erupting, employment of play-way method can be very effective. This method demands high creativity, innovative techniques and patience. The following methods can be employed in the process of teaching and learning various aspects of a language.

Teaching vocabulary:

Every individual's vocabulary can be split into active and passive. Active vocabulary consists of a set of words that are often put to use with complete or partial knowledge about the words. Passive vocabulary consists of words that are seldom or never used due to unfamiliarity of meaning and usage. When words in active vocabulary are used sparsely, they tend to get accumulated in the passive vocabulary. Like wise if the words in passive vocabulary are often used and meanings are learnt, they get added to one's active vocabulary. This movement takes place in every individual's mind. In order to reduce the number of words in passive vocabulary and to increase the number in active vocabulary the following games can be employed in classroom teaching.

1. Word Disintegration: This is probably one of the oldest and commonest of all word games. The teacher would give a difficult word and ask the students to derive known words using the letters in the parent word.

Example: "Exuberance" – bar, bear, ear, can, cab, ran, race, etc.

This game not only kindles the active vocabulary of the students but also provokes wider thinking and a flair for the language.

2. Word Scramble: In this game the teacher would jumble the letters in a word and would ask the students to find the word as well as other smaller words hidden.

Example: "L U A R M" – arm, lam, mar, ram, rum, alum, arum, marl, maul, mural

This game not only kindles the active vocabulary but also the passive vocabulary, helping the students to recollect several forgotten words and to familiarize their meanings and usage.

3. **Snakes and Ladders:** This game has been played for over several generations as a mere pastime. The same can be used to teach vocabulary as well just by adding in a few rules. The board can be set in such a way that every ladder is always accompanied with a snake too. This way whenever a person is about to reach the cell with the ladder and snake, he or she has to answer a question related to vocabulary, either by giving the meaning for a word given or by using the word in a sentence. If the student is able to answer, he or she gets to climb the ladder; else he or she comes down the snake.
4. **Dumb Charades:** This too is a well-known game. The teacher can split the class into groups and give words to representatives from each group. The representatives would enact to his or her group to spot the correct word. Bonus marks could be given to those who can use the words into sentences and can give the meanings as well.
5. **Picture idioms:** The teacher could collect a few pictures that can signify an idiom and ask the students to guess the idiom.



Example: - a piece of cake – The test was a piece of cake.

There are several more games that could be employed in classrooms to teach new words and their meanings. A few other common activities are “match the correct synonyms”, “correct the spellings”, “dictionary hunt”, and so on. These activities also promote the students to use a dictionary. Thus their passive vocabulary shrinks and active vocabulary grows.

Teaching Sentence Patterns:

Sentence patterns in English are different from that in several other languages. Hence Grammar-Translation method will not help much in the process. Direct method is the most appropriate method using which a teacher can ensure the sentence patterns are deciphered properly. Sentence patterns in English have always been taught in schools using Subject, Verb and Predicate; using abbreviations to symbolize each category and asking students to frame sentences accordingly. However, formation of sentences can be taught better using the following methods.

1. **Enact the sentence patterns:** In this method, the teacher could call out a few students to represent a subject and an object, make them perform some actions and explain the verb and the relationship between the subject and the object.

Example: A student gives a pen to another student. Teacher can explain that the student A is the **Subject**, pen is the **Direct Object**, student B is the **Indirect Object** and the action of giving is the **Verb**.

2. **Jumble, arrange and shuffle:** In this method the teacher can write out nouns and verbs in pieces of papers and jumble them. The students can be split into groups and made to frame sentences in various patterns using the various nouns and verbs. This would help them broaden up their thinking capacity. The papers could be shuffled and reshuffled to frame a huge variety of sentences.
3. **Spot in the story:** This is one of the most interesting methods which might help students to learn sentence patterns faster. A story can be printed out and circulated among the students. The students can split themselves into groups and identify various sentence patterns in the story. This would enhance their reading skills as well.

Though there are several more play-way methods of teaching, sentence patterns and formation have always been a big challenge for the teachers as well as students due to the influence of mother-tongue. Hence it is advisable to carry out teaching sentence formations at a later stage in the process of teaching languages.

Teaching Grammatical Components:

Grammar is the most essential part of any language. But it is always considered to be one of the toughest and less interesting components to be taught and learnt. But this component can be made interesting if the teacher can interact with students, make them come out with the aspects they already know and then explain them in detail. It is always better to induce games and fun activities in some form or other to ensure full participation of the students. The following are few games that can be used while teaching various components of grammar.

1. **Word scrappers:** In this game one student would begin giving a word that is a noun. The next student would add an article; the next would add an adjective and so on. Once all the components of Parts of Speech are induced, the last student would be asked to give it as a full sentence. Since the students themselves add words to words, they would make sure they add meaningful words to make a complete sentence. This would not only make them familiar with the Parts of Speech but also help them frame larger sentences. **Example:** *Apple - The apple – The big apple – The big apple was eaten – The big apple was eaten slowly- The big apple was eaten slowly by me – The big apple was eaten slowly by me and my friend – Oh! The big apple was eaten slowly by me and my friend.*
2. **Story with actions:** In this method the students could be asked to choose a short story of their choice. Each student can be given one component which he or she will have to just enact wherever it occurs instead of telling it out. **Example:** If a student is given prepositions, while narrating the story, whenever a preposition occurs, he or she has to enact that particular preposition so that other students would try and identify the same. This method would help the student who enacts to identify prepositions in the story and will help the other students to learn various prepositions. Whenever a student misses out a preposition the teacher could help out with the same.

English is the need of the hour and there is an urge to learn the language thoroughly in every individual. When the schools and colleges fail to help the learners with learning the language properly, only then they start looking out for extra help. Even if teachers do their best to put all their expertise in teaching, improper interaction and failing to involve all the students in the classroom activities would result in failures. Since every student today have easy access to computers and web they easily acquire the basics of English and grammar through web sources. Hence teacher must understand that what students really need; whether the basics or explanations; and then plan their teaching methods accordingly. In all the scenarios play-way method of teaching languages will definitely prove fruitful. Irrespective of the age group, every individual today looks for an atmosphere where learning would be pleasant, where teachers would respect their level of understanding and provide them with ample knowledge according their level of understanding. The students expect innovations and creativity from teachers in all possible ways. Hence it is an inimitable fact that the exuberance in teaching and learning languages lies in the creative and innovative applications of the teachers.

**Note: No secondary sources were referred. All the methods and ideas mentioned above have been drawn out of real experiences of teaching and learning.*

Difficulties and Remedies in Learning English as Second Language

Indumati Nelluru & Abdul Ameen Mahammad

Introduction

In the world of Globalization, it has become the fact that English has become the World language and language of everything. On the other side, it has become the bitter pill that though English is the world language, still majority of the students, particularly from rural background and the learners of English as it is their second language are facing a lot of problems. To make them successful, academically and professionally, it has become clear that Language can be learnt by those students by integrating different methods of language acquisition. The students as well as the teachers ought to make integrated efforts which yield the objective.

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English Language – Importance:

English language, undoubtedly, plays a very pivotal role in the world. Almost all the people across the globe try to be good at language and to get the command over it. It is being used in every field such as education, trade, technology, banking, medicine, engineering and everywhere. Here are many independent countries, with their own ‘national’ languages, which nevertheless have opted for English as the necessary world language, and this facilitates mobility in ideas and persons over so extensive an area. Fortunately, for us, India with a population of 1000 millions, distributed between linguistic areas, a common link language English which is like the language of the elite and largely the medium of higher education. English has become, for us, more or less an Indian Language. The number is increasing day by day, shows the people who are interested in communicating in English language. 70 % of the communication is happening in English only. Every institution gives an utmost importance to English language and conducts various programmes for the development of their students and offer certified courses which are very much helpful in getting the placements across the globe keeping the view that ‘Learning a language is not acquiring the subject but acquiring the Skill’. There is a fact that “the man who speaks English fluently will not get lost in the world where there are people”.

Importance of English Communication for Students

At first, English acts as a tool that significantly affects the students in academic life, particularly at the time of graduation. While all the subjects in their academics are in English, it requires being competent enough in English communication. This is the thing particularly we do find with engineering students. They have various sorts of assignments like lectures, tutorials, labs, project reports and papers and everything is happening in English only. Especially, during the process of recruitment, they are being checked their proficiency in mastery of English. They are going to be placed in such organizations where all the people across the globe come and work and need to extend their cooperation. Hence, one should get the good competence in Communicating in English which plays a great role in the academic life and the professional life of every student.

Problems Faced By the Students of Rural Areas

Majority of the students belong to rural areas and most of them have had their regional language medium at their schooling. They have their own intellectuality, requisited qualification and their aspirations. But, at every juncture of their lives, they feel English is an obstacle for their career. So, let us have a look at the reasons which make the students who are the Digital Natives too, but, feeling the language a hard nut to crack.

Poor Background of Family

As everyone knows the fact that classroom contains the students of different levels. Some are good at grasping and their intellectuality whereas some people are good at English communication. It is observed that the ability of English communication is good with those whose parents are literate and belong to the higher or above middle classes to those who are illiterate and lower or below middle class. It is because of the parents' exposure to their child towards the improvement of English language. They always encourage their children since the beginning of their education. It does not happen with the latter as they are lagging in knowing the importance of English language.

Lack of Skilled Teachers

Another major fact is there are no skilled and interested teachers to motivate the students to improve their language skills. Some of them are following the traditional methods in their teaching which keeps the practical approaching aside. They are unaware of the upgrading technology and lagging with the advanced techniques in teaching English language. In fact, it happens from the primary levels of teaching. The only view of teachers, students, even the parents is to make the student get good result in their academics which does not yield the competence in English language. Finally, English becomes a nightmare to the student.

Learning Approach

Learning approach is another drawback. The students are accustomed to reading and writing, excessively, listening, to some extent and the process of speaking in English is totally ignored. But a student must attain all the four skills of language – Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing. Particularly, excessive listening must be done which helps them to be good in speaking. As it is proved historically, listening is the first process of learning and speaking a language. We had two great people in the history, Abhimanya and Prahlada. And at present, we can have the example about this is our childhood, the way we have become fluent in our regional language. But, the students are unable to get this simple logic to be applied in learning other language, English too.

Contrast Views on Learning Grammar in English

There is a much controversy on learning grammar in English. Grammarians say grammar is necessary to learn English language but anti-grammarians say it is not because no one knows the grammar in their regional language, in fact, they do not bother about grammar but they are good at speaking their language. So, grammar is being neglected and the application of grammar in day to day life is being ignored which does not help the student to get the competence in English language, particularly at the time of writing which is also being tested during their interviews.

Lack of Exposure to the English Communication

Most of the students of rural background are unaware of the importance of English communication which results the distinct student too fails in achieving success during his interview due to the lack of communication skills, mastering vocabulary and the aspect of pronunciation. As the classroom is the mixture of various students who are good at English communication make these students feel inferior gradually make them losing confidence on themselves. Sometimes they become alone and isolated.

Lack of Awareness

Students do not have complete awareness of English language since from the schooling. Generally, in schooling, for ten or twelve years, they do communicate in mother tongue mainly rather than the other tongue, i.e., English. They are not insisted to communicate in English and they feel free and comfortable with their own language. All of a sudden, the time they enter into college, if the teacher asks them to communicate in English, they will feel otherwise and inconvenient which leads to the lack of interest in them to sit and listen to the regular classes even.

Difficulty Levels of Pronunciation

English language is itself special with regard to its pronunciation. It has its own difficulty too. As there is no one-to-one correspondence between spelling and pronunciation in English, most of the students feel difficult in writing and sometimes communicating in English language. It is very clear that spoken part is totally different from written communication, but because of the difficulty in uttering some words as the students, from rural background particularly, are unable to identify the pronunciation of some words by its spelling, spoken aspect is ignored too.

Mother Tongue Interference

Most of the students face the problem with the influence of their native language or mother tongue in learning English language. They feel difficult in listening to the other tongue, later working with peers in classroom discussions, communicating with different groups, under one roof. There is a problem with the accent which leads to a lot of ambiguity in the minds of the students.

Remedies

From my experience and observation, I am presenting a few remedies to overcome the difficulties in learning English.

Role of Teachers

Keeping in view the importance of English communication and its demand, teachers should put the efforts to be integrated with the students. Machines of many kinds have an increasing role to play in education at all levels. They will upgrade the teacher but not replace him / her. The role of the teacher is merely important at all levels. There is a necessity of involvement of the faculty along with the student to increase the level of English communication competence. Faculty should not force the students to learn the language but to tell them the importance of language in their lives in a very convincing manner and assist them in attaining all the four skills. In fact, faculty makes the students to speak rather than they themselves engage in speaking or teaching. With the help of the teachers, students are able to participate in various activities like Presentations, Group Discussions, Role Plays, and Mock Interviews etc, to develop their communication.

Practical Approach of Grammar

Grammar should be taught in such a way the students learn their regional language. But, it takes lot of time again as they feel English is the second language. But they should be convinced that it should be learnt, of course, as second language, but for getting confidence in speaking and for good performance by all means.

Digital Learning

It is a fact that today's students are, no doubt, Digital natives. So, it's time to come out of traditional method of learning instead new trends and methods of teaching must be emerged in the process of learning English language. In fact, students are also showing their interest in learning using technology, i.e. computers. This method of learning helps the students to work more effectively which consists:

- Using Audio / Video clips
- Bilingual method – using regional language when it requires
- Language acquisition – vocabulary
- Situational Dialogues / Role plays
- Grammar Exercises
- Pronunciation practice

But, all the facilitators must be aware of the latest advancements.

In the process of Digital Learning, students may have:

- Direct Instructions
- Indirect Instructions experimental Learning
- Independent Study
- Interactive Instructions
- Creative Competence
- Self-adjusted Timing

Self – Learning

Students must be motivated towards the process of self- learning. They must make use of English newspapers, journals, news channels, magazines, English language classes and any other source which helps them in acquiring the English communication competence.

Requires Motivation

Acquisition of English language depends on Skill which requires lot of motivation. It needs the learners' attention, commitment, their devotion towards the achievement and success. The learner should make tremendous contribution in the process of language acquisition.

Improvement in Teaching Facilities

It should be seen that special efforts should be made certain that the teachers will get proper teaching facilities like materials, equipments, special reference books and teaching aids. The schools and colleges must ensure that their libraries will possess all the requisited books, journals and so on which helps them to make their students more active and enthusiastic learners of language.

Make Students Think in English

Teachers should motivate their students in such a manner to communicate only in English but not in their own tongue but should not insist them to speak in English, probably takes lot of time, months. Learning a language requires time to assimilate all the nuances of the language. English is particularly difficult for many people mainly because of the many exceptions to the rules.

Hence, students need opportunities to be active in their activities that require them to think and negotiate and practice language in communication with teacher and their peers.

Triggering Hopes

Teacher should feel responsible in building the confidence in the students. Students should not be asked the complex questions which make them feel inconvenient and stop them learning the language. The students should have good rapport with the class and the class teachers and they should be curious to the next class. Then only they will come to the class with new, higher hopes.

Levels of Standards Should Be Seen Matched

Undoubtedly, the standards of a teacher and a student are quite different. A teacher can speak like anything, but not does so the student. So, it is to be observed by the teacher whether the student is able to understand and run with him / her or not. Be patient with the students and encourage them in learning the other language, the second language, English and make them well expressive.

Conclusion

The teacher of English can certainly acquire professional excellence, if they attempt to possess the attributes and the methods that have been suggested. Development definitely will have the real development of a learner. Once students have accessed and analyzed information, it is now time for them to learn to organize it in a format that is easily found for future reference and use. Students turn their attempt to producing an end product with their information and knowledge. Above all, the learner has to make constant practice and receive training for speaking, reading and writing. When there is a coordination of four major skills, then the learner will easily at the same time, with ease he can learn the second language and become master in it. "Practice makes a man perfect", the learner should practice what he has learned.

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Communication by Translation

Dr. P. K. Jain

Introduction:

There is a close kinship among communication, language and translation. Generally speaking communication is sharing of information or intelligence. The most common medium of communication is language. Besides, non-linguistic ways such as kinetics of body, symbols, codes and signals are also employed to steer forth communication. But in present paper I argue on how linguistic communication is channelized by translation. Translation, from the very beginning, has been a form of communicating thoughts among various people, cultures and countries. The translator, before being a “writer” as such, is primarily a “message conveyor.” In most cases, translation is to be understood as the process whereby a message expressed in a specific source language is linguistically transformed in order to be understood by readers in the target language essentially consists of conveying the meaning expressed by the original writer. He forms a bridge between two languages- the source language and the target language. He is a true conveyor and interpreter of the message. The honesty and fidelity of the translation depends on how much proximity the translator has with both languages. Even the trivial slip in understanding either of the languages makes communication ineffective and meaningless. Nida states “translating consists in producing in receptor language the closest natural equivalent to the message of the source language first in meaning and secondly in style.” Thus the translator has to take care of meaning and style in order to make communication natural and palatable. In this way a translator acts in two capacity first as decoder and secondly as re-coder who understands the text and then interprets it to the receiver in its true spirit. Thus he is the real facilitator of communication. While defining the togetherness of communication and translation it is pertinent to quote Gadamer’s views, who never thought communication as, “passing of information from one person to another” but as “some subject matter” becoming “mutually accessible for two or more people.” He also stated that “invented systems of artificial communication are never languages. For artificial languages, such as secret languages or systems of mathematical symbols, have no basis in a community of language or life.”³ He also added that our verbal world should not be conceived as a barrier to knowledge, but rather than something embracing everything, “always open to every possible insight”, although “language as language can be contrasted with every other act of communication.”

Translation = Communication:

Everyone knows, for instance, that legal translation leaves little room for adaptation and rewriting. Similarly, when it comes to translating insurance contracts, style-related concerns are not paramount to the translating process; what the end reader needs is a translated text that is faithful to the source text in meaning, regardless of stylistic prowess from the translator. Yet, in a number of cases, the translator faces texts which are to be used within a process of “active communication” and the impact of which often depends on the very wording of the original text. In these specific cases, the translator sometimes finds it necessary to reconsider the original wording in order to both better understand the source text (this also sometimes occurs in plain technical texts) and be able to render it in the target language. This is the moment when the translator becomes an active link in the communication chain, the moment when his/her communication skills are called upon to enhance the effect of the original message.

The translation process here becomes twofold: firstly, the translator needs to detect potential discrepancies and flaws in the original text and understand the meaning they intend to convey. To do this, the translator often needs to contact the writer of the text to be translated (or any other person who is familiar with the contents of the text) in order to clarify the ambiguities he has come across. Secondly, once this first part of the work is over, the translator will undo the syntactic

structure of the original text and then formulate the corresponding message in the target language, thus giving the original text added value in terms of both wording and impact. It is important to stress that this work will always be carried out in cooperation with the original writer, so that the translator can make sure the translated message corresponds to the meaning the writer originally intended to convey; remember, the translator is essentially a message conveyor, not an author.

The art of translation has always been complex and flummoxing as it involves the matrix of two languages- the one source language and the other target language. It is not only difficult but impossible also to make perfect balance between the two. Hence every translation can only be an approximation," no translation can reproduce the original perfectly." It (The original) involves mind and soul of the writer at the particular moment of time, context and circumstances that disappears in the translation. A translator works hard to reach the original but in doing so he either adds something superfluous to it (the original) or drops (from the original) something essential. Most of the translations have problems of exactitude in emotions, meaning and context to the original text- both linguistically and culturally. These two factors separate the thinking plains of the writer and the translator to a great extent and thus make them poles apart. This chasm further widens in the translation of a literary work.

A translator tries to evoke an emotional experience in the reader through the translation similar to one created by the author of the original. Thus, he strives for the three way balance of emotion, form and content. Apart from this, a translator faces two fold problems-the one dealing with the choice of text for translation and non-availability of translations of the same text already done and the second linguistic and non-linguistic. These problems cover the areas of meaning, style, tone, technique and overall effect. In the words of Catford, " Translation as a space is always unidirectional: it is always performed in a given direction: from a Source Language (SL) into a Target Language (TL). Translation may be defined as follows: the replacement of textual material in one language (SL) by equivalent textual material in another language (TL). The central problem of Translation practice is that of finding TL translation equivalents".

Genuinely speaking, a translator chooses the text for translation keeping in mind the universality of the text and the author. Another significant criterion in the choice of a work for translation is its artistic worth, social relevance of a work and popularity of the writer. If the work has already been translated the translator has to work as a translation- critic and in case of finding it difficult he decides to translate afresh striking off the errors of earlier translators. On the other hand non-availability of the translation of the text compounds the problems of the translator as he has to work in a vacuum.

According to Nida the problem of translation between the target language and source language lies on two fronts "first in terms of meaning and the second in terms of style." The problem of style can be dealt in with the style of language and the style of author. The former means the peculiar stylistic structure of each language, which is closest to that in another language and the latter, the selection of individual author from the general stylistic structure of a language. In translation, the former aspect of style should be taken as a wider term to indicate the peculiarities of stylistic structure of each language. Style in the context of translation, can be defined as a structure of phonology, word, morphology and syntax of source language, which are contrastive to those of target language. Stylistic problems in translation occur mainly because of the difference in the stylistic structure of source and target languages. It means that stylistic problems in translation should be studied with the help of contrastive stylistic analysis of source language and target language. Nida divides stylistic problems of translation into four levels- Phonological, lexical, morphological and syntactic."⁸

Phonological Factors - In Translation, from one language to another, phonological factor, play a vital role. Every language has its own phonological system. A translator will have to be aware of

phonological system of both the languages - the source language and the target language. The slight lapse will change the pronunciation of one word into another. Special care should be taken in the pronunciation of proper nouns. They should bear diacritical marks to ensure correct pronunciation and it happens with other words also where there is a danger of homophonous words. These diacritical marks may create problem to the readers in understanding the accurate implication of these marks.

Lexical Factors - It pertains to the words or vocabulary of language. Every lexical form is connected in two directions with grammatical forms. But in translation it has its deep impact. The accuracy of translation depends on the understanding of the meaning given in the source language. A translator will have to be very intelligent in bringing the suggestive meaning of the source sentence into the target sentence. Sentence is the prime basis of meaning and not the word, the word becomes meaningful only when it is used in sentence. The meaning of a word depends upon its use in the sentence, its context, etymology, appropriateness, time and place, association, contrast, gender, collocation its power of expression the meaning, the speaker and the tone. A literal translation cannot communicate the exact meaning of the original. Words of one language, many times, do not find their parallels in other language. While translating such words, a translator will have to find out the meaningful equivalent words to convey the exact meaning of the original. Idiomatic phrases create lot of problems to the translator...for example "os yky & ihys gks x;sA" A literal translation would be they became red and pale. While it should be translated as "They burst into anger". Combined words, too, create problem to the translator for example "uhyh&uhyh" "can not be translated as "blue-blue." "pk;&ok;" means "tea". Regional words also pose a lot of problem before a translator.

Morphological Factors - At the morphological level, there are a number of problems for a translator. These problems are mainly brought out because of different morphological structures in languages. No two languages have the same morphological structure. This create problem in finding out the equivalent words while translating from one language to the other. Apart from this, there are other problems also that are related to verb morphology: compound verb formation, tenses and other aspects. In Hindi, we generally make use of complex verbal formations made up of nouns and verbs. But while translating to English these complex verbal formations are translated into simple verbs. For example, "fglkc tksM+uk" "to add an account" must be changed "to calculate the account.

Syntactical Factors - At syntactical level, the problems of a translator are many and complex to a great extent. Grammatical structure of a language differs from the other. In English, articles play important role in making a sentence directional and meaningful. We find nominative expressions, finite verb expression, taxeme of selection etc. in English. Every syntactic construction shows us two of (or some times more) free forms combined in a phrase, which we may call the resultant phrase. The resultant phrase may belong to a form class other than that of any constituent. In English definiteness can also be part of some grammatical constructions, such as the relative clause construction. There are problems in translating sentences with complex construction. For example - "tehu ij fxjk gqvk Vksi" on (the) ground fallen hat' should be translated into "the hat dropped on the ground".

The proverbs, customs, myths, folk images, relations, humour, specialized vocabulary of one language do not correspond to the other. It is not only difficult but sometimes impossible to find equivalent words in other language by the translator. For example "pkpk] ekSlk bR;kfn" do not find their parallelism in the word "uncle" of English.

The above discussed problematic areas of translation cause compound challenges to translator and even the trivial slip at any step changes the whole course of meaning, thus, seriously affecting the direction of communication. A perfect translation of a work from one language to another is like cloning. Pointing the problem of translation Fried-Rich Maxmuller had said that

translation could never take the place of the originals, because they could never be more than an approximation of one language to the other. Then he observed, " The translator, however, if he has once gained the conviction that it is impossible to translate old thought into modern speech, without doing some violence either to the one or to the other, will hardly hesitate in his choice between two evils. He will prefer to do some violence to language rather than to misrepresent old thoughts by clothing them in words which do not fit them. "

Conclusion:

In this paper my initial aim is to highlight the common aspects of communication and problematic areas of translation and to explore how translator plays a vital role in defining communication with its accurate meaning to the reader. Ineffective communication is meaningless and in our struggle to make it effective 'translation' is involved on multiple levels, bearing in mind the possibility of both intralingual and interlingual translation. As for interlingual translation, Rosenzweig stated more than three decades ago that there are no linguistic particularities in any language that cannot be found (at least in germs) in all the other languages (cf. Chomsky's concept of universal grammar), which forms the basis of the possibility, mission and necessity of translation. However, he predicts the harmony of all languages one day, which – at least in the present – seems to be more than utopian. Despite all these bottlenecks at various stages translation pervades our lives , it is omnipresent and indispensable in all domains. In present age of information technology translator has proved to be the true ambassador of communication across *the* globe.

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English Language Teaching Through Stylistics at Undergraduate Level

Jayakrishnan. M & Dr. G. K. Chithra

English language teaching in classrooms across the country faces many challenges. Two of the most significant challenges are the adoption of suitable methodology for the teaching of English as a second language and the materials with which this methodology is to be realized. These are extremely significant because the effectiveness of language learning in classroom depends on the way a teacher selects, manipulates and executes these two aspects of language teaching to suit the needs of the students. The importance of English language teaching through Stylistics can be viewed from this fact that it offers an infinite range of materials and a novel methodology of appreciating these materials resulting in non-conscious learning of English language.

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Methodology of Stylistic analysis:

Stylistics is concerned with the systematic analysis of style in language and how this can vary according to such factors such as genre, context, historical period and author (Leech Geoffrey 2008:54). In many respects, Stylistics is similar to literary criticism and practical criticism. It is also the application of the principles of linguistics in literary criticism. Thus, stylistics invariably exhibits the aesthetic zeal of a literary critic and scientific temper of a linguist.

The set of practices, procedures and rules, commonly called methodology, as governed by the stylistic analysis are well suited to class room practices of language transaction. One of the foremost reasons for this claim is that stylistic analysis is primarily literary criticism. Here, the concept of 'literary criticism' differs from the ordinary concept of literary criticism on two accounts. First, the concept of 'literature' and the next is the mode of criticism.

The concept of literature:

The concept of "what is literature?" has undergone a drastic change over the last few decades. The traditional concept of literariness is basically value-judgment, which is highly subjective, personal and hence subject to prejudices. The concept of literary merit of a text for two critics of different socio-political background will be drastically different. Therefore, for the stylistic analysis, literature includes all written discourses. Moreover, the same language transcends all discourses and since we are concerned with language in classrooms, the literature for stylistic analysis is all written discourses.

The mode of criticism:

There are many grey areas in the way the ordinary literary criticism which is based on criticism of early to mid-twentieth century, approaches a text. The analysis and interpretation were based on subjective and impressionistic values. The observations and judgments are highly personalized and therefore two critics arriving at different views on the same text is common. Stylistics provide a less intuitive and personalized interpretations of text.

"By concentrating on the language of the text, and accepted linguistic methods of categorizing and interpreting, it is argued that stylistics did not reflect the views of the Individual critic, but an impersonal, reproducible 'truth.' Anyone approaching the text and conducting the same stylistic procedure ought to arrive at the same results." (Thornborrow & Wareing, 1998, p. 5)

Stylistics attempts to analyze and interpret on objective criteria. Both analysis and Interpretation are based on empirical methods. However, there are criticisms that stylistics is not as objective as it claims to be. But, on closer observation, it can be seen that interpretations can be

subjective because the meaning and message in language are extremely contextual and reader oriented. Saussure observed, "In language, there are only differences without positive terms."

Another key point in the suitability of stylistics as a classroom methodology is that the analysis is linguistic based. The phrase structure analysis provides an excellent understanding of the structure of English language itself. Hence, the stylistic analysis also provides an interesting platform to learn English grammar contextually as well as non-consciously.

Variety of Materials:

The materials for stylistic analysis includes all forms of written or spoken discourses such as Poems, extracts of fiction, speeches, quotes of eminent personalities, advertisements, diary entries, news reports, owner's manual of electronic gadgets etc. Such sheer variety of learning materials makes the methodology of stylistic analysis very versatile and attractive as an excellent tool for English language teaching. Such variety of materials has also other advantages for a teacher. A teacher can easily select the appropriate materials to suit the level of learners. Choosing the materials of appropriate length and difficulty level also allows flexible time management. Further, the materials for teaching being of ordinary discourses, the learners get an opportunity to familiarize with the English language in usage today in various fields of communication. Such materials also involve the representational language which "in order that its meaning be decoded by a receiver, engages the imagination of the receiver" (McRae, 1991, p. 3).

Objectives of teaching English language through Stylistics:

Objectives are the learning outcomes that are expected in a specific period and measurable in terms of discrete language skills. It may be specified as content based or language based, teacher centered or learner centered, process or product oriented. The following are the learning objectives of teaching English language through stylistics expected to be achieved through the module designed by the researcher.

1. To understand how graphological features of a poem are manipulated to achieve the desired poetic effects.
2. To understand how morphological features such as compounding, neologism, coinages etc., are manipulated from linguistic norms to achieve a particular effect.
3. To understand how lexical features are selected and manipulated such as deviant collocation to achieve a style.
4. To be able to identify the phonological deviations employed in various discourses such as rhymes, consonance, assonance etc for a particular effect.
5. To be able to identify the syntactic deviations in discourses such as inversion, repetition, enjambment, parallelism etc to achieve foregrounding.
6. To understand and identify the semantic deviations such as metaphor, metonymy, oxymoron etc., to achieve deviation and foregrounding in discourses.
7. To understand deviation, repetition and parallelism as major foregrounding devices.
8. Analyze English sentences into its syntactic categories and identify the constituents of each category.
9. To sensitize the modern concept of literature and identify the distinction between 'Literature' and 'literature'.
10. To understand how authors select specific point of view of narration for desired effects.
11. To understand how a writer achieves satirical effects.
12. To familiarize with some of the gender specific issues in English language.
13. To understand the stylistic effects of modality and transitivity
14. To understand the selection and manipulation of pre modifiers and post modifiers for particular effects.

15. To understand that ungrammaticality is a way of achieving style.
16. To identify the period of literature by analyzing its vocabulary.
17. To read and appreciate discourses and understand how linguistic features are manipulated for achieving specific effects.
18. To enable the learners to heuristically rewrite texts and thereby identify linguistic features those provide the feel of the text.
19. To empower the learners to develop language, text and cultural awareness in the reading of discourses.
20. To develop skills of literary analysis and response.

Conclusion:

According to A. K. Sharma: “English language teaching in India, you will agree with me, has suffered a lot so much that our students who pass intermediate or degree examinations with English either as a compulsory or as an elective subject can neither speak nor write correct English, may be because the emphasis in our schools and colleges has always been on the conceptual content and **the stylistic content has been neglected so far.**” (66). The methodology of stylistics greatly reduces the emphasis on the content aspects and enable the learners to concentrate on how English language works in the linguistic context of the discourse. Therefore, the researcher believes that stylistics is an efficient teaching tool for teaching of English language at Under Graduate level.

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Why Should Indians Learn English? A DNA Analysis of Objectives

Dr. J. John Sekar

Background to the Study

The objectives of learning/teaching English need to be constantly revisited from time to time since its status globally changes. India as the largest consumer of ELT materials designed elsewhere in the world cannot be an exception. ELT professionals without making any compromise must be bold enough to help policy makers in the country so that parents' dreams & wishes, learners' time & effort, country's economy and finance, and institutions' infrastructure & resources will not go waste. Colonial policy makers were guided by the blue print provided by Macaulay and accordingly, the objectives of ELT aimed at producing docile and uncritical workforce, and appreciating the master's culture that includes religious practices, literary aesthetics, and political system. They were not only successfully implemented through out the colonial period, but also carried over uncritically into Independent India, perhaps due to paucity of time and unpreparedness on the part of academics. Since then, there has been no turning back! Colonial agenda of reading and appreciating the Master's literature and language in different avatars continue to date: let it be American or British literatures, or cultural agencies like British Council or American RELO, methods of teaching from GT to C& C Method, general literature curriculum from the Secondary level to the Tertiary level, testing patterns, examination systems, research culture et al. No one is sensitive enough to smell something terribly rotten in the state of ELT in India. Real purpose of learning English has not been served. It has left a huge gap between what learners really need and what they are given by the system.

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Objectives of the Study

The primary objective of the present study is to review the objectives of ELL/T in India and to address the question why English should be learnt now in India.

Research Questions

The following questions were raised for interrogation:

1. Has English changed in terms of its status globally? Whose language is it anyway?
2. Should there be any change in aims and objectives of learning it in India?
3. How should English be taught or learnt?

Hypotheses

The following hypothesis was framed for the investigation:

English cannot be learnt successfully if learners do not have clear objectives/purposes at once

Research Design and Results

Two sources were exploited for the present investigation. One, various colonial records and Educational Commissions' Reports in Independent India were revisited to address the questions constructed for the purpose of the present study. It is because of the strong conviction that the objectives of English language teaching in India ought to be historically placed and interrogated. English was not introduced in any haphazard manner. It was well-thought out, planned, and executed through several measures and modifications during the colonial period. Therefore, the relevance of English in the changing times, the structure and contents of English language education, and components and methods of testing students' achievement in the language can be

critically assessed only upon a close, disinterested observation and examination of the historical-political nexus during the colonial period and its uncritical extension after independence. Two, an informal method of conversing with all stakeholders of English language education—parents, students, and teachers—on the need for English language (education) was attempted intermittently and it yielded a lot of food for thought and reflection.

When the records were scrutinized, the genesis of the present mismatch between what the learners want and what is meted out to them can be traced. While colonial consumers of English aimed at acquiring it as a means to finding jobs both in the Company first and in the Government later, a Despatch of the Court of Directors dated 16 February 1787 indicates that the early colonial masters aimed at

establish[ing] mutual good faith; to enlighten the minds of the Natives and to impress them with sentiments of esteem and respect for this British nation, by making them acquainted with the leading features of our Government so favourable to the rights and happiness of mankind. (Sharp: 3-4).

An overwhelming majority of the present stakeholders would like to learn English as an international communication tool for subsistence, sustainable development, and saturation. Ironically, this wish and desire of the parents and the public are not taken seriously by the academics who look at English language acquisition through a circuitous way of appreciating the Master's culture first by reading canonized literary giants from Chaucer to Chesterton. Operation is a huge success from teachers' point of view, but a failure from the (patients') learners' point of view. They continue to be in pathetic condition generation after generation. While a few succeed in the purposeless English language educational system, many are slaughtered silently.

Discussion

English is being taught in India without any real purpose that suits the needs of the present learners. On the one hand, every one, literate & illiterate/semi-literate, ruralite & urbanite, minority & majority, men & women, knows the material utility of learning/knowing English. On the other hand, standards have never improved over the years though the elders derive some solace and comfort that their knowledge of English in 'those days' was much better than now. Students don't use it in real life situation. Ironically, the present generation of learners has greater and more exposure to varieties of English aurally-orally and visually. Yet, there is a huge failure in the educational system to deliver the result. Learners know pretty well the long time benefits of learning English, but they don't see any real purpose behind the kind of English curriculum that is being taught to them compulsorily. They are quite sure that this kind of English curriculum is not at all useful to them both in the academic and real life situations. This is chiefly because of the collective colonial inheritance on the part of English teachers who believe in the colonial design of English language curriculum.

What is the colonial design of English language curriculum? What was the objective? Early missionary-educationists in 1787 viewed the teaching of English as the most effective means of establishing a direct political and cultural contact with the Indians. The first English schools in India were established in small towns like present Tanjore, Shivaganga, and Ramnad with this utility value of English. Colonial administrator W. Fraser to the Chief Secretary, Fort William had a different reason for teaching English to select section of Indian society. He writes in 1823:

The greatest difficulty this Government suffers, in its endeavours to govern well, springs from the immorality and ignorance of the mass of people, their disregard of knowledge...particularly their ignorance of the spirit, principles and system of the British Government... The boys [the children of the pleasantry or Zamindars] should understand from being able to read and write, something of

the British Judicial and Revenue System to the purpose of a diffusion of information amongst the mass. (Sharp 13-14)

It is clear that listening and speaking were not their aim at all since the Master thought that the subjects were not supposed to address them in the Master's language.

Charles Grant, a bureaucrat-turned missionary was the first to plead for the cause of British education in India in his 1792 "Observations on the state of Society among the Asiatic Subjects of Great Britain, particularly with respect to Morals and on the means of Improving it." He declared that the cause of the pathetic condition of Indians was ignorance and its remedy was English education. He suggested the medium of English as the vehicle for imparting western ideas that he called "our superior lights." Thus, he anticipated Macaulay.

The true cure of darkness, is the introduction of light. The Hindoos err, because they are ignorant; and their errors have never fairly been laid before them. The communication of our light and knowledge to them, would prove the best remedy for their disorders; and this remedy is proposed, from a full conviction that if judiciously and patiently applied, it would have great and happy effects upon them, effects honourable and advantageous for us.

It is perfectly in the power of this country, by degrees, to impart to the Hindoos our language; afterwards through that medium, to make them acquainted with our easy literary compositions.

The first communication, and the instrument of introducing the rest, must be the English language; this is a key which will open to them a world of new ideas. (Sharp: 81-83)

Holt Mackenzie's Note dated 17 July 1823 expresses his paternalistic, moral views of public education though he belonged to Territorial Department, Revenue Collections:

Caution indeed must be used in admitting the light to the morbid sense... Its [Government's] aim is to raise the character, to strengthen the understanding, to purify the heart... whatever in short tends to make men wiser and better and happier here and hereafter. (Sharp: 57-60)

Indians through Rajaram Mohun Roy pleaded for the promotion of "a more liberal and enlightened system of instruction, embracing mathematics, natural philosophy, chemistry and anatomy, with other useful sciences." (Sharp: 99-101)

In his Minute dated 2 February 1835, T. B. Macaulay first deals with the medium of instruction. He first frames the question "which language is the best worth knowing?" He declares:

I have never found one among them [orientalists] who could deny that a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia.

He acknowledges the superiority of imaginative literature of India, he laments the pathetic condition of science and history:

The department of literature in which the Eastern writers stand highest is poetry... But when we pass from works of imagination to works in which facts are recorded and general principles investigated, the superiority of the Europeans becomes absolutely immeasurable.

He praises English for its epistemological superiority:

It [English] stands pre-eminent even among the languages of the West. It abounds with works of imagination...vehicles of ethical and political instruction...with just and lively representations of

human life and human nature,--with the most profound speculations on metaphysics, morals, government, jurisprudence, trade...

He foresees the future role of English:

In India, English is the language spoken by the ruling class. It is likely to become the language of commerce throughout the seas of the East...Of all foreign tongues, the English tongue is that which would be the most useful to our native subjects. The state of the market is the decisive test...

He gives the blue print of English literary education:

It is possible to make natives of this country thoroughly good English scholars, and that to this end our efforts ought to be directed...We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern—a class of persons Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect. I believe that the present system tends not to accelerate the progress of truth but to delay the natural death of expiring errors. (107-117)

Lord Bentinck's Resolution dated 7 March 1835 seals the fate of English language education in India:

All the funds will be employed in imparting to the native population a knowledge of English literature and science through the medium of the English language. (130-131)

English teachers have been consistently faithful to all these colonial masters' educational design and ignored the needs and demands of learners. Colonial masters have left, not literary masters. Do Indians continue to be in darkness? Do they still require "the superior lights"? Are they still immoral and ignorant? Do they still need to appreciate the strength of the English political and cultural superiority? Should they still cultivate English tastes, opinions, morals, and intellect? If NO, why should the business of teaching English literature or of the English language through English literature continue?

Should there be any change in aims and objectives of learning it in India? YES. English is as much ours as theirs. It's part of the Indian consciousness of the elite if not of all. But English is needed for different purposes. It is not the English of England that is needed in India. It is the language of the world now. It has been de-nationalized completely. Indians do not want any one particular national variety. They need a world variety to establish communication with anyone who does not know Indian languages. It has taken a new avatar of being an international auxiliary language. It is international in the sense that it is one which is used by people of different nations to communicate with one another. As an auxiliary language, it is used other than the first language, by nationals of a country for internal communication. English now belongs to any country which uses it and may have as wide or as limited use as is felt desirable.

English is needed in India now to express its culture and concepts as much as an international communication tool for employment world-wide. It is needed to modernize the life of every individual and country as a whole. To be modern is not the property of the West. English itself is not the possession of any specific western nation. Some countries around the world may have it as their national mother tongue, but India does not require their variety. It uses the world variety to which it has also contributed a lot. When any language becomes *international in character*, it cannot be bound to any one culture. English is *not an imposed burden* to the majority of students. This majority says that they would make an extra effort to learn English even if it were not a required subject because it goes beyond its immediate usefulness. It has moved away from the status of a national and colonial language to that of a true world language. Expansion of English is

not through conquest but through increased trade and contact between nationals, and the world's need for a lingua franca for this developing international market-place and society. It is seen *less as a symbol of imperialism* and more as a viable candidate for the world's most important international language.

English is now learnt for professional purposes like facing interviews, writing resumes, writing reports, conducting campaigns, writing letters & memos, participating & presenting papers in meetings, seminars, conferences, & discussions. It is needed for different social roles and interaction in social contexts. The ability to communicate one's ideas and attitudes like agreeing, disagreeing, convincing, narrating, requesting, ordering, explaining, apologising and the like is the need of the hour. It is not the ability to interpret a literary text. Communication skills in English have a worldwide market. It is the language of the Info-Age and has come a culture-neutral. It is this neutrality that has enabled it to acquire its global market value and it has made it desirable and acceptable to a vast majority of people all over the world.

How should English be taught and learnt? It's a big challenge because there has not much indigenous research and reflection on this issue. One of the effects of colonial hangover is that India looks forward to the West for a solution to the problems that it faces. It may be through men or material or method. It's high time that we evolved or adapted the methods to suit the Indian bilingual climate. It should evolve out of teaching-learning process. Naturally, it cannot come from the research lab (research scholars) but from the actual day-today classroom experiences through action research. It should be the joint venture of teachers and students. Classroom experiences should be theorized and systematized so that thousands of practitioner and millions of learners who are in disadvantaged positions would benefit. Research supervisors and guides must suggest topics on teaching-learning methodologies and create interest in future researchers. Exclusive national conferences should be conducted on the theme so that innovative attempts can be shared, discussed in-depth, and published to get the world attention.

India was used by the colonisers as a testing ground for devising teaching methods (Pennycook, 1998), testing techniques (Spolsky, 1995), and literary canons (Viswanathan, 1989). It's the colonizers' tendency to exclude research by the colonized on English language and literature that has been collectively internalized by the present day consumers of English language and literature. One of the manifestations of being kept at the receiving end epistemologically is the passive and uncritical expectation and acceptance of knowledge from the West. By now, Indian literary and language academia should have started importing the Indian-made methods of teaching English as a Second/Foreign language in the bilingual/multilingual contexts to the rest of the world.

Since Indian learners of English are taught English from Standard I or III, there is no need for General English at the tertiary level. Instead, English for Specific Purposes shall be considered. If learners want English for appreciation of English Literatures, English for Literary Appreciation can be offered. Or else ESP courses like English for Commerce, Economics, Science & Technology and Computers, Biological Sciences, Law, Business et al. Since English is a 'foreign' language to millions of rural students, teachers must devise teaching strategies that treat English as a foreign (EFL) or second (ESL) language. Teachers should also teach English as an International Language (EIL). Learner Autonomy should be inculcated so that they can own up the responsibility for learning English.

Recommendations

The following needs can be discerned from the present investigation:

1. National conferences shall be conducted at different parts of the country on the need for reforms and innovations in teaching methods.

2. History of English language teaching in India shall be included in the postgraduate English curriculum.
3. Priority to methods should be accorded in research ventures leading to PhD.
4. A cluster of autonomous colleges can be formed and they can be encouraged to open up research centres for the purpose.
5. Universities and postgraduate departments with access to research should subscribe to international online and print journals on methods.
6. More of language components like methods of teaching English, materials production, testing methods should find place in English Major curriculum at undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

Conclusions

India should revisit its objectives of teaching/learning English in the changed scenario on account of the changed status of English from having been the language of colonization and westernization to that of modernization in the Info-Age. Universities ought to effect curricular changes to meet the new demands of the 21st century learners who are visual and multi-tasking tech-savvy. Teachers and students who intend to become teachers of English ought to place the teaching of English against the historical background. Learner needs and responsibilities must be given priority in curriculum designing and research. A road map for the teaching of English in India for the next 50 years should be prepared by the teachers of English.

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Teaching English through Films: A Paradigm Shift

Dr. Naveen K Mehta & Dr. Meenal Rathore

Introduction

In the field of teaching and learning English as second language, people have come out with many new and innovative teaching methods. With the rapid development in the field of technology and improvement in learner's communicative abilities, teachers are keener to use new devices which are more interactive and useful. The use of film in teaching is an interactive and effective approach for beginners as well as school and graduate level learners. An English Language teacher can judiciously use films for enriching English Language of learners. Teaching through movie may be helpful developing listening, speaking and understanding nonverbal cues. A teacher can conduct pre and post activities related to the movie. Before the beginning of the movie teacher can co relate some examples and present them before the learners. After the viewing of movie students may be asked to take part in group discussion based on theme, plot or leading characters. Internet can be a great boon for innovative teacher as one can download Hindi (with subtitle in English) or English films or inspiration/motivational, small clips (5-10 minutes duration) that too from free available websites.

A teacher with the help of LCD and computer can play such films in the scheduled lectures/lab. Thus films are also affordable and cost savvy. Some persons state that simple films like action films work better than learning communication because the dialogue is much simpler. Quieter dramas are usually preferable subjects, since they allow one to focus on the dialogue more readily. The language of the film strips should be selected carefully which is neither difficult nor easy. For teacher, in order to make the film class successful, they have to endure great pressures from films' preparations and assignments to its guidance, inspection and exams. Thus the film teaching can make the students more independent and provide improved motivation for them. They can better understand the cultural background of the target language to be learnt.

Literature Review

Boyd and Wertz (2003) highlighted that the effect that film has on the individual can be examined. They further highlighted that while some films can be strictly entertainment and a means of escape, other types of films can often be an activity that the audience can actively participate in and become emotionally involved in. Gillis (2006) appears to be in favour of using well-known classic films in the class rooms. Marcus and Stoddard (2007) designed a study to examine how teachers today are using film to teach historical issues in the class room, as well as what they see as the positive and negative ramifications of using film as a historical tool. Lin (2009) investigated the effects of visual aids and text types on listening comprehension. The result of the study showed a significant effect of input presentation modes on listening comprehension and their interaction with text types. Thirunavukkarasu and Lakshmi (2013) stated that many of the ESL teachers are afraid to show films in their class rooms because they think that they are not expected to show films and are supposed to teach the same.

Objectives and Research Methodology

The present paper aims to explore teaching methodologies that can be helpful in teaching English language through films with the help of review of literature. This paper is based upon review of literature and secondary data collected from various websites, journals, magazines, newspapers and reference books. Literature review has shown prior research work done in this area.

Benefits for Learners

- Films offer both cognitive and affective experiences.
- Easy understanding of the topic.
- Learning becomes fun and enjoyable.
- It helps them to develop competencies in listening and speaking skills.
- Enriching vocabulary.
- It helps them to come across with nonverbal cues and sentence formation through dialogue delivery.
- To build logical and rational thinking skills.
- To enhance creativity and imagination power.
- To inculcate moral, ethical, social, cultural and literary values by watching classical films.
- To develop a holistic personality by viewing motivational and inspirational films.
- In learning different culture and tradition, and cultural and social values.

Benefits for Teachers

- Making learning process students centered and live.
- In raising confidence level of learners.
- In developing critical and analytical perception of learners.
- In developing listening, writing (by asking students to write reviews), speaking.
- In engaging class in well planned manner and developing interest of learners towards communication.
- In conducting role play, group, peer and other class room activities.
- It is the most effective, powerful and economical teaching tool.

Limitations

- Knowledge level of students should match with the level of information contained in the films.
- Selection of an appropriate film is a challenging task for teacher.
- Duration of film should be according to the scheduled time stated in the time table of the college.
- Controversial/objectionable/obscene scenes and dialogues should be properly edited.
- Audio and visual quality should be perfect otherwise it may lead to a state of misunderstanding and confusion.
- A film should have some message or objective otherwise it may create vacuum and the efforts of the teacher may go into vein.
- Relevancy of the movie should be checked before showing it.
- Copyright restriction may be a big hurdle in playing of films so a teacher should remain cautious towards it.
- Humor, drama, terror and language can divert the attention of learners.

Suggested Class room Activities

Classroom Activity 1

Teacher should divide class into small groups of 15-20 each. Students will be asked to watch movie patiently and afterwards the teacher may ask questions related to specific scenes, characters etc. and those questions will be discussed in detailed by the group members.

Classroom Activity 2

The teacher will ask the students to write their views, perception and opinions after watching film. They are told to write critical analysis of film which helps to widen up their perception as well as improves their writing skills.

Classroom Activity 3

The teacher will divide the students into groups with different characters belong to film. Teacher may give students five minutes or more to prepare the dialogue in class. After that each group will perform their respective scene.

Concluding Remarks

With the development of various technological tools and economy, talents and knowledge, quality and different skills, new social and educational reforms, students are interested in not only acquiring language but also the different skills related to that particular language. Students are now becoming more and more enthusiastic and curious about learning language and for that a teacher has to groom himself/herself to fulfill student's needs. So, teaching English through films can be a useful and practical method to build the learner's confidence in dealing with the language.

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Teachers' Perception on the Present Method of Teaching English Grammar in Reducing Syntactic Errors among Secondary School Students of Kerala

Noora Abdul Kader

Introduction

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A major concern for the English teacher has been how to help students make all and only correct sentences. The teachers in the secondary schools of Kerala are following discourse oriented pedagogy for teaching grammatical concepts. Perhaps our teachers have developed a notion that the minimal unit that can serve communication function is the sentence because every sentence carries some information. The curriculum, syllabi and textbooks have been developed and are meant to be transacted in tune with social constructivism and critical pedagogy. Construction of knowledge has to take place at all levels of learning and in all domains of knowledge. This implies that we cannot stuff the learners with lots and lots of information pertaining to grammar. Grammatical concepts are to be constructed by the learners by analysing a certain body of linguistic data available from the discourses and categorizing them in specific ways. The general processes of the constructivist classroom will be retained in tact for facilitating concept attainment in the realm of grammar. . The grammar is essentially a set of directed Productions as defined by Greibach. Syntactic structures are complex objects, whose subtle properties have been highlighted and elucidated by half a century of formal syntactic studies, building on a much older tradition (Rizzi, 2004). Structures are interesting objects of their own, both in their internal constitution and in their interactions with various grammatical principles and processes. The idea that, inflectional morphology is done in the syntax and is the result of movement rules involving roots and affixes, an idea going back to the analysis of verb affixation in English in *Syntactic Structures* (Chomsky 1957). A syntactic role indicator is adjoined to each production to describe the role played by the word class *c* when fulfilling the prediction *P*. According to Skehan (1998), L2 learners are driven by a focus on meaning. Drawing on Swain (1985), Skehan claims that production (for him, through tasks) is necessary to force the learner to focus on form of the language

Need and Significance of the Study

A study was conducted by the investigator to analyse the areas of syntactic errors among secondary school students. The result of the study revealed that there are several areas like concord in using primary and modal auxiliaries, using conjunctions and prepositions, using articles, using proper syntax etc were the secondary school students are making errors. The mistakes made by them while constructing syntactic structures are like omitting the structures, addition of the structures and incorrect use of the structures. Most of the secondary school students couldn't even follow the proper word order arrangement and can't even construct sentences without proper grammatical structures. In such a situation, there is a great need to identify a solution for reducing the syntactic errors in the sentences of English language constructed by secondary school students. There is nothing coming out meaningful in the sentences constructed by these students. It is essential to identify at this juncture that whether the present method of teaching is sufficient enough to reduce the syntactic errors while constructing grammatical structures of English grammar. If not so, the study will lead a light to the curriculum setters and the language teachers for developing an effective strategy for reducing the syntactic errors.

Objectives

1. To find out the English teachers' perceptions of the difficulties they face with regard to grammar instruction in an ESL context using the present method of instruction.

2. To find out whether the present method of teaching is effective in reducing the errors while constructing syntactic structures of English grammar in the perception of teachers

Methodology

Sample

The present study was conducted on a sample of 66 secondary school English teachers selected through stratified random sampling technique from Malappuram, Thrissur and Kozhikode districts of Kerala. The sample was selected from Government schools. The profile of the subjects is given below in Table I.

Table I: Profile of the Respondents to the Questionnaire

| Nature of sample | Sub sample | No: of respondents to each category | Total sample |
|------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------------|--------------|
| Gender | Male | 11 | 66 |
| | Female | 55 | |
| Qualification | Master degree | 43 | 66 |
| | Bachelor degree | 23 | |
| Experience | <5 years | 34 | 66 |
| | >5 years | 32 | |

Tools Employed

The data was collected using a questionnaire, divided in to two parts namely Part-A, and Part- B. Part - A is comprised of questions about the difficulties faced by teachers while teaching grammatical concepts using the present method of teaching English. And Part – B makes an attempt to seek response from the teachers on whether the present method of teaching is reducing the errors while constructing syntactic structures of English grammar. The subjects responded to each statement on a five-point Likert-type scale (from 5 for 'strongly agree' to 1 for 'strongly disagree'). The respondents also provided personal information on gender, qualification, and teaching experience, for creating their profile in terms of variables.

Statistical Technique Used

Percentage Analysis was the statistical techniques used for the present study.

Results

Table 2 Data and results of the English Teachers' perception on the difficulties faced by them with regard to grammar instruction in an ESL context using the Present Method of Teaching.

| Areas of difficulties | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|-----------|------------|
| Spoken and written communicative skills | 20 | 30 |
| Use of authentic text for grammar teaching | 18 | 27 |
| Construct and use of grammatical structures | 28 | 43 |
| Total | 66 | 100 |

From the Table 2 it is revealed that 30 percentages of secondary school teachers find it difficult to help the learners in develop spoken and written communicative skills using the present method of teaching grammar. 27 percentages of teachers find it difficult to help the learners construct grammatical concepts using the authentic text. 43 percentages of the secondary school English teachers opined that they find it difficult to help the learners in constructing and using grammatical concepts using the present method of teaching.

Table 3. Data and results of the English Teachers' perception on how far the present method of teaching is reducing the errors while constructing syntactic structures of English grammar on select areas.

| S NO | Areas | Percentage |
|------|---------------------|------------|
| 1 | Primary Auxiliaries | 17 |
| 2 | Prepositions | 14 |
| 3 | Articles | 18 |
| 4 | Conjunctions | 13 |
| 5 | Syntax | 8 |

From the Table 3 it is revealed that only a few teachers are having the opinion that present method of teaching is helpful in reducing the syntactic errors while constructing syntactic structures of English grammar among secondary school students. Teachers are in the opinion that the present method of discourse oriented pedagogy is not focussing any of the forms of grammatical structures and as a result students are not focussing any of the structures and learning English is just for the sake of passing the examination rather attaining the skills.

Discussion

From the result it is revealed that 30 percentages of teachers are finding difficulty in helping the learners in written and spoken communicative skills using the present method of teaching. Teachers find it difficult in correcting the mistakes of the learners due to lack of enough time in the written and spoken communication and direct translation from mother tongue to the target language in written communication still exists.

Out of the total sample 27percentages of the teachers are finding it difficult with the authentic text for helping the learners to construct grammar. Reasons for the arguments are that they find the authentic text time consuming and it is difficult to produce tasks of a suitable level from authentic texts. They find it difficult to catch the attention by creating simulated atmospheres using the present method of grammar instruction.

43 percentages of them are finding it difficult to help the learners to construct and use grammatical concepts using the present method of teaching. Teachers are compelled to take much effort and have to work hard to derive grammatical concepts from the discourses. Lack of proper basic knowledge in grammar makes it difficult for the teachers to introduce new concepts. Teachers are compelled to give marks even when the answers are partially correct in grammar.

From the response of the 17 percentage of teachers it is revealed that discourse oriented pedagogy is not sufficient enough in reducing the errors while using primary auxiliaries like is, am, was, were, do, does, did, has, have and had. Prepositional errors are quiet common in the sentence structures of English language and only 14 percentages of teachers opined that errors could be reduced using the present method of teaching. Syntactic errors while constructing articles and conjunctions could be reduced to a less extent in the perception of 18 and 13 percentages of teachers respectively. And finally regarding the using of proper syntax, only 8 percentage of teachers are in the opinion that discourse oriented pedagogy is effective in reducing the syntactic errors.

Educational Implications

The findings of the present study point to the following implications:

1. EFL Curriculum and material developers should show an understanding of learners' and teachers' difficulties, and provide sufficient guidance and help in the curriculum document and the teachers' book showing how the potential difficulties could be addressed in planning

their classroom activities. Teachers may be given examples of mediating tasks, which would mitigate the difficulties.

2. Students need to be taught grammar through various methodologies and approaches to cater to their individual styles of learning, and educators should consider students' attitudes and perceptions when making decisions about how to teach grammar.
3. EFL teachers would do well to understand and address their learners' concerns in planning their lessons and classroom activities should focus on form along with meaning of the structures, and use supplementary materials, if necessary, to help learners cope with the difficulties.
4. Both in-service and pre-service training programs should be planned in such a way that student teachers and practicing teachers articulate the potential and actual difficulties and discuss ways of overcoming or at least coping with them.
5. The database relating to teaching English as a second language, including the difficulties of learners and teachers with regard to grammar instruction, should be enriched by more detailed research and analysis, which would enable generalizations across the state.

Conclusion

Generally speaking, in teachers' perceptions, both teachers and students invariably face serious difficulties with regard to EFL grammar instruction, students facing them to a greater extent than teachers. It is obvious that EFL teachers consider these difficulties quite serious, which suggests that serious attention needs to be paid to them. There may be generally recommended ways of teaching EFL grammar (for example, the implicit method), but it would not be proper to adopt them universally without looking at the possible difficulties that might go with those methods suggested. While a less favored method might pose fewer problems and hence be more effective, a more favored method might be less effective owing to greater difficulties or problems in implementing it. The difficulties may also be influenced by the context in which a particular method is used. It is, therefore, necessary to make a detailed study of such difficulties faced by teachers and students in specific contexts, take appropriate steps to overcome them, and adapt the method to suit the actual teaching and learning environment. This is not to suggest 'diluting' a sound approach or method, but only to plan mediating or supplementary tasks to help learners tide over the difficulties. One pedagogical implication that stems from the present study concerns the teaching of complex syntactic structures. System capacity must be taken into consideration since it affects how learners process form and meaning simultaneously. In this sense, research on L2 processing, especially that related to instructed second language acquisition (VanPatten, 2007), can shed light on this area.

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When Pronunciation Pedagogy meets Technology

G. Prashanti

Introduction

In the realm of English Language Teaching (ELT), pronunciation is often not part of the curriculum or it is treated marginally. Moreover, it is pertinent to mention that in most of the teacher orientation programmes, pronunciation issue is hardly addressed that provides subjects a plea to avoid such an important area of language learning. Without a course to recommend to a student, and strapped on resources and time, English as a second language teacher cannot give sufficient guidance to his or her students who are interested in improving their pronunciation. As pointed out by Celce-Murcia and Goodwin there is a threshold level of pronunciation in English such that if a given non-native speakers pronunciation falls below this level, no matter how good his or her control of English grammar and vocabulary might be, he or she will not be able to communicate orally with native speakers of English (8).

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Pronunciation instruction is the need of the hour and has been regarded as an important aspect in any language program intended to help learners to achieve success in oral communication. Jenkins described it as "possibly the greatest single barrier to successful communication" (83). Setter & Jenkins commented that pronunciation needs to be addressed in the teaching of all languages, as clearly there is little point in learning a (living) language if one does not mean to communicate with other speakers of that language (2). In view of that, in recent years, an increasing attention has been paid to provide pronunciation teaching that meets the communicative needs of learners.

CAPT (Computer assisted pronunciation training)

During the recent times there has been a growing demand to use technology for educational purposes as well as to learn English with special focus on pronunciation. For learners and teachers who want to improve their pronunciation in speaking English through independent study, there are scores of computer-assisted language-learning programmes. In this vein, speech synthesis and automatic speech recognition, two of the most common applications in speech technology, present the basic technology for the improvement of applications for pronunciation teaching (Busa 15). *Speech synthesis* is typically utilized for rudimentary listening comprehension and for learning sound-symbol correspondences (Chun 63). To illustrate, a commercial software package, RealSpeak™ Word by Nuance, employs speech synthesis to change the words and idioms from a dictionary into speech output, to help learners to hear how words should be articulated (Busa 15).

In *automatic speech recognition system*, L2 learners' pronunciation is compared against native speaker models and learners are told their errors and/or corrected accordingly. Speech recognizer is utilized in the development of automatic (phone) pronunciation error detection as an aid in pronunciation teaching classes or for individual learners (Kim, Franco and Neumeyer 646). In these practices, learners listen to native language samples, repeat and record their productions, and compare these to native speaker models.

Resources

Today, a number of interactive commercial as well as pronunciation teaching products are on the market. While some of these products are CD-based, some are delivered over the internet.

CD-ROMs

Dictionaries are areas in which technology has come to the fore. Many of the major publishers have started to issue CD-ROMs with their dictionaries, promoting learner autonomy in pronunciation acquisition. The CD-ROMs offer learners a range of features such as the opportunity to hear words in isolation and, in some cases, in connected speech. There is also the possibility of recording and listening to themselves in order to compare their own pronunciation with the dictionary version. For instance, Daniel Jones' English pronouncing dictionary accompanied by CD-ROM provides the learner with a copious amount of information about American and British English pronunciation.

Fraser's CD-ROM, *Learn to speak clearly in English*, is another which covers different aspects of English pronunciation. It starts by encouraging the student to think about communication in general, before moving on to sections on sentence stress and rhythm, the role of segmental and suprasegmentals and 'critical listening'. Again, students are able to record themselves and compare it with a speaker on the disk. For teachers, there is a companion disk, which similarly makes use of clever graphics and comparisons with other culture-specific ideas, like colour, to demonstrate how speakers of different languages categorise phonemes differently.

The recent surge of interest in harnessing computers for teaching suprasegmentals has led to the development of a number of programmes. Protea Textware have published three CDROMs focussing on connected speech in American English, Australian English and British English (see Westwood & Kaufman, 2002). Cauldwell has published a CD-ROM, *streaming speech*, which deals with a range of aspects of British English pronunciation. The material on the CD-ROM is underpinned by extensive research; the student is able to record him or herself speaking in some sections, and compare this with an English-speaking model.

Internet

Another electronic medium which hardly requires an introduction is the internet. Today, internet-based materials are viewed as not only technological but also pedagogical devices to improve pronunciation teaching and the learning process.

- *Praat* is a free downloadable application developed for researchers, which has applications in speech analysis, synthesis, manipulation and labelling, among other, and offers a facility for phoneme identification and discrimination tests, has also been modified to teach vowel and diphthong production by means of formant plotting .
Internet address: www.praat.org.

Online professional organizations also offer a wide range of resources that teachers can employ to develop their phonetic knowledge and pronunciation skills. These online professional organizations specific to pronunciation learning and teaching are

- *The International Phonetic Association* aims to promote the scientific study of phonetics and the various practical applications of that science. IPA fonts, journals, and sounds of the IPA are available on both cassette and CD. Internet Address: <http://www.arts.gla.ac.uk/IPA/ipa.html>
- *IATEFL's Pronunciation Special Interest Group* makes pronunciation teaching interesting and accessible for all teachers of English. *Speak Out!* is their publication devoted to the teaching of English pronunciation.
Internet Address: <http://members.aol.com/PronunciationSig/index.htm>.
- *TESOL's Speech/Pronunciation Special Interest Section*: This organization provides information about the interest section, discussions of pronunciation issues, information about pronunciation teaching and resource books, pronunciation activities, articles, previous TESOL Matters columns, and links to interesting Web Sites.
- Internet Address: <http://www.public.iastate.edu/~jlevis/SPRIS/>

Secondly, online journals, such as the Journal of Phonetics, the Linguist, and Language Learning & Technology provide ready access for language teachers who are interested in promoting their phonetic knowledge, comprehending the most current research trends in the field of pronunciation learning and teaching, and putting theory into practice. These online journals specific to pronunciation learning and teaching can be described as follows:

- *The Journal of Phonetics* The Journal of Phonetics publishes papers of an experimental or theoretical nature that deal with phonetic aspects of language and linguistic communication processes.
Internet Address: <http://hbuk.co.uk/ap/journals/jp/>
- *The Linguist*: This online journal contains online academic papers, job resources, research support and a myriad of other helpful links for the linguist. Internet Address: <http://www.emich.edu/linguist/>
- *Language Learning & Technology*: Description: This online journal looks at how technology impacts the classroom. Articles relating to technology that facilitate the teaching of pronunciation on the Internet are published in the journal.
Internet Address: <http://lt.msu.edu/>
- <http://www.uiowa.edu/~acadtech/phonetics/english/frameset.html/>: This site includes animated articulatory diagrams for consonant and vowel phonemes of North American English, a step-by-step description and video-audio of the sound in a context.
- <http://esl.about.com/od/pronunciation> lesson plans: This site presents free English pronunciation lesson plans for beginning, intermediate, and advanced level of English learning in ESL/EFL classes focusing on phonetics, IPA, and correct sentence pronunciation.

Learning Pronunciation through Online Chat Interaction

Online Chat interaction is a social networking site that promotes a conversation partner model in which subscribers communicate with one another by text, audio chat, and even video chat in some cases. Thus, the students apply their pronunciation practice to situations of real-time interaction. And as language learners worldwide use these sites, an English language learner may end up using English as a lingua franca with some of the non-native English-speaking users of these sites. In these cases, learners may find it easier to focus on intelligibility instead of accent as their interlocutors may also have accents. Moreover learners' motivation also may increase when they have international electronic pen pals with whom they can communicate authentically for meaningful purposes.

Talking Heads:

Lastly, an aid to pronunciation teaching classes comes from the improvement of so-called Talking Heads, i.e., computer-animated heads which integrates speech technology with studies on gestures and head and face movements. These talking heads are devised to appear on the learner's computer monitor and act as the learner's virtual teachers to engage in many aspects of his/her language learning process, from reading to pronunciation to conversation practice (Busa 117).

Role of teachers and learners in using CAPT

As with all materials, teachers should be judicious in what is actually being taught via computers and the internet, in order to make sure the materials have taken research into account and are not just rehashing old ideas through technological means. It is the job of the teacher to be able to evaluate these materials and ensure the learner has made the best selection for his/her level and needs. This can only strengthen the position of the teacher with respect to pronunciation teaching and learning. A teacher with some flexibility in his or her curriculum could design an assignment

around one of these online communities to raise awareness of the important factors in English pronunciation.

Computer applications have a great potential as use in learner independence and self-access situations, though using technology as a tool may be more ideal for a motivated, independent learner, language-learning sites are not the answer to perfecting all students' pronunciation, but may serve as a useful tool for some learners whose aim is to improve their intelligibility. These sites are easy to navigate, and may be used by a learner in an independent study of English language pronunciation, or given by a teacher as a class assignment

Advantages and Limitations of using CAPT

Advantages

CAPT is of interest to language teachers and learners because it can provide individualized instruction and immediate feedback on the correctness of a learner's response to computerized tasks (Nagata 338). Language teachers also benefit from using CAPT software in their pronunciation classes since it can give students drilling practice, which language teachers' view as monotonous and time-wasting. CAPT systems also present an interactive learning context in a range of modes: whole class, small group or pair, and teacher to student (Pennington 428). Instead of distributing pronunciation materials in the form of printed handouts in the language classroom, teachers can make them available to students through the electronic medium by altering the way in which students receive L2 specific phonological input. Because internet-based materials offer minimal pairs, tongue twisters, songs, sound animations, step-by step phonetic descriptions, and video animations specific to segmental (i.e. consonant and vowel phonemes of English) and suprasegmental (i.e. pitch, loudness, tempo, and rhythm) aspects of English pronunciation, they have attracted pronunciation teachers who are willing to infuse colourful, natural, and interesting teaching materials into their lessons (Hişmanoğlu 52).

Limitations

Some negative sides of using online pronunciation resources may be problem-causing firstly for language teachers and students who are inexperienced in e-learning as well as computer illiterate. Secondly, access to online pronunciation resources can sometimes be quite time-consuming and frustrating, especially when there is no high-speed internet in educational institutions. In some cases, due to the change of web addresses or for some other reasons, access to online pronunciation resources may be unavailable, which is highly demotivating for both the language teacher and the students. Thirdly, language teachers may have difficulty in maintaining control over online pronunciation activities in a computer laboratory. Lastly, students may not have the opportunity of face-to-face interaction when using online pronunciation resources, which may be boring for some students who like classroom teaching.

Recommendations for Language Teachers

Technological advancements should be considered as blessing in disguise for the learning of refined pronunciation. However, language teachers, especially those who are seniors, avoid using such resources in their pronunciation classes because of being computer illiterate, inexperienced in e-learning, and e-teaching. At this point, it should be stressed that language teachers can be stimulated to employ online CAPT by the following ways:

- Language teachers, teaching English at tertiary level to perspective teachers, should equip themselves with computer skills to use Internet in a befitting manner.
- Universities should promote language teaching through computers so that every teacher may consider it mandatory for the improvement of his/her as well as students' pronunciation.

Universities/Colleges (having teacher education programmes) must allocate funds for better and Internet equipped computer labs so that after training from the teacher educators, perspective teachers may become independent learners so far as good pronunciation/articulation is concerned.

- Teacher Training Programmes should be organized in order to educate the language teachers to use online resources. The training facilities should also include seminars and workshops. The training programmes should also encourage them to access to online language teaching sites and read the online journals or magazines.
- Online pronunciation resources and materials if not used appropriately, they will not be beneficial for the students. The first step in maximizing the use of online pronunciation resources is to create a need for language teachers to check or visit them frequently. For instance, the web addresses of some online pronunciation resources and materials can be incorporated into the course book so that the language teachers can access the online resources and materials either before or after the class. (Cheng 21).
- The language teacher can design a number of activities based on the online pronunciation site. Creating quizzes on the web, using a dedicated discussion forum as a platform for out of class discussions and reflections, and using a chat room for real-time communication activities are some of web-based activities. It is through these web-based activities that language teachers and the students can have the chance to use online pronunciation resources and materials (Cheng 21)
- There are many activities and projects that can be done through the use of technology, such as collaborative research projects, e-mail projects, online discussions, and peer reviews, (Skinner & Austin 278). The advantage of using these tools is that these projects are not bound by geographical limitations. Teachers of colleges and schools in various parts of the world can collaborate on such projects, thus benefiting not only the students but the teachers as well.

Conclusion

Nowadays, there are a variety of pronunciation materials, such as course books, CDs, DVDs, dictionaries, phonemic charts, vocal tract diagrams as well as online resources. These resources should be made more readily available to teachers and students and should be introduced and demonstrated positively during teacher training. Online pronunciation resources (i.e. online professional organizations, online journals, and online discussion groups), and other online resources (i.e. pronunciation lessons, sound and video animations, diagrams of speech organs, tongue twisters, minimal pairs, and songs) facilitate the teaching of L2 pronunciation by the language teacher. All language teachers should employ online resources or should be trained in using online resources to develop and improve English pronunciation teaching and learning.

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Online Sources in Learning English Grammar

S. Ramanathan

As the title implies the English language teaching traverses to new vistas and paradigms from the traditional methodologies and has resulted in remarkable change, especially throughout the twentieth century. Perhaps more than any other discipline, this grammar teaching-learning tradition has been practised in various adoptions in language classrooms all over the world for centuries. As it is evident in this very short paper, there are many milestones in the development of this tradition. The present paper on learning grammar focuses a different perspective in learning English grammar and not teaching, because with the advancement of technologies and birth of internet widely used for educational purposes, there is a considerable change in the structure of learning a subjects; learners are shifted from passive listeners to active participants due to the introduction of learner-centred teaching styles and the word, 'teaching' in the present day classroom is replaced by the word, 'learning'. 'The Guru-shisya parampara is withered and the teacher of the modern days is slowly replaced by teaching machines like computers. It also brings forth the various sources available for learning English grammar online. Succinctly this paper is an attempt to bring out some of the online the sources that are useful for the learners and general public who are interested in learning English grammar.

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English is one of the international languages, widely used in the present day world. English language teaching has become part and parcel of almost all the universities' syllabus, though the students claim that they are undergoing a course on English literature. English language is more skill based than we think of reading and studying. The students have to think of and assimilate strategies not to learn but to acquire the skills, the present day class room teaching-learning strategies adequately provide scope for acquiring the skills required to master the language using the Information and Communication Technological devices.

Development of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has not only shrunk the world into a village and hence we call it a Global village, but also it has made the teaching-learning process easier, more innovative and more interesting than ever. The present day classrooms witness a pervasively paradigmatic change in the teaching-learning process that the teaching process is shifted to learning process, to put it correctly. No longer need the young and earnest learners depend on the mouth of the eminent professors to learn concepts than it is grasped from an ICT like web resource or the like.

Internet has quickly become a premier resource to learn grammar for the learners to practice grammatical developments. On the "world wide web" learners can find numerous websites to learn the modern developments in grammar. The growth of internet has facilitated the growth of English language; technological innovations have made learning easy. Internet is an engrossing, exciting and extremely powerful learning tool for not only the learners but also to the teachers. It is an undeniable fact that there are many instances where desired results were produced teachers in India who for a long time used grammar-translation method or lexical approaches in their classroom pedagogy. The learners' needs and proficiency, the teacher's competency and confidence, along with a host of other factors that determine the validity of how instructors best deal with this kind of technology assisted learning.

It is a paradigmatic fact to accept that the internet has forever changed the way that we live. Its importance will continue to grow in the coming years. Many sociologists firmly believe that by the forthcoming years most of the world will be conducting its business and staying in touch with friends and relatives and with family solely through internet. Computers have become widespread in many educational institutions and homes and their use has increased so dramatically that the

majority of English teachers are now thinking about tremendous implications of employing technology in teaching English. Almost all the present day English classes are equipped with the ICT devices which in turn equip the learners acquiring language skills.

Technology can bring about changes in teaching-learning methodologies. But the tentacle spread of ICT devices toppled the strategies in teaching where the learners has started to learn by self using the internet devices, once the researchers had to toil hard to complete their research using the latest devices, because they had to travel widely to collect those resources. Whereas now days it has become handy at the press of a button, thanks to the World Wide Web service. Internet not only the changed the scenario of research but it has also changed the strategy in teaching grammar that is the phrase and process of teaching is reversed, rephrased and reprocessed as 'learning.' Unlike the traditional classrooms, where the students had to fully depend on the knowledge of teachers ,in the present day ICT enabled learning process envisages the students refer to the internet sources to learn everything. They learn with their own pace.

A language can best be spoken or understood, only when the learner is able to fully grasp the developments in grammar. Grammar is the heart of any living languages. Inadequate study or understanding of grammar leads to chaos. So the learner has to learn the rules of grammar thoroughly and practice it in day-to-day life to fully acquire the language skills. Internet provides very exhaustive teaching strategies in learning grammar through its various websites and also in testing the knowledge of learners.

Some important websites which provide intensive instruction in English Grammar

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish>

This link offers you notes and some resource materials for learning English grammar in the form of Micro soft word formatted document, pdf transcripts, mp3 audio files, mp4 video files that are compatible with i-pods and mobile phones.

<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/internet-grammar>

The internet grammar of English language offers the readers an on line course in English grammar designed primarily for the use of university students. It is also quite useful for everyone who longs to learn grammar and use English language correctly. There are some courses available for free of cost and some are offered for a moderate fee.

<http://www.learn4good.com/languages/index.htm>

This link offers online language lessons in English and Spanish. The lessons include phrasal verbs, slang terms, idioms and preparatory tests for English for specific purposes.

<http://www.dailygrammar.com>

A very inquisitive website on grammar offers grammar lessons in a fun filled convenient way by simplifying complex grammar concepts. This site is a greater instructional tool, as compared with others for learners of all ages and skill levels and varying needs. The daily grammar lessons consist of four hundred and forty lessons and eighty eight quizzes. Lessons 1-90 cover the eight parts of speech not other lessons which are conducive and comprehensive in learning English grammar and also it covers almost all the mechanics of English grammar with recent developments.

Internet has started reshaping education. Education will not be the same in the next decade. Through internet it is possible to get different kinds of materials that were previously unavailable to

many learners. It helps the learners to understand where other methods have failed. Learners may have the option to select learning materials that meet out their level of knowledge, their pacing in learning and their interest. Resources can be made available ffrom any location and at any time. Students can learn independently and communicate with the facilitator or coach. Internet also provides feedback to the learners through conductinc tests in their area of learning. The activities available at the internet related to learning grammar aims at proliferation of knowledge and those materials are helpful to the learners throughout their life in mastering the particular language. It proves that the use of which is flexible and the learners are not forced to learn everything in a specific time; they can access the material and learn the concept based on their available time.

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English for Specific Purposes: A Felt Need

Dr. G. Reddi Sekhar Reddy

Introduction:

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is regarded as a trend setter in the field of English Language Teaching (ELT) at present. But ESP is neither a new area of study nor it is a novel approach in English pedagogy but it is a new emphasis in teaching English language. It considers different reasons for learning English, which enables the learner and the teacher to choose more relevant and more effective materials for the ESP course. Because of its strong practical basis ESP has become the dominant approach in the field of teaching English as a foreign language.

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) has become a major developmental focus in the area of English Language Teaching (ELT) in the present scenario. ESP courses are those where the curriculum and materials are designed by the prior analysis of the communication needs of the learner, rather than by non learner-centred criteria such as the teacher's or institution's predetermined preference for General English or for teaching English as part of a general education.

In the arena of English Language Teaching (ELT) the students should be provided with the awareness about the necessary ability of language to convey and to retrieve information in general contexts. So the acronyms such as ESP (English for Specific Purposes), EST (English for Science and Technology) and EAP (English for Academic Purpose) has gained considerable prominence as proficiency in communication has become essential to communicate or to retrieve information related to their specific disciplines.

It is felt necessary to consider English for Specific Purposes (ESP), which has emerged as a branch of study by itself to cater to the communicative needs of the various professional students. ESP has been an attempt to cater to the language needs of professional students for specific purposes. Purpose of the language study or language use can differ from one course to the other. Therefore ESP centres on each such course identify the specific needs of the learner to learn and use language in the desired context. In simple words ESP adopts a learner-centric approach and allows the learner to articulate his future language needs. The specific language needs expressed by the learner ultimately form the base for ESP material design.

Munby defines ESP:

“ESP courses are those where the syllabus and material are determined in all essentials by the prior analyses of the teachers or instructors predetermined preference for General English or for teaching English as a part of a General Education” (2).

Kennedy defines ESP: “the essence of ESP is in catering to the needs of particular groups of students, taking into account the variables and constraints involved” (101). The students are not comfortable in articulating their ideas and find it difficult to communicate in formal English, which forms the basis for letter writing and report writing and presenting a paper. It is found that each student's language competency varied from one another. Both the students coming from regional medium of instruction as well as from English medium of instruction are aware of the importance of developing effective communication skills.

The technological advancement in the later half of the twentieth century has made English particularly significant and mighty for the youth who desire to progress on the social and

professional ladders. India has been and must make the best use of English to develop itself culturally and materially, so that it can compete with the best in the world of mind and matter.

English at Global Context:

It is crystal clear that English language opens the window to world. National boundaries have become mere notions today, so people are living in a 'Global Village'. People are becoming aware of this concept of 'Global village' on a personal level with Internet explosion. English plays a vital role in this globalization and it has become the language of choice for communication among the people of different nations. People correspond regularly with others all over the world, products are brought and sold easily all over the world within no time and one can watch major news events with photographs in 'real time'.

Communication enabled by the internet is even less bound by standard forms of English, as communication in English is exchanged among partners belonging to English and non-English speaking countries. Hence it has become the moral responsibility of every nation to teach English to their youth. They can help their students by reviewing and revising language, their policies and teaching methodologies. Obviously, if they are teaching the students English as a second language, specific types of English and idiomatic usage should be taught. Hence the concept of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) has got paramount importance and its vitality is clear in the areas like Information Technology, Engineering and Technology, Scientific Research, Business, Travel and Tourism, Hospitality, Healthcare and Financial Associations.

English for Information Technology:

For varied reasons English is important in Information Technology (IT). IT is used in business and undoubtedly is basically the backbone of the commercial world at the moment. English, the international language of trade and commerce is currently interlinked in terms of being able to operate many systems. Most of the programmes are produced in English in all the institutional events, therefore English is essential to understand them. As it is an international language of communication it allows communication through electronic means in a single language. Further a lot of information on the internet is in English. Most of the websites on the internet were created by English speakers and so are written in English. Hence in many ways it has become necessary to be able to understand English.

In addition, considerable computer terminology is emerging from time to time and an array of acronyms of English expressions is growing. So people all over the world can understand these terms if they are conversant with English. Using a single language as the primary IT language has streamlined the computer processing. The commands for many programmes are in English and so programme might not respond to commands in other languages. So while specifying the objectives of teaching English in India, educators should also remember that it has become vital today to know how to use English language apart from knowing the language as it is supposed to be learnt. Hence there is a felt need of ESP related to Information Technology.

English for Scientific Research:

As Peter Stevens pointed out:

EST claims to be able to help students of science in performing these communicative functions by making them explicitly aware of the ways in which language is used in science. Hence a general multipurpose kind of course may not be of great help to the students of science, so the context looks at ESP.

Most of the scientific research papers worldwide are published in English. Scientists all over the world work together with their fellows in research by communicating in English even though the latter are not native speakers of English. English language is the means of scientific discussions in the latest and the most advanced discoveries and inventions in science and technology. English as a common language is almost indispensable all over the globe for higher scientific and technological studies. Hence high proficiency in English language stresses the need of English for Specific Purpose (ESP).

English for Engineering and Technology:

In the recent days the terms technical English are echoing everywhere. The students who wish to study engineering and technology have to take specialised English classes to improve more job opportunities for themselves domestically or globally on large and multinational projects. As they need a high proficiency of both spoken and written communication related to technical English ESP has become a felt need for engineering students. The concept of ESP is said to be quite appropriate for teaching English to the students of Science and Technology (EST). Peter Stevens and H. G. Widdowson opined: “working in this area that literature-oriented courses do not help students of science and technology in acquiring the English language skills which are related to their scientific and technological study”.

English for Business:

In the present century English plays a key role in several major global industries. It has assumed the role of a common language of communication in the arena of global trade and commerce. The terms ‘Business English’ stand for English related to the international trade and commerce. Non-native speakers of English learn English with an aim to be successful in doing business on the global scenario. Much of the English communication that takes place within business circles all over the world occurs among non-English speakers, so effective communication has become essential. Business English serves diverse purposes for diverse people. For instance, it focuses on vocabulary and topics used in the world business, trade, finance and international relations. For others it refers to the communication skills used in the work place and focuses on the language and skills needed for typical business communication such as presentations, persuasions, negotiations, meetings, correspondence, report writing and so on. Hence the need for English for Specific Purpose (ESP) came into limelight.

English for Financial Associations:

At present the phrase ‘stock market’ echoes everywhere all over the world. The world’s largest stock exchanges are based in English speaking countries, so English has become a vital language for investment, foreign exchange and banking. The personnel who work in these enterprises require high proficiency in spoken English with a clear grasp of financial vocabulary. Many large corporations organise business English classes for their staff and pay for specially designed courses in ESP.

English for Travel and Tourism:

As travel and tourism has emerged as an important and ever growing industry, it requires personnel with excellent English language both in spoken and written forms with specific terminology and sentence structure for smooth operations in the field. For instance, English is required for all the airline crew and air traffic controllers. Further English is the standard mode of communication in shipping and marine industries. For the people who work in tourist agencies from booking clerks to the guides it is necessary to have good spoken English to be successful. Those who want to enter into these areas have to be trained in English for high proficiency by specially

designed courses in English for Specific Purpose (ESP). All these exemplify the need of English for Specific Purpose (ESP).

English for Hospitality:

Ever-growing travel and tourism gave a great scope for the growth of the industry of hospitality. Hotels around the world are eagerly looking for fluent English speaking people to work at reservation desks, in the restaurants and at other positions which involve interaction with the clients regarding the facilities that are offered at the hotels. Even smaller enterprises such as bed and breakfast and family run hotels are also interested to recruit those who are fluent at English spoken skills. Many people who desire to work in the industry of hospitality learn English as a foreign language or Second language in order to improve their English performance to advance their career. All such situations gave importance for English for Specific Purpose (ESP).

English for Healthcare Industry:

Healthcare has emerged as an enormous Hospital industry with large number of corporate hospitals. In this profession doctors, nurses and technicians who professed with effective communication skills can grab wonderful opportunities within the country as well as all over the world. They need a high standard of oral and written communication apart from very precise and accurate medical vocabulary in English, which may be possible with English for Specific Purpose (ESP).

Conclusion:

Thus depending on the actual needs of the occupation, training of relevant forms and functions must be given to communicate effectively in business contexts and in work place for which a specific language programme is devised to improve the oral, aural and written communication skills, which is named as ESP. To meet the rising needs of English language teaching, variants of general ELT have paved way to ESP. English for specific Purpose (ESP) advocates the adoption of Special Courses designed to suit the needs of various groups of learners. English for Special Purpose marks advancement in the conventional framework of ELT, which defines the teaching requirements depending upon the specific needs of different groups of learners.

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The Impact of Teacher development Groups on Omani EFL Teachers' Classroom Practice

Salim Al-Khayari & Dr. Salma Al-Humaidi

Introduction

Teacher professional development (PD) seems to have been receiving increasing attention for more than two decades. Craft (1996: 5) argues that 'professional development and in-service training have attracted increasing attention in recent years'. Diaz-Maggioli (2003) defines PD as a continuous learning process in which teachers willingly engage to learn to modify their teaching to suit students' learning needs. From this definition, we can highlight two essential features of PD: (a) 'ongoing' process and (b) 'voluntary'. These two features distinguish PD from training.

In contrast, training is often a one-off and compulsory event. In addition to that, 'making teachers attend some workshops or seminars from time to time does not really help much' (Ali, 2007: 117). 'Unfortunately, it seems that traditional forms of professional development popular today, such as workshops, in-service training, and conferences, have not increased levels of teacher growth and student learning' (Murray, 2008: 1). Although those forms can help, their helpfulness is inadequate, especially they do not offer a way to integrate materials presented into practice (Owston, 1998; Murray, 2008). One reason for this is that workshops and seminars lack coherence and continuity as well as they do not have clear objectives (Ali, 2007). Teachers are usually summoned to attend such programs, even if these programs do not satisfy their needs. Furthermore, another drawback of such PD forms, as Piedrahita (2007:94) claims, is that 'teachers are put into a passive role' because they do not usually choose the topic of focus. In a training session like a workshop, although they play an active role in the workshop activities, teachers often sit down listening to what is said by a presenter, who is considered to be an expert, and taking notes. When teachers get engaged in PD actions that are more meaningful to them, they become more eager to engage in them and collaborate with other teachers (Piedrahita, *ibid*).

Consequently, there seems to be a need to have another form of PD which can have more effect on teachers' practice. The emergence of teacher development groups (TDGs) seems to be promising in this regard. Yeh (2005) claims that, TDGs are getting growing attention as efficient tools, for professional development at all educational levels. This means that such groups can lead to PD not only for teachers but also for other practitioners, such as administrators. Clair (1998) sees TDGs as an alternative to traditional PD models because they provide teachers, either from one school or from different schools, with chances to look collectively at their teaching and their students' learning.

Literature Review

What are TDGs?

Richards and Farrell (2005: 51) define a teacher development group as 'two or more teachers collaborating to achieve either their individual or shared goals or both on the assumption that working with a group is usually more effective than working on one's own'. Piedrahita (2007: 93) also defines it as 'an organization in which teachers, instead of an outside expert, negotiate and decide their own agenda, objectives and the activities to be carried out'. TDGs are seen as an alternative structure to traditional PD because they allow teachers opportunities to jointly investigate teaching and learning on their own initiative (Clair, 1998).

Characteristics of TDGs

TDGs have certain characteristics that make them unique PD formats. Farrell (2007) proposes the following characteristics:

- Feeling safe. Teachers feel free and safe to do whatever they want with no fear of being judged or evaluated by an outsider. TDGs are safe places where members find support and trust (Johnson & Johnson, (1998; Harmer,2001; Keedy et. al., 2001; Yeh, 2005).
- Feeling connected. The group gives the teachers the feeling of being connected with other teachers who have similar interests and challenges. Because 'teaching can be a very lonely profession' (Kaplan, 2008: 336), a TDG gets teachers together to remove the feeling of isolation which most teachers have experienced for too long (Yeh, 2005).
- Feeling passionate about the group. This makes teachers experience ownership and gain knowledge through it.
- Being grateful for the group's existence.

Keedy et. al. (2001) also mention some other characteristics of successful PD programs, including TDGs, such as the voluntary participation, the diverse, active self-directed learning experiences and the integration of efforts to improve classroom teaching and learning

Establishment of TDGs

Group membership and size

Richards and Farrell (2005) identify two ways of enrolling teachers in a TDG: direct and indirect recruiting. Direct recruiting is done by the founder of the group or the facilitator of the group. Indirect recruiting means getting others, such as a supervisor, to advertise or identify possible teachers. However, this does not mean that teachers are forced to join a TDG, but rather that it is voluntary (Richards and Farrell, 2005; Cooper and Boyd, 1998; Jackson, 2008). 'Teachers join the group because they wish to, they are not *sent*' (Holloway & Long, 1998: 537).

In the literature there is no consensus on a certain group size, but there seems to be an agreement that the smaller the group is, the better. Head and Taylor (1997: 100) emphasize that a TDG 'does not have to have a large membership'. Richards and Farrell (2005), for example, suggest a group size of 5 to 8 teachers; however large groups can split into two subgroups. Cooper and Boyd (1998) argue that a group should not exceed six members. As mentioned above, TDGs need to have a small number of teachers. This is partly because their members need to know each other (Forest, 1998) in order to feel comfortable and in turn to collaborate to achieve the shared goals. How fast that happens may be partly dependent on the group size. In other words, the more teachers a group involves, the more time teachers need to familiarize themselves with each other.

Determining the group goals, rules and focus

Since TDGs are a bottom-up approach to teacher professional development, the group members are the ones who determine the group goals and rules, as Richards and Farrell (2005) suggest. The group rules are considered to be a contract between the group members and help control the group (Head and Taylor, 1997). Piedrahita (2007), mentioned above, also emphasizes that the teachers themselves establish their group objectives.

In the initial meetings, teachers have to establish a focus for their group. Richards and Farrell (2005) mention that there should be a suitable group focus which the teachers feel the need to know more or learn about.

Meetings

There is an agreement among researchers (Such as Cooper and Boyd, 1998; Johnson and Johnson, 1998; Roy, 1998) that group members should meet regularly. Johnson and Johnson suggest weekly meetings, while Cooper and Boyd suggest monthly meetings. However, the meeting time and place should be decided by the group members according to their needs and circumstances (Richards and Farrell, 2005). They also suggest that the meeting place is chosen according to: privacy, size, comfort and distractions. Cooper and Boyd (1998) suggest 'rotating the meeting place' as a condition for the success of a TDG. In addition, there should be a facilitator who starts the meetings, focuses the discussions and summarizes the conclusions (Richards and Farrell, 2005).

Sustaining the group

Once a TDG has started, it needs to continue and flourish. In order to achieve that, Farrell (2007) proposes some factors such as time commitment and task commitment, negotiating ground rules, assigning roles and confidentiality. Cooper and Boyd (1998) came up with another list of conditions to sustain a TDG. They include meeting on a regular basis, rotating the meeting place and co-facilitation of the meetings and de-briefing the meeting.

Previous Studies

Keedy et. al. (2001) reported a study that was conducted in the USA that aimed to (a) identify PD programs that led to teacher empowerment and the improvement of teaching and learning; (b) describe and compare the major characteristics of those programs. There were 15 nationally recognized professional development programs. The reputation technique was used by which experts were asked to nominate high-performing PD programs. Those programs resulted in teacher empowerment, instructional improvement and students' achievement. Among others, TDGs were found to be one of the most successful PD programs. This is because those programs provided teachers with an atmosphere of support and trust and they gave them the opportunity to be responsible for their own professional growth. This indicates the importance of the TDG model as a form for teacher PD. This makes the researcher more interested in this model and eager to see its effects on a group of Omani EFL teachers.

Padwad and Dixit (2008) investigated the impact of the participation of 11 teachers in a PLC called English Teachers Clubs (ETCs) on teachers' thinking about and attitudes towards classroom problems in a central Indian context. They found that the involvement in ETCs has led to better performance among the teachers in terms of contextualization of the problems, critical approach to problems, belief in self-agency and pragmatic approaches to finding solutions. This study also confirms the significance of the TDG model. It shows that it had an impact on teachers' performance in their contextualization of classroom problems.

Arbaugh (2003) examined the values that seven secondary geometry teachers placed on their participation in a school-based group. He also examined the organizational structure of the group, and the impact of that structure on teachers' continued participation in the study group. The researcher acted as a facilitator and researcher. He was an active participant in all of the group discussions and asked probing questions and challenged the teachers to reflect on their teaching. The researcher used three data collection methods: final interview written preparation (answers to a set of questions), interviews and audio-taped accounts of group meetings. Results showed that the teachers were supported in four areas: building community and relationships, making connections across theory and practice, curriculum reform, and developing a sense of professionalism. Results also indicated that participation in the study group had an impact on teachers' self-efficacy. In summary, from being involved in the TDG, among other benefits, teachers reported that the group helped them think more deeply about their practice and to link it with theory.

Farrell (1999) investigated the ways a TDG promotes reflective teaching. He focused on a group of three experienced EFL Korean teachers who met on a weekly basis to reflect on their work. Although the group focus was reflection, the researcher also discussed the participants' perceptions about their TDG experience. He found out that two teachers perceived their group experience as rewarding in their teaching career. They appreciated the relationship among themselves, peer observation, journal writing and the group meetings. The other teacher was fascinated by the group members' attitudes and enthusiasm about teaching and that they accepted differences among themselves. In general, the teachers perceived that they benefited from their participation in the TDG. For example, they believed that they had developed personally and professionally. They also thought that they became more effective teachers.

Yisrael (2008) conducted a qualitative case study to determine if interdisciplinary teaming has a positive impact on teacher morale. This case study was conducted at a high school in Southwest Ohio in the USA. Interviews and observations were used to collect data from a group of five teachers. The study showed a positive impact on teacher morale. For instance, the teachers became more comfortable and confident about their work. They had less feeling of isolation because they shared resources and ideas with their colleagues. Teachers also had increased self-esteem and became more reflective. Although the purpose of the study was not to find out the impact of the teaming on teachers' practice, one can argue that all the above mentioned advantages would likely help, to a certain extent, to improve the teachers' classroom practice.

Murray (2008) conducted a case study research in which she aimed at finding out the administrators and teachers' perceptions about the role of TDGs in meeting PD goals and the factors that the members considered important in a TDG. The study also aimed at identifying the teachers' perceptions of the effects of the TDGs on their teaching and their students' learning. The study included 25 teachers and three school principals forming three TDGs in three different schools from one district in the USA.

Results showed that the administrators found TDGs as important in accomplishing district-wide goals. The teachers perceived the TDGs as effective to improve their teaching practice as well as their students' learning. Some teachers provided evidence for such improvement. The teachers considered their choice to join the TDGs and to choose their focus topics as a major factor in the success of their groups. As a form of PD, the study concluded that the TDGs contributed to creating a supporting PD environment for teachers. They also helped the teachers to make informed decisions about what was best for them and their students.

Methods

Participants

The sample comprised five male Omani EFL teachers. The teachers aged between 24 and 42 years and came from four different schools. They taught different grade levels and they had different teaching experiences. Three teachers were in their first years of teaching, while the other two have been teaching for more than 16 years. Two of them were senior English teachers in their schools, so they had fewer teaching periods than the other three, whose teaching load ranged between 18 and 20 periods a week. All the teachers were holders of a BA in education. They all worked under similar teaching conditions and received almost similar in-service training. All five teachers were supervised by the same supervisor.

Instruments and procedures

Observation form of phonics sessions was the main data collection tool which consisted three parts. Part One was divided into three main themes and under each one, except the second, there were some sub-themes. The first theme included: students' previous knowledge, model and practice, monitoring, encouragement and attitudes. The second theme was 'assessment'. The third theme was 'classroom environment and materials' which included: classroom environment, activities, extra materials and follow up. The second part of the observation form contained a list of the stages the TDG members had decided to follow throughout the semester. The observer ticked the stage that the observed teacher was employing. The stages, in sequence, were: the alphabet, single-letter sounds and two-letter sounds, simple words, longer words, words with silent letters and sentences. It also included a question which asked the observer to indicate whether the teacher was following the stages mentioned above. There was a space provided for any explanation, regarding the stages. Part Three comprised a space for any general comments the observer would like to add.

Semi-structured interviews were used to explore and clarify the teachers' perceptions of the TDG which they had spelled out in their journals.

Researcher's field notes were used to capture all that was going on in the TDG meetings in order to gather as much information as possible from those meetings. Therefore, the researcher briefly jotted down what he heard and noticed during the meetings.

Teachers' journals were a kind of reflection as well as a record of what the participants had done and their feelings about the group. Worth mentioning that the participants in this study were not forced to write and one of them wrote nothing.

Research questions The study attempted to answer the following questions:

- What is the impact of the TDG model on Omani EFL teachers' classroom practice?
- What are the teachers' perceptions of their experiences using the TDG model?
- What are the difficulties faced by the EFL teachers in using the TDG model?

Results and Discussion

What is the impact of the TDG model on Omani EFL teachers' classroom practice?

The answer to this question was mainly obtained through observation. However, some data were also obtained through the teachers' journals as well as the interviews with the teachers.

Teaching and learning

a. *Activating students' previous knowledge*

All the teachers tended to activate their students' prior knowledge. They did that by revising what they taught in previous sessions. All the five teachers were found to activate their students' previous knowledge. For three of them, there was no change observed, but for the other two, there was some change occurred throughout the phonics sessions. Nasir was noticed linking the sessions with previous ones and Zahir moved from oral work to using handouts for the purpose of activating his students' previous knowledge.

b. Modeling and practicing

Modeling was a major part of almost all teachers' phonics sessions. More practice was noticed to be offered to the students and modeling decreased. This may indicate that the teachers were adapting their teaching according to the achievements their students made. In other words, the more the students got confident, the more practice they were provided and the less modeling they were given. In addition to that, the teachers adopted a variety of correction techniques. Teachers shifted from using teacher-correction as the only error correction technique to adopting peer-correction and self-correction. This may point out that the students became more familiar with phonics and more aware of their errors.

c. Monitoring phonics sessions

Except Saeed, all the other TDG members have developed in monitoring their phonics sessions. Rather than using one error-correction technique, they used other techniques. Interestingly, they encouraged their students to identify and correct their own errors by getting them notice the errors. They used a variety of ways to do that, such as pausing to indicate the error. The teachers also offered their students more support, such as giving examples and remodeling sounds and words.

d. Encouraging students

All the classes observed seemed that they had an encouraging learning atmosphere because the teachers were friendly and tolerated their students' weaknesses and were committed to help them. They also tended to praise their students for their efforts.

e. Teachers and students' attitudes towards teaching and learning phonics

All teachers seemed to be interested in teaching phonics. This is reasonable because they chose this issue as a focus for the TDG. Except one teacher, all the other teachers seemed to increase their praise and encouragement for their students. Teachers might have recognized the need to motivate their students and to maintain this motivation because teaching phonics takes time and effort from the students. The teachers' interest and enthusiasm were always high, however, for their students it appeared to be changing across the sessions. The teachers' continuous interest and enthusiasm may indicate their commitment to their students' progress. It can also mean that their students were making progress and this is why the teachers were always motivated.

Assessing students' progress

The TDG members always checked their students' understanding throughout the sessions. Assessment was likely to be a major part of the phonics sessions and the teachers used a variety of methods to assess their students. In the interview, one of the TDG members mentioned that he learned to test his students to diagnose their difficulties, which he had never thought of before. For example, he tested his students in the alphabet in order to identify the letters and sounds that were still problematic to them. That test gave him a clearer picture of his students' specific difficulties. There was some improvement noticed throughout the sessions in the students' abilities to read. One reason for such improvement was due to the use of assessment data to inform the teaching of phonics. This is consistent with Murray's (2008) findings.

Classroom environment and materials

This aspect of the teachers' classroom practice seemed to be the least improved area. Most of the phonics work was carried out orally with the use of the board. In this area, all teachers were

likely to be very similar. They moved from oral work to some printed activities. In addition to that, teachers started to give their students some homework, contrary to their approach at the beginning of the TDG. The teachers did not seem to be interested in classroom displays. In Meeting 6, the group members discussed this issue and they seemed to believe in classroom displays' usefulness for students.

However, from their experiences, the teachers said that the students used to see classroom displays as decoration for the classroom. This view might have been implicitly conveyed by school administrations that students should fill their classroom walls with charts, pictures and other displays in order to satisfy school visitors (FN. October, 27). Overall, classroom environment and materials seemed to be the least improved area of the teachers' classroom practice.

Commitment to the TDG procedure and focus

The teachers seemed to be committed to follow the procedure they had agreed upon in the TDG's early meetings. The commitment that the TDG members showed may be due to their choice to participate in the TDG as well as their choice of the focus of the group. In other words, this is similar to what Murray (2008) reported in her study that choice leads to commitment. Based on what the teachers said they intend to do after closing the TDG, one can deduce that the TDG had an impact on the teachers' classroom practice.

This matches with what Richards and Farrell (2005) argue that being members in a TDG can result in more effective and innovative changes in teaching. However, the amount of change that occurred in the teachers' classroom practices seemed to be relative. In other words, while some teachers developed one area, others developed another. The table below summarizes the changes that took place in the teachers' practices.

A summary of the changes occurred in the teachers' classroom practices

| Areas observed | Teachers | Beginning of TDG | End of TDG |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|---|---|
| Activating students' knowledge | Nasir | Revising previous sessions Eliciting examples from previous sessions | More linking current sessions to previous ones |
| | Zahir | Oral work only | Oral and written work |
| | Ali, Saeed, Mahmood | No clear change | |
| Modeling and practicing | Nasir | More modeling and less practicing | More practicing and less modeling |
| | Zahir | No clear change | |
| | Ali | More modeling | Less modeling No clear change in practicing |
| | Mahmood | Less practicing | Same amount of modeling and more practicing |
| | Saeed | No clear change | |
| Monitoring phonics sessions | Nasir | Not listening carefully to students Whole-class support Three correction techniques | Careful listening Individual support |
| | Zahir and Ali | Teacher-correction technique Less support | Added self and peer correction More support |
| | Mahmood | Supporting through examples and repetition More peer correction | Supporting by modeling and reminding Made students notice errors |
| | Saeed | No clear change | |
| Encouraging students | Nasir | Rare praise | More praise (different expressions) Expressing satisfaction of progress Offering advice and suggestions |
| | Zahir | Praised using the expression 'excellent' | Also praised the students who made mistakes for trials |
| | Ali | No obvious change | |
| | Mahmood | Less praising expressions | More praising expressions |

| | | | |
|---|---------------|---|---|
| | | | Repeating correct answers with rising intonation |
| | Saeed | Always praising and encouraging – no clear change | |
| Attitudes towards phonics teaching and learning | Nasir | Interested, but students were less interested/enthusiastic | More engagement/participation from students |
| | Zahir | A few students were engaged | More students engaged |
| | Ali and Saeed | No clear change | |
| | Mahmood | Less active students | More active students |
| Assessment | Nasir | No clear change – using the same techniques | |
| | Zahir | Checked understanding by eliciting examples | Self assessment |
| | Ali | No clear change | |
| | Mahmood | Eliciting examples | Asking questions and quizzes |
| | Saeed | No clear change | |
| Classroom environment and materials | Nasir | No classroom displays, no printed materials | No classroom displays, some printed materials, more encouraging learning environment |
| | Zahir | No printed materials | Provided students with handouts and assigned homework to them |
| | Ali | One classroom display, No printed materials | One classroom display, used some printed materials some of which were shared by the TDG members |
| | Mahmood | No classroom displays, used some OHTs, no homework assigned | No classroom displays, used some printed materials, assigned some homework |
| | Saeed | No clear change | |

The table shows that the classroom practice with teaching phonics of all the teachers, except Saeed, have changed in one way or another. Although the teachers differ in the aspect and the degree of change that occurred in their classroom practice, it is noticeable that the TDG had an impact on their teaching.

What are the teachers' perceptions of their experiences as TDG members?

In order to identify the TDG members' perceptions of the TDG, data was obtained from their journals as well as the interviews. This analysis is also supported by the researcher's field notes (FN) which he took during the TDG meetings.

Teachers' expectations

All the TDG members had good expectations about the group and its impact on them. The teachers' journals showed two kinds of expectations. There were expectations about the TDG meetings and expectations about the students' reaction to learning phonics and their level of knowledge.

Group meetings and discussions

The teachers had positive expectations about the group discussions and they anticipated to benefit from them. Those expectations seemed to have been realized. The teachers also seemed to have a positive impression about the TDG meetings and discussions.

What the teachers mentioned about the benefits of the TDG discussions is consistent with Murray's (2008) study as the teachers in her study gained information and support through such discussions. The TDG members were asked about whether the group discussions were different from the discussions that the teachers usually have with their colleagues in their schools. They came up with an interesting comparison between the TDG discussions and school discussions. There was

a consensus among the members that the TDG discussions were much better than school discussions and they were in favor of the TDG discussions. This comparison clearly summarizes the teachers' perceptions of the TDG meetings and discussions.

All the teachers had a positive impression about the TDG meetings and they seemed to be pleased with them. From the beginning of the TDG, the members had positive expectations about the TDG meetings and discussions. Throughout the meetings, the teachers appeared to have confirmed those expectations. They perceived the meetings and discussions to be effective, helpful and beneficial. They also reported that the discussions were open and they were free to express and share their ideas.

Membership and group members

It was noticeable from the teachers' journals and interviews that the TDG members appreciated each other and found each other to be helpful and cooperative. All the group members stated that the work was done collaboratively and no one tried to impose anything on the group.

All the group members mentioned that they found each other as helpful and cooperative. They perceived the TDG as a place where they shared ideas and had free discussions with each other. They considered themselves as equal and no one imposed anything on the group. In other words, the TDG members felt safe to discuss whatever they liked and they had support from each other; this matches what Johnson and Johnson (1998), Farrell (2007) and Murray (2008) found through their studies. In addition, the group members seemed to have felt connected with each other which might have reduced the feeling of being isolated. Yeh (2005), and Richards and Farrell (2005) argue that when teachers get together, they remove the feeling of isolation. Interestingly, one of the group members clearly stated that he realized that he was not alone in this world. Another member also mentioned that before joining the group, he used to work individually. Surprisingly, the feeling of being connected and supported seemed not to be experienced within school community although the TDG members were part of a group of teachers in their schools.

Once, in one of the TDG meetings, the members spontaneously deviated from the focus of discussion for a while and talked about some of the worries and frustrations they experienced in their profession. They talked about the syllabi they taught and the Ministry's ignorance of their opinion in this regard. They also spoke about their work burden such as the administrative work they were required to accomplish and their relationships with school administrations (FN, November, 3). This may demonstrate two issues; one is that the TDG members developed a close relationship with each other; and the other is the significance of the TDG in creating the atmosphere in which the teachers felt connected with and supported by others. Similarly, Murray (2008) also found that TDGs provided teachers with a powerful sense of connection to each other. This is also aligned with Abraugh's (2003) results that the TDGs helped teachers in his study to build community and relationships.

Spelling out feelings, worries and frustrations with supportive friends may help teachers relax and in turn impact their teaching in an indirect way. Similar to what Head and Taylor (1997) claim, the TDG in this study was a safe environment for bringing those feelings to the surface and talking about them.

All the TDG members seemed to be passionate and thankful for the group existence. This is what Farrell (2007) calls the 'gratefulness for the group existence'. Through their journals, they expressed their sadness for ending the group. This may indicate the extent to which the TDG was important for them. One member suggested the group to keep in touch and to meet whenever possible. He mentioned that he believed there was a need to do that (FN, January, 12).

For all the above reasons and the experiences they went through for a whole semester, the TDG members were in favor of the TDG model, compared to the traditional PD structures. They also recommended the TDG model of PD for other teachers.

Gains from the group

All the group members claimed that they gained a lot from the group or from being enrolled in the group. One common benefit among the members was sharing ideas. However, the group members seemed to differ in their perceptions of the gains they got from the TDG. This may also indicate the purpose for which they joined the group.

In the interview, the TDG members were asked about whether the group helped them to enhance their students' progress. All the teachers reported some improvement in their students' level as well as their students' attitudes towards phonics and reading in general. In their journals and in the interviews, the teachers claimed that they gained many benefits from the TDG. Sharing and having new friends who have similar interests were common gains among the TDG members. The teachers' gains can be grouped into three categories:

Sharing. The teachers shared their ideas, experiences, materials and ways of teaching. Although this seems to be normal within any group of teachers in any school, in the TDG it was likely to be different. There was some kind of commitment and every member had something to share and left with various ideas from other members. This is what Cooper and Boyd (1998) suggest as one condition that helps to sustain a TDG.

Systematic and cooperative work. The members learned to be systematic in dealing with their students' problems as some members explicitly mentioned. They realized that to solve any problem, they need to diagnose it and then plan a procedure to tackle that problem. It is a practical approach to problem solving that Padwad and Dixit (2008) also found through their study. This is exactly what one teacher referred to as a change in his way of thinking. If this happened, then this way of thinking would probably influence the teachers' way of teaching.

Having empathetic friends. It was clear that the teachers were comfortable with being listened to by the other group members in a nonjudgmental atmosphere. This agrees with what Farrell (2007) mentioned as a condition for a TDG to ensure continuity.

However, when the teachers were asked in the interview about whether the TDG had an impact on their teaching, none of them mentioned explicitly that it had an impact on their teaching. Rather, the impact could clearly be seen on the students, as one of the teachers said. Such impact on students is attributed by Richards and Farrell (2005) to the group's focus on issues related to learners and learning. In this TDG's case, the focus was on 'phonics'. The other group members also indicated this in an indirect way. Students' improvement, which the teachers claimed that their students achieved, can also be considered as a sign of development on teachers' practice. This is because students might not be able to achieve progress by themselves without their teachers' efforts. In other words, it can be claimed that good teaching can lead to students' progress. In addition, all the gains the teachers claimed to have obtained would have probably influenced their teaching in one way or another.

TDG model or traditional PD?

The TDG members were asked to compare their experience with the TDG and their experience with the other PD programs they have had before. All of them seemed to prefer the TDG model as a way of PD. Each member had his own reasons for that. The table below shows the comparison teachers made between the TDG and the traditional PD structures.

Comparison between TDG and PD structures as seen by the teachers

| TDG model | Traditional PD structures |
|---|--|
| Teachers are active participants. | They are often passive participants. |
| There are people who are ready to listen to and have discussion with you. | Short-term in nature, no opportunity to find people who are ready to listen to you |
| Focus on practical issues. | Focus more on theoretical issues |
| Members are equal. | There is someone who is considered to be an expert. |
| Sufficient time to tackle, reflect on and modify different issues. | There is no time for tackling, reflecting on and making modifications to different issues. |
| Limited number of teachers allow for more sharing and discussion. | Many people, less opportunity to share and discuss |
| Teachers contribute in deciding agenda of discussion. | There is a pre-determined agenda. |

All the members recommended the TDG model for teachers' PD because it is beneficial for teachers as well as their students.

School support

The TDG members seemed to have received some support and encouragement from their school administrations; the teachers seemed to differ in the amount of support they received. Almost all the teachers perceived that allowing them to leave their schools to attend the TDG meetings as kind of support from their school administrations. Attending the TDG meetings required the administrations to adjust the school timetables and this was seen as a help for them, too. In addition to the support they received from their school administrations, some of the TDG members said their school principals occasionally asked them about the group.

The TDG members said they received some support and encouragement from their school administrations and they appreciated that. This support varied from one school to another. That is to say, some school administrations seemed to be more cooperative with their teachers (the TDG members) than others. It seems to be difficult to say whether the school administrations were interested in the TDG model and whether they were fully aware of the idea itself. This might justify the reason behind the little amount of support they offered their teachers.

Group closure

The teachers seemed to have enjoyed being members in the TDG, as it was obvious from their journals. Therefore, they expressed their sadness when the TDG reached the end.

What are the difficulties faced by the teachers using the TDG model?

The answer to this research question was obtained through the teachers' journals, the interviews and the researcher's field notes.

Confusion

Confusion was one of the difficulties the TDG members encountered in the beginning. The teachers who came to the first meeting with some confusion, left with a clearer idea about the group. Confusion seems to be unavoidable as most people come to a first meeting with a lot of queries and concerns (Head and Taylor, 1997). This was the case with the TDG members who came to the first meeting with some uncertainties about different issues. However, they left the first

meeting clear about what confused them. This indicates that such difficulty is normal at the beginning of such situations.

Difficulties

All the TDG members, except Nasir, seemed to have faced no difficulties regarding membership. Regarding the group meetings, the majority of the members said they had no difficulties with them. Regarding the TDG, there seemed to be no considerable difficulties faced by the members.

Meeting venues

Richards and Farrell (2005) consider having an appropriate meeting place as an important factor for a TDG to function effectively. However, one of the logistical difficulties the TDG faced was finding an appropriate room to meet in. Although none of the members mentioned this, this difficulty was clearly noticeable. The TDG meetings were held either in Learning Resource Centres or in one of the school administration offices. There were often some interruptions during the meetings as a result. Such interruptions often distracted the flow of discussions and it was somehow annoying for the group members (FN, 1, 6, 7, 10, and 11).

Conclusion

The aim of this study was to investigate the impact of a TDG model on Omani EFL teachers' classroom practice. It also aimed at exploring the teachers' perceptions of their experiences as TDG participants as well as the difficulties they faced. A group of five Omani EFL teachers was formed on a voluntary participation basis. The teachers decided to join the group and to participate in this study out of their own free will and interest. The TDG lasted for one semester. The results of this study show that there was some evident development in the teachers' classroom practice regarding teaching phonics which was what the group had decided to focus on. The most noticeable development was on modeling, practice and error correction. The teachers were enthusiastic and committed to their students' achievements. They kept encouraging and praising their students. This was also an area which witnessed some development.

Assessing students was an integral part of the teachers' phonics sessions. They used their assessment data to adapt their methods and techniques of teaching phonics. One teacher mentioned that he had not thought of testing his students in the alphabet and sounds of the letters. This clearly indicates an impact of the TDG on the teachers. However, there was very little improvement in the area of classroom environment and materials.

The participants of this study perceived the TDG as great opportunity to share ideas and experiences with teachers from other schools. They found the group as beneficial and gained a lot from it. In addition to sharing ideas and experiences, the TDG members also realized the importance of cooperative work to achieve collective goals. They appreciated each other for their helpfulness, cooperativeness and for being good listeners to each other. The members had a chance to spell out their worries and frustrations which might have helped them feel more comfortable. The teachers did not face difficulties as TDG members, except being confused at the beginning of the group which is normal as Head and Taylor (1997) mention. Finding suitable rooms for the group meetings was another difficulty. Other difficulties that were not group-specific include journal writing and cooperation of school administrations.

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ELT: Enhancing Employability Portfolio

Sharmishtha Singh

Employability Portfolio is a complete set of written document as well as communicating effectively with the prospective employer. In today's corporate dominated world, the entire education of a student culminates into one hard truth 'getting placed'. Employability portfolio is managing students' communication skills through means of skill building techniques and measurable changes in his language. This process requires a lot of documentation and mapping and practice.

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Communication is inexorably required in any form whether written or verbal, when a person wants to be employable. Vats, A (2009). We are living in a competitive global environment and English is all times the preferred language all over the world. English occupies a place of prestige in our country. In a country like India having a history replete with cultural invasions and burdened with cultures and regional dialects, a link language is indispensable. Even after 65 years of Independence, India is still a British colony in her inner self. In India English is not only used for the utilitarian purpose but also for the interpersonal and inter institutional communication for general as well as for specific purposes.

Introduction:

This paper presents the importance of the English for employability, need of English for Engineering students, assessing the students, developing the required curriculum, methodology in delivering in order to reach the possible outcome with reference to Engineering students. 'If you can speak in time you are fine' Martha Bigelow. Employability or being Employable means to equip with a certain set of skills which would be relevant for the particular field or career specific. According to the survey, carried out by a number of agencies, more than 70 percent of our engineering graduates are not employable. (Sinha, 2011) Dr A.P.J.Abdul Kalam has rightly said that India does not have problem of unemployment but unemployability. Employability skills as they are often referred, those job related attributes which employers seek in a candidate. The graduates lack other skills besides the academic or technical skills. The top three most important general skills identified are integrity, reliability and teamwork, while the top three most important specific skills are entrepreneurship, communication in English and use of modern tools and technologies.

Role of English language for employability:

What does a learner need in target situation and Why the youth of India are aware that English can win them good jobs with rich salary and they feel the inevitable need of learning English not only for their academic life but also to hone their communication skills for their career success.

Analysis of needs of engineering students for learning English language:

The term "analysis of needs" was originated by Dr. Michael Philip. The identification of ELL's language and academic need is very important, because it becomes the basis for the development of a proper program of instruction. For this target group, the foremost need is to make them aware of the complexities of the corporate selection process. Good communication skill is a necessary qualification for recruitment, growth, and professional effectiveness. In the highly competitive environment in the country, student with effective skills in addition to subject knowledge have an immense advantage over others lacking similar skills.

Everybody has understood and accepted the need of English for employability as well as for sustainability. Almost every university is now focusing on value added courses which enhances the employability aspect of student and thus providing the English communication classes as a value added course while imparting training on the above mentioned skill sets. The need of an hour is to work on the various needs and requirements of students with regard to their various skills.

Training Program Objectives:

The Objective of these training programs should be to:

- Enhance verbal and written communication skills of students.
- Fine tune analytical skills (Mathematical, verbal aptitude & logical reasoning.)
- Develop content within students.
- Familiarize students with the corporate selection process though mock GD and Interview practice sessions
- Develop skill sets (teamwork, leadership, interpersonal, etc.) required to enhance employability.
- Develop a corporate personality within students

The medium of instruction to edify these skill sets is invariably in English language and the concept of delivery must be based on the very famous lines of Confucius:

- ✓ I hear and I forget.
- ✓ I see and I remember.
- ✓ I do and I understand

Assessing the ELL's Linguistic abilities:

Convincing communication requires a good knowledge of the language to be used. For this purpose well envisioned planning is required. The foremost aspect of ELT to non native speakers is to assess them with the language skills they possess to identify the current level of students' needs and requirements, to plan the curriculum accordingly. The idea is to understand the student's communication level and linguistic abilities. Therefore Pre training assessment of every student is done to gauge the student's extant level of the language's competency in English language.

Mapping the Student's linguistic abilities:

It is important to keep a ready reference or a mapping matrix of the level of communication before introducing training module to the student. For this purpose constant and continuous evaluation of a student's growth needs to be done. This should be recorded at regular intervals. Colorado (2007) Standardized tests in English do not usually reflect ELL's true content knowledge or abilities. But informal assessments can provide a more well-rounded picture of their skills, abilities, and ongoing progress. This is an ideal classroom portfolio and its main objective is to provide a learning curve of the student, *where* a student began and *how* he or she has developed. This is particularly useful for showing students *how* an ELL is progressing and even to formulate corrective measures to develop a new plan. Careful planning and implementation is necessary in order to ensure that portfolios serve this function.

Assessment Techniques:

Various methods have been evolved for assessing student's communication level at the beginning and at subsequent junctures.

- Impromptu speeches
- Role plays
- Debates
- Skits
- Quizzes
- Group discussions
- Psychometric tests
- Interview Questions

Various kinds of tests have been designed to assess the capabilities on a variety of skills. It is important to make students' realize the crucial value of these employability skills at the initial level in order to make them equip with the same.

Assessment Elements:

For attaining proficiency in English language, it is imperative to focus on certain aspects, which are also the key assessment parameters. They include:

Grammar: The medium used to communicate should be structured correctly with respect to grammar.

Articulation: The student should be able to clearly deliver and communicate ideas in English.

Content: Relevant ideas should be expressed with conviction.

Vocabulary: Depending on the level of the academic program, there should be a benchmark for the vocabulary.

Fluency: The more pauses and interjections a student takes to deliver, his ability to communicate gets affected. Thus such use should be strategically made.

Developing the curriculum:

Once the students are assessed on the parameters of their existing communication level, the curriculum should be planned on the basis of the requirement and need of the students.

Methodology of delivery:

Delivery of such training program requires activities that will bring about a paradigm shift in the minds of participants. Therefore the curriculum delivery requires loads of activities which involve students to be more focussed in approach, there by resulting in better imbibed knowledge. Activities need to be fun-filled and be based on *Employability* aspects. For Instance an initial written communication plan could be more focussed on building Resumes. Mock sessions to develop skills on *Group Discussions* could be devised as a Role play forums. Most often it is not *what* you know but *how* well you can express that matters in corporate selection process like extempore, interviews, group discussions and presentations. Facing these situations at the time of hiring students may feel hesitant and nervous. Hence initiating them into such challenging communication forums is imperative.

Challenges and Suggestions on course:

Diversity among students:

There is much diversity among ELL's in Indian schools and universities Stephenson. A,(2003). Cultural, regional and economic differences are evident and their influence on students is quite astounding. For teachers of ELT, the goal is to help their students to attain a uniform status in

a specifically defined time frame. The diverse background must be moulded into apt learning sensibilities. An effective training module must blend social skills in convincing interpersonal skills.

WIFIM:

For any learner it is imperative to first be convinced on his 'WIFIM; What is in it for me?' Therefore, a communication teacher must devote initial hours of training in making their students' *realize* the importance of the training program. Page | 256

A study of Gardner and Lambart (1959) has been done in order to find out the co-relation with linguistic performance of learners in regard to Attitude and Motivation. They suggested that an L-2 learner needs to be psychologically prepared to learn a second language.

Time Restraints:

For any value added course there is a very limited time period devoted for the implementation of the entire curriculum, and thus it gets very difficult for the teacher to train the students in the given time frame. Hence the need is to design customised student learning modules within a specified time capsule.

Conclusion:

“English will make everybody survive and go anywhere”. This expression is of great significance. English is now the global language of business. Multinational companies are mandating English as the Common Corporate Language. When we look at the distinction between preparing students' for LIFE vs. for a CAREER, all of these help prepare them for life and also make them competitive employees in the workplace. English is a vital factor Enhancing and deciding their Employability Quotient and without any doubt, The Actual Universal Language.

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Exploring the Judicious Use of First Language in the Teaching and Learning of Second Language: A Balanced Approach to ELT

Shivani

Introduction

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The use of the first language (L1) of the learner in second language (L2) learning has been a controversial issue for a long time. According to Stern (1992), the use of L1 in L2 teaching is “one of the most longstanding controversies in the history of language pedagogy”. It is controversial because different theories of L2 acquisition afford very different hypotheses about the value of L1 use in the classroom. From an interactionist perspective, for example, emphasis needs to be given to ensuring learners receive maximum exposure to L2 input, whereas from a sociocultural perspective the L1 can serve as a tool for scaffolding learner production in the L2 (Ellis 2008).

The first language has long been considered the villain in second language learning, the major cause of a learner’s problems with the new language. Krashen (1981) suggests that the knowledge of the first language is a source of errors in learners’ L2 performance, so there should be an English environment in the English language classroom. Ellis (1984) argued that L1 should be used as little as possible. In recent years, however, most of the research endorses the use of the first language as it facilitates the learning process of the second language (Cummins 2007, García 2008 and Kang 2012). It has been pointed out that depending on the learners’ target language proficiency level, the extent of first language use in the classroom should be determined without affecting the learners’ opportunity for the exposure to the target language.

Arguments for avoiding the first language

The cross-linguistic influence has had a rather unique history in second language acquisition, research and practice. It was presumed to be the only source of syntactic errors in adult second-language performance (Lado 1957). The monolingual principle refers to exclusive use of the target language as instructional language to enable learners to think in target language, with minimal interference from the first language (Howatt 1984). For years, English-only has been a default position of ELT pedagogy. Due to a variety of reasons, for example, a concern over students' maximum exposure to English or a perceived lack of target language competence on the part of non-native teachers, or sometimes even sheer necessity when a teacher does not share the same linguistic background with learners, the monolingual principle has become a taken-for-granted dogma in language instruction. At policy level (Littlewood and Yu 2011), teachers are advised by national curricula to either "ban the L1 from classroom" or "minimize" it as "the L1 is not something to be utilized in teaching but to be set aside" (Cook 2001).

According to Harmer (2007b), a serious objection to the use (especially the over-use) of the students’ L1 is that it restricts the learners’ exposure to the target language. It is possible, for example, to make use of their first language when we give instructions, but this will reduce their exposure to a type of English which is ‘an ideal source of language for student acquisition’ (Harbord 1992). Indeed if the teacher is a principal source of useful comprehensible input, then the more time we spend speaking English, the better.

There is one typical situation where the use of the L1 seems counter-productive. This is when the teacher encourages the learners to use English in communicative speaking tasks, whose purpose, after all, is to give the learners opportunities to communicate in English. The teacher may understand the students’ natural inclination to communicate in the best way they can (i.e. in their

first language), but it will be meaningless for the purpose of the activity that the teacher asks them to engage in (Harmer 2007b).

Agreeing with the idea of Harbord (1992) that English is ‘an ideal source of language for student acquisition’, Cook (2001) believes that learners of English should be exposed to an English using environment as much as possible. Krashen (1986), a pivotal advocate of the only-L2 use in the language classroom, continues this idea by stating that “comprehensible input is the only causative variable in second language acquisition”. He means, “Success in a foreign language can be attributed to input alone” (Brown 2000).

The supporters of the monolingual approach also indicate that the major impediment to L2 learning is interference from L1 knowledge (Cook, 2001). Krashen (1981), in his ‘Second Language Acquisition and Second Language Learning’, suggests that the first language knowledge is a source of errors in learners’ L2 performance. He also reports, “A high amount of first language influence is found in situations ... where translation exercises are frequent”.

Despite this popular belief and common practice, avoidance of L1 in L2 classrooms, according to Cook (2001) "has no straightforward theoretical rationale". On the contrary, empirical research in recent years has proved that the first language is the most important ally a foreign/second language can have.

Arguments in favour of the use of L1 in classroom

A number of authors have talked about the potential pedagogic benefits of carrying out contrastive analysis of grammars. Both Atkinson (1987) and Harbord (1992) present similar views. Atkinson proposes a simple explanation or demonstration of the rule followed by a translation exercise in those cases where L1 and L2 differ structurally.

Schweers (1999), in a report of the outcome of his research on the use of the first language in English classes, concludes that ‘a second language can be learned through raising awareness to the similarities and differences between the L1 and L2’. James (1980) makes reference to contrastive teaching as a valid technique to impart (students with) ‘packaged information, in a form easily assimilated as knowledge, about the intricacies of L2 systems’. The case is built stronger when we consider SLA research on the effect of formal and explicit instruction in the classroom. It is generally accepted that instruction that focuses on language form can both speed up the rate of language development and raise the ultimate level of the learners’ attainment (Willis 1996).

Atkinson (1987), in his discussion about the general advantages of native language use, claims that to let learners use their L1 is “a humanistic approach” which allows them to say what they really want to say sometimes”. In terms of learner autonomy and evaluation, Ellis (2003) proposes that L1 allows students to give ongoing feedback about the course and their experiences of learning much more fluently than they will if they are only using English. According to Nunan and Lamb (1996), in most foreign language contexts, using the students’ first language to give brief explanations of grammar and lexis, as well as for explaining procedures and routines, can greatly facilitate the management of learning.

The first language opens the door not only to its own grammar, but to all grammars, in as much as it awakens the potential for universal grammar that lies within all of us. For this reason, the first language is the master key to foreign languages, the tool which gives us the fastest, surest, most precise, and most complete means of accessing a foreign language. Hence, if we look into the matter through UG perspective, it becomes very clear that even UG researchers believe that L1 has a vital role to play in L2 learning. The present study is also based on the assumption that learners’ L1 may be judiciously used as a resource to facilitate the learning of target language.

The use of first language as a linguistic resource in the classroom can encourage and enhance students' positive attitude toward their first language, their belief in themselves and their capabilities to achieve higher learning in academic areas as well as second language and literacy. One of the main assumptions of this researcher's approach is that the first language of the learner is a very powerful factor in second- language learning and one which cannot be eliminated from the process of learning.

The task of an English Teacher in India becomes very challenging as English is considered a second language which is to be acquired in an atmosphere of vernacular language. Intuitively, a good number of teachers feel partly based on their own experiences as learners of a second language, that the first language of the learner has an active and beneficial role to play in instructed second language learning. Learners do not construct rules in a vacuum; rather they work with whatever information is at their disposal. This includes knowledge of their L1. The L1 can be viewed as a kind of 'input from inside' (Ellis, 2003). And yet, for some of us, there seems to be a generalised feeling of guilt that we are acting counter to the principles of good teaching when we use the learners' first language as a tool to facilitate learning.

In this study, the argument is: if students are trained to contrast L1 and L2, and differences as well as similarities are made explicit, chances are such explicit knowledge will enable learners to notice the 'gap' between their inner grammars and the target language and ultimately, through constant hypothesis testing, achieve higher levels of grammatical as well as communicative competence. Thus, the principal role of cross linguistic referencing becomes consciousness raising. Rutherford (1987), in a chapter dedicated exclusively to the central role of consciousness raising in language learning, holds that 'successful learning comes about only when what is to be learned can be meaningfully related to something that is already known'.

There is little doubt that what the language learner already knows is the first language, through which, more or less consciously, s/he tries to perceive and assimilate the elements of the target language. Utilizing and controlling this tendency instead of ignoring or fighting it may go a long way towards facilitating learning a second language as Weschler (1997) pointed out;

No matter how much a teacher wish it weren't so, so-called 'interference' will always plague any learner who has ever leaned one language before another. The term itself has a negative connotation, but need not; better to think of the inevitable influence of the L1 on the L2 as a potential aid or tool. For those who advocate teaching the student to 'think directly' in the target language, an interesting philosophical question would be, "Once having learned to think in one language, is it even possible not to think in that language?"

The question then suggests itself whether it isn't better to use this habitual transfer in some way rather than desperately try to fight and eradicate it, or even to deny its existence. Using contrastive analysis in the classroom may go a long way towards controlling this powerful tendency and making an ally of what has long been considered our greatest enemy. Friedlander (1990) supports the positive effects of using the first language for second language writing. In his study, adult second language writers were encouraged to use their first language in planning and developing ideas, and then translating those ideas into their second language. The findings of his study revealed that the use of the first language does not impede the writing process, but instead facilitates the meta-cognitive processes such as planning and organizing ideas, which in turn reduces inhibitions in second language production. It follows that warning the learner of the language interference, showing clearly and in advance where it may appear and what s/he should keep in mind to curb it may greatly facilitate second language learning. The first language represents a powerful resource that can be used as an aid to enhance learning but it must always be used in a principled way.

The researcher believes that the first language of the learner should be treated as an ally in the process of second language teaching and that it should be consciously used instead of being ignored and avoided at all costs. I am convinced that, from a psychological point of view, it cannot be avoided and that, from a pedagogic point of view, it can facilitate learning if used wisely and deliberately. I completely agree with D P Ausubelk (qtd in Marton 178), one of the cognitive psychologists, who condensed all of his educational research and thinking in the following statement:

If I had to reduce all of educational psychology to just one principle, I would say this: The most important single factor influencing learning is what the learner already knows. Ascertain this and teach him accordingly.

When learners use first language structures in second language performance, they in effect plug lexical items (vocabulary) of the second language into the surface structure of the first language. In other words, they “think” in the first language and use words from the second language, much as one would handle word-for-word translation. (Dulay, Burt and Krashen 1982). Students may feel frustrated and tend to believe that their identity is jeopardized if their first language is made degenerate. Further, the use of L1 frees learners from psychological barriers like embarrassment or nervousness and offers them mental comfort. It also creates a kind of rapport between the teacher and the learners and the learners are motivated to interact with the teacher independently. The first language provides a new dimension to the class and makes it pupil friendly and lively.

Towards Developing a Teaching Strategy Recommending the Use of Balanced Approach in English Language Classroom

Most relevant to most language teaching situations are methods that actively create links between the first and the second language (Cook 2011). In terms of frequency, Carole Franklin (1990) found that over 80 percent of teachers used the first language for explaining grammar and for discussing objectives; over 50 percent for tests, correcting written work and teaching background; under 16 percent for organizing the classroom and activities and for chatting informally. SLA research provides no reason to banish the rational use of the L1 in the classroom. As Swain and Lapkin (2000) put it:

To insist that no use be made of the L1 in carrying out tasks that are both linguistically and cognitively complex is to deny the use of an important cognitive tool.

The L1 of the learners should be used as a scaffold to facilitate second language learning and it should be removed gradually over time to create room for maximum exposure to the target language.

Now finally a few words about how the researcher envisage the use of first language in the classroom. The following diagram shows the step to step usage of a balanced method of the judicious use of the L1 in English language classroom.

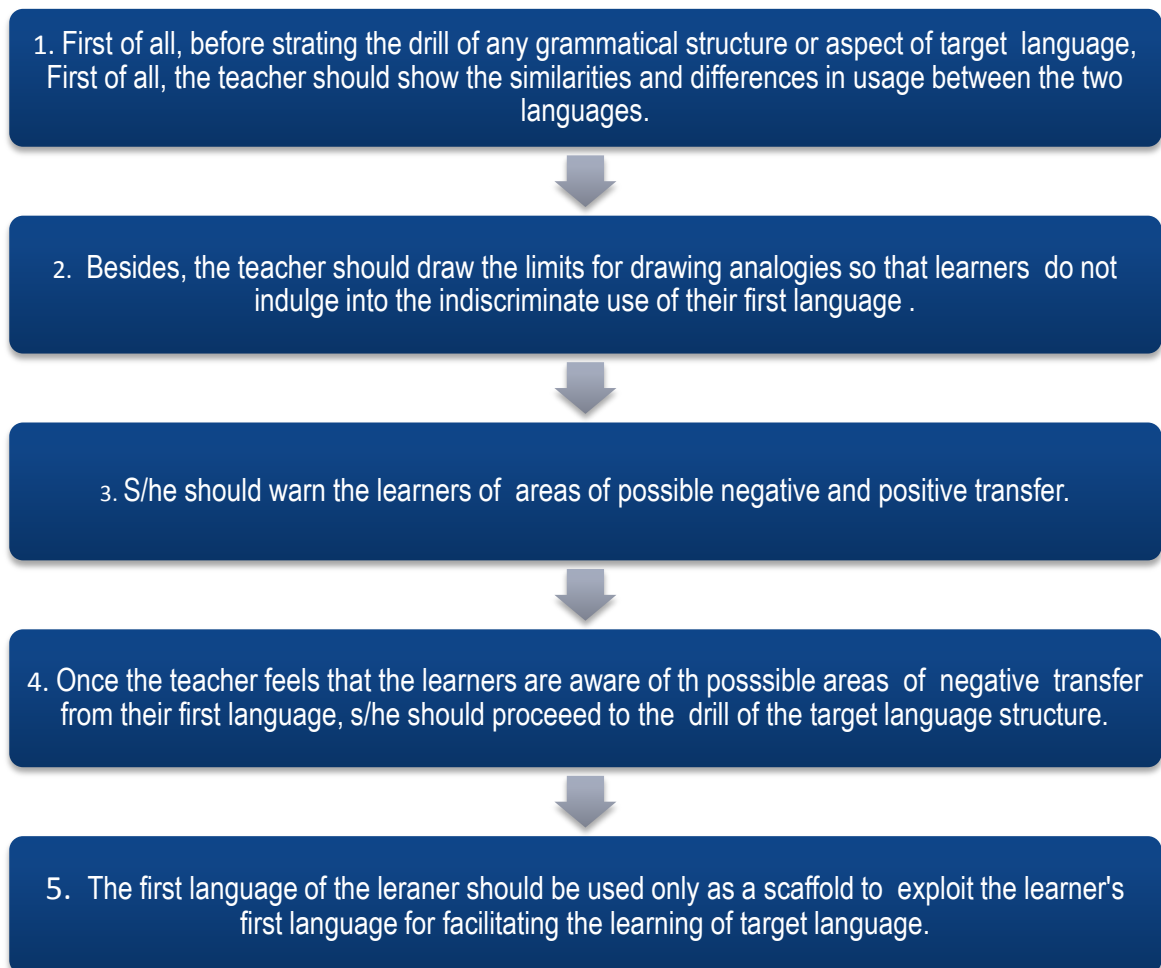


Figure: Flow chart showing the step-wise use of L1 in English language classroom

All of this should be done before the practising of the given structure so that habits are formed on a conscious, cognitive basis. Frequent use of translation as a perfect contrastive technique for learning grammatical structures would be one of the characteristics of this approach, although it would not become the only or even the main technique.

Conclusion

There is no denying the fact that in order to develop a native-like proficiency in a second language; the learner needs to get maximum exposure to the target language. But this approach reflects just one side of the coin. The SLA researchers and the teachers of English cannot afford to ignore the other side of the coin which shows that the indispensable function of first language of the learner in teaching and learning English language cannot be denied. The first language is the master key to learning of second language, the tool which gives us the fastest, surest, most precise, and most complete means of accessing a foreign language. The need is to use a balanced approach to second language teaching which allows the shrewd use of L1 in second language classroom.

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Learning outcome – affecting factors and remedial measures

D. Uma Devi

Learning makes a man perfect and it brings up behavioral change in the humans. It provides key to the structure of one's personality. Learning is a process which covers cognitive and affective of human behavior. It brings out development in personality as well. It helps one to attain growth in various spheres such as physical, mental, emotional social, moral, aesthetic and language. Of all the spheres growth in language plays a vital role as it is the chief source of communication. This paper brings to light the outcome of learning English as a second language and the factors affecting it. It also offers some suggestions to overcome the affecting factors.

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Since English has been an internationally accepted language, learning it as second language has become mandatory. Learning second language results in divergent thinking, creativity and cognitive development and it widens one's circle of communication. English is used as second language in large number of countries. People across the world learn English for plethora of reasons. It is learnt not only for educational reasons but also for the expansion of their horizons on the means of communication and it is imperative to the success and advancement in various fields.

English has been one of the educational tool requirements. Moreover it opens many doors for people and provides them with a variety of options. Hence many counties opt to English as second language. ESL is the course that is designed to teach English to people whose native language is not English. Due to various reasons the learner's outcome of learning English is not up to the mark and their proficiency level is far from satisfactory. This study focuses on the factors that impact on the learner's poor performance in English. The reasons are many and they vary from psychological reasons to family environment in which the learner brought up. They are listed below.

- Though it is a language, learners consider it as a tough subject to learn
- Since it is a foreign language, exposure with native speakers is very less. As a result the learner is not able to produce English in real form
- Usage of vernacular language in the language classroom fails to attract the learners
- Learners without English background foundation find it very difficult to learn English
- Learner's ignorance of how important English language is, results in failing to develop language skills
- The environment outside the classroom is not feasible and does not support the usage of English
- Physical health or illness that affect the learner's outcome

In addition to the above said reasons, the psychological reasons play major role as it produce cognitive disability in the learner. Thus the learner is unable to develop his proficiency.

- Fear of making mistakes and being ridiculed by others hinder the proficiency level of learners
- Lack of self confidence results in inadequate knowledge of the language
- Individual differences in intelligence leads to comparison that develops inferiority complex
- Past bitter experience of the learners affects their mentality and it results in lack of outcome and performance
- The learner loses his hope When he does not get enough motivation
- Intellectual inferiority by birth
- Lack of attention, interest, distraction and irrelevance
- Too much of parental care also hinders the learner's creativity

Psychological factors can hinder the success of the second language learners and it diminishes their cognitive ability. Often the learner loses his self-confidence and his performance may be affected because of anxiety and embarrassment. This results in the learner's inefficiency of producing the target language. Hence these factors, especially the psychological factors to be analyzed and remedied, as they are highly responsible for failing to produce the target language. These factors have to be remedied to the maximum.

- Motivating the learners to acquire confidence plays a key role
- Awarding the learners with grades and appreciating them often will enthruse them
- Creating congenial environment inside the classroom is mandatory. The teacher must see to that the learner's self esteem does not suffer as their fear of ridicule may result in language shock
- The teacher should understand the demands of the learner and address them adequately
- Tests to be conducted and assessment is to be done in positive way with routine evaluation and continuous monitoring
- Activities that kindle the cognitive ability to be used in the language classroom
- Amicable relationship between the learner and the teacher is important as it removes the complex that exists among the learners.
- The learner's motive and reasoning capability to be analyzed and answered accordingly.

Learning English as second language opens wider opportunities. The expansion of English language has rapidly increased the needs to gain better communicative English throughout the world because the aptitude to use English is very much needed for further studies, journeys to other countries for social and professions, global contacts of all kinds. Therefore, it is mandatory to counteract the factors that affect the learner's outcome in learning the target language. As the learner's mentality is largely responsible for his creativity and development, the psychological factors have to be remedied at the early stage.

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Reading Comprehension in ESL/EFL – Perceptions of the Learners

Umamaheswara Rao Bontha

Introduction

Reading is one of the major language skills that needs a significant attention in ESL/EFL curriculum as the academic success of the learners largely depend on effective reading skills. It can be observed, “Many language teachers assume that teaching and learning a foreign or second language (L2) depends on reading skills” (Hedgcock S. John, Ferris R. Dana., 2009:2). This perception of the teachers assigns greater responsibility to reading skills to enhance the competency of the learners in other language skills too. Lack of reading habits among the learners can lead to a major challenge in teaching/learning the language. This is true even in the multicultural society in America. Leddy (2008:8) writes that “the NEA report is especially depressing in detailing the severe drop in reading among teenagers and young adults....The NEA report notes that 38 percent of employers rate high school graduates as ‘deficient’ in reading skills, while a shocking 72 percent of employers rate such graduates as ‘deficient’ in writing skills.” The drop in reading printed materials is attributed to the latest technological changes such as internet on which the students spend most of their time.

Levitov (2010), in her editorial, “Reading as a 21st-Century Skill Can Not Be Taken Lightly,” expresses that students need reading and writing skills as well as the ability to communicate and comprehend to use online or printed resources. She further states that “with electronic access comes the need for new skills for navigating and comprehending text and content in digital form.” It is clear from the above that reading as a skill cannot be neglected or taken for granted as the modern, technological, electronic, and digital world still needs effective reading skills to comprehend and respond through it. Having discussed the importance of reading skills even in the 21st Century, it is appropriate to understand the definitions of reading skills.

Reading Skills

Reading is a skill that is defined in different ways. Grellet (1981:3) opines, “Understanding a written text means extracting the required information from it as efficiently as possible.” Urquhart & Weir (1998) emphasize reading as “dealing with language messages in written or printed form” (p. 14, emphasis in original). The definitions of Grellet (1981) and Urquhart & Weir (1998) reveal that reading is the comprehension of the written language that leads to the construction of meaning to the written text that is read.

Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension assumes significance in teaching and learning reading skills. Effective reading comprehension skills alone can improve learners’ reading skills and it particularly helps in increasing the pace of reading. Reading comprehension can be defined in different ways. The RAND Reading Study Group (2002:11) stated that comprehension is “the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language.” In other words, reading comprehension involves reading a written text and interacting with it and in the process meaning is constructed to the written language. Reading comprehension is often discussed in terms of being a process involving the integration of decoding ability, vocabulary knowledge, prior knowledge of the topic considered, and relevant strategies to make sense of a text and understand it (Kintsch & Kintsch, 2005; Block & Pressley, 2002). Thus, reading comprehension is not a simple process. It, rather, needs the knowledge of many sub-skills such as decoding the meaning from the written language, knowledge of vocabulary and background knowledge of the topic of the text. Moreover, it demands the reader to apply suitable reading

strategies to deduce the exact meaning of the text to comprehend it completely. Therefore, it is clear that it is not easy to define reading comprehension as it encompasses over 30 different skills such as “summarizing, analyzing, creating themes, predicting, reflecting, inferencing, etc” (Block & Pressley, 2002).

Techniques of Reading – Skimming, Scanning and referencing

Reading comprehension can be effective if learners are taught some techniques or strategies of reading that they can apply to the reading text to facilitate effective comprehension. In both L1 and ESL studies, students who have been taught how to identify text structure and use this knowledge to guide their reading process have exhibited better comprehension and recall of information than readers lacking such knowledge (e.g., for high school and college students) (Meyer, Brandt, & Bluth, 1980; Slater, Graves, & Piché, 1985; Slater, Graves, Scott, & Redd-Boyd, 1988; Swaffar, 1988). In other words, understanding the structure of the reading texts and the genres leads to better comprehension skills. In addition, “Comprehension strategies are specific, learned procedures that foster active, competent, self-regulated, and intentional reading” (Trabasso & Bouchard, 2002, p. 177). Therefore, the learners would benefit if they are taught fundamental techniques of reading such as skimming, scanning and referencing.

Skimming is the first sub-skill that has to be applied to the reading text to get an overall idea of the text that activates readers’ schemata. Then scanning facilitates the location of the specific information in the text and leads to comprehension. Ding (2008), in discussing the implications of fast reading for college students, sees fast reading as consisting of two skills: skimming and scanning – both playing different roles in reading. To Ding (2008), both skimming and scanning are important for doing well in college English tests, for studies in general and for Internet reading. In other words, both skimming and scanning help the learners to improve their pace of reading and paves way for effective comprehension of the text leading to better performance in the comprehension tests.

Referencing is another sub-skill of reading that assists learners in reading comprehension. ESL/EFL readers often encounter problems in comprehending reading texts due unfamiliar words that popup while they read the text. This might put off the reader from reading the text. The readers/learners should acquire strategies of deducing word meanings from the context to enhance their pace of reading and to continue to read without referring to other sources for word meanings. Similarly, Morrison (1996) opines that, lexical inferencing is using the available linguistic cues as well as other key points in a text in order to guess the meaning on unfamiliar word. In Haastrup’s (1991) view lexical inferencing is a process of guessing the meaning of an unknown word by using all linguistic cues available in the text together with the reader’s world knowledge, his/her linguistic knowledge, and his/her awareness of the context. The importance of lexical referencing in reading can help the learners to learn new words leading to a “well-elaborated semantic knowledge, which includes developing knowledge of usage, collocations and other lexico-grammatical characteristics.” (Hunt, & Beglar, 2005: 28). Therefore, lexical referencing is an important sub-skill that guides the learners toward effective reading comprehension.

Research Tool and Method

As the present research is action research, it was thought that a questionnaire would help to record the learners’ perceptions about reading comprehension. In order to get a comprehensive picture of learners’ perceptions, a questionnaire was designed on a 5 point Likert Scale in a wherein 1 corresponds to ‘strongly agree’ and 5 corresponds to ‘strongly disagree’ with scale 3 corresponding to ‘neutral’. The questionnaire was implemented on the students randomly to get a viable sample for the present study. The questionnaire consists of 10 questions that focus on the perceptions of the students on reading comprehension. A total of 28 students were selected from

level 2 of the Foundation Program because these students begin to read passages of moderate length where skimming and scanning techniques have to be used to comprehend the reading texts. For convenience of analyzing the data the 5 point Likert scale is reduced to 3 points namely, agree, neutral and disagree.

Objective of the Study

The present study is an action research that aims at exploring the perceptions of the learners on reading comprehension.

Findings

The main aspect of the results of the study is that a majority of learners are of the view that they use skimming and scanning techniques effectively. This throws light on the important role played by skimming and scanning techniques in effective reading comprehension. A majority of the learners have also felt that they are not able to guess meanings of the new words from context. In order to have a comprehensive picture, the perceptions of the learners are discussed in detail below.

Learners' Perceptions

A majority of learners expressed that they can skim the reading passage when they responded to the first statement, 'I can skim through the passage to understand the topic of the passage' (item 1), where 82 per cent of them agreed, 18 per cent were neutral and none disagreed. 82 per cent of the learners responded positively to the statement, 'I can scan the passage to find answers to the questions given' (item 2), 18 per cent remained neutral and only 7 per cent of them responded negatively. To the statement, 'I can identify the meanings of the new words from the context in which they occur' (item 3), 43 per cent of them expressed their agreement, 43 per cent of them were neutral and 14 per cent expressed disagreement. The statement, 'I can understand the main idea of each paragraph in the reading passage' (item 4) received 75 per cent of agreement, 39 per cent of neutral response and 14 per cent of disagreement. 57 per cent of the learners affirmed the statement, 'I always complete answering all the questions within the specified time' (item 5) while 25 per cent were neutral and 18 per cent disagreed. To the statement, 'I read the entire passage word-by-word' (item 6) 47 per cent agreed, 39 per cent remained neutral and 14 per cent disagreed. 53.5 per cent of the learners expressed their agreement with the statement, 'I read only the titles and main ideas, and then I read the questions and check for the answers' (item 7), 21.5 per cent of them were neutral and 25 per cent of them expressed disagreement. Only 21 per cent of the learners agreed with the statement, 'I answer all the questions correctly' (item 8), while 50 per cent of them remained neutral and 29 per cent of them disagreed. To the statement, 'I can paraphrase the sentences in the reading text' (item 9), 61 per cent of them agreed, 14 per cent remained neutral and 25 per cent disagreed. 50 per cent of the learners expressed their agreement with the statement, 'I can summarize the passage after reading the entire reading text' (item 10) while 36 per cent remained neutral and 14 per cent of them expressed their disagreement.

Discussion

The perceptions of the learners illustrate the significance of effective reading techniques in order to facilitate effective reading comprehension skills among the learners. The results of the study further help us to understand how far the learners are able to succeed in comprehending the reading texts. Reading comprehension skills are particularly important to these learners as they have to read a considerable amount of materials in their undergraduate courses to achieve academic success. From the findings of the research it is clear that the learners are aware that these skills are important for them; however, they not completely equipped with all the techniques of comprehending the reading texts.

To the statement, ‘I can skim through the passage to understand the topic of the passage’ (item 1), 82 per cent of the learners expressed their agreement. Skimming the passage is the primary requirement of understanding a reading text. 75 per cent of the learners responded positively to the statement, ‘I can scan the passage to find answers to the questions given’ (item 2). A majority of learners expressing that they can skim and scan a reading text throws light on the importance of the two techniques in reading comprehension. Furthermore, according to Grellet (1981:19) both skimming and scanning are “specific reading techniques necessary for quick and efficient reading.”

Figure 1.1 illustrates the responses to the statements 1 & 2.

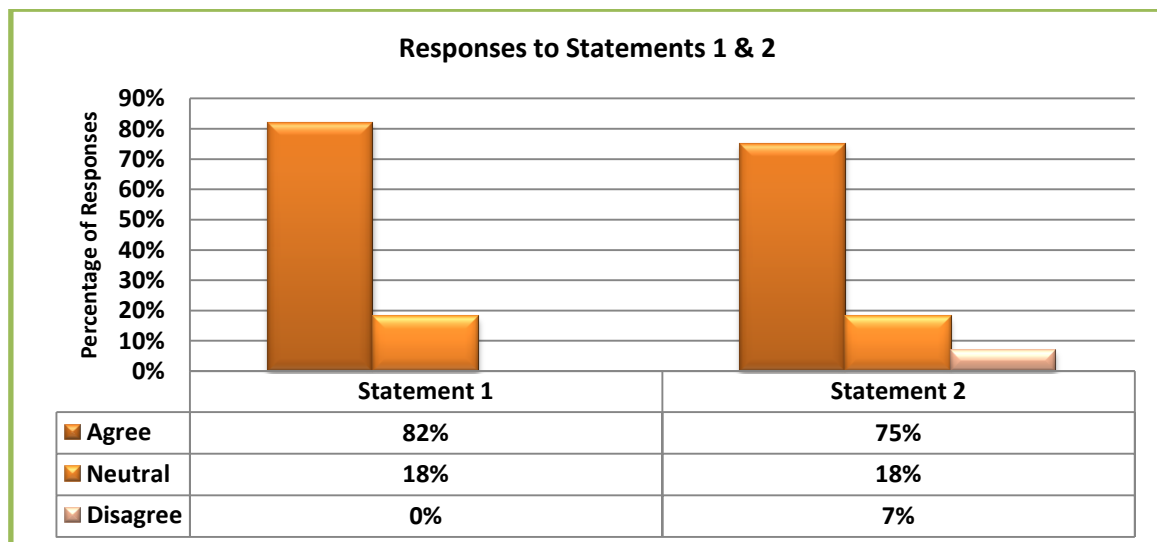


Figure 1.1

A minority of 43 per cent of the learners agreed with the statement “I can identify the meanings of the new words from the context in which they occur’ (item 3). However, Hastrup (1991) states that lexical inferencing denoted a process of guessing the meaning of an unknown word by employing all linguistic cues available in the text together with the reader’s world knowledge, his/her linguistic knowledge, and his/her awareness of the context. Furthermore, “well-elaborated semantic knowledge, which includes developing knowledge of usage, collocations and other lexico-grammatical characteristics” (Hunt, & Beglar, 2005: 28) is mainly achieved by learning new words through utilizing lexical inferencing in reading. Hence, deducing word meanings from the context assumes a significant skill in the ESL/EFL context as it enhances better comprehension and pace of reading. In fact, the more vocabulary knowledge causes the better text comprehension (Bengeleil & Paribakht, 2004; Schmitt & McCarthy, 1997).

Figure 1.2 illustrates the responses to statement 3.

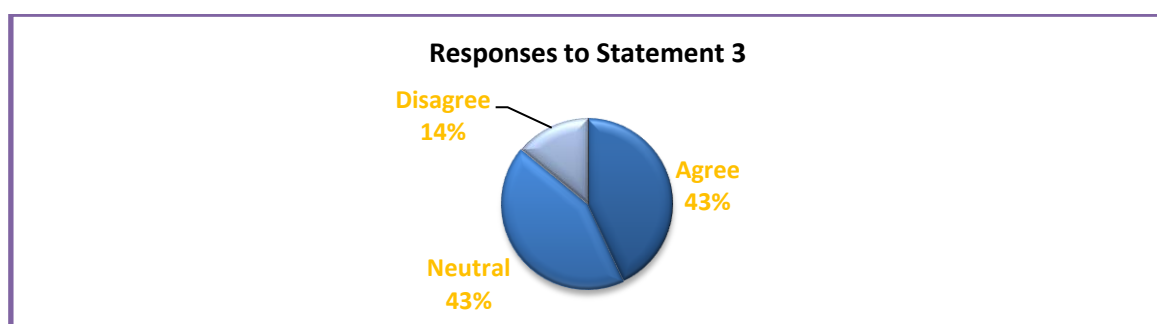


Figure 1.2

75 per cent of the learners responded positively to the statement, ‘I can understand the main idea of each paragraph in the reading passage’ (item 4). This is synonymous to the opinion of Brown, Armbruster, & Baker (1986: 54), “Authors flag important statements by such devices as headings, subsections, topic sentences, summaries, redundancies. . . . Expert learners know about such devices and use them as clues to help them concentrate on essential information.”

Figure 1.3 illustrates students’ responses to statement 4.

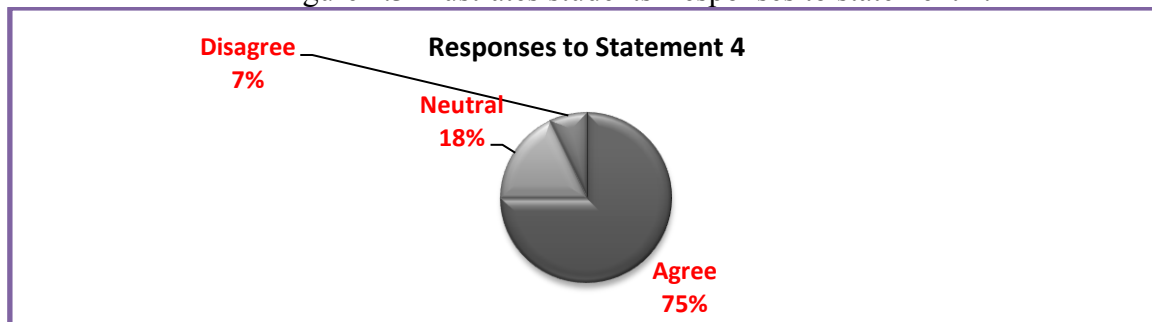


Figure 1.3

The statement, ‘I read the entire passage word-by-word’ (item 6), was agreed by only 47 per cent of the learners. Similarly, only 53.5 per cent of the learners responded positively to the statement, ‘I read only the titles and main ideas, and then I read the questions and check for the answers’ (item 7). The results of these two perceptions clearly say that almost fifty per cent of the learners read the entire text and again fifty per cent of them apply techniques and strategies of reading quickly for the information.

Figure 1.4 illustrates students’ responses to statements 6 & 7.

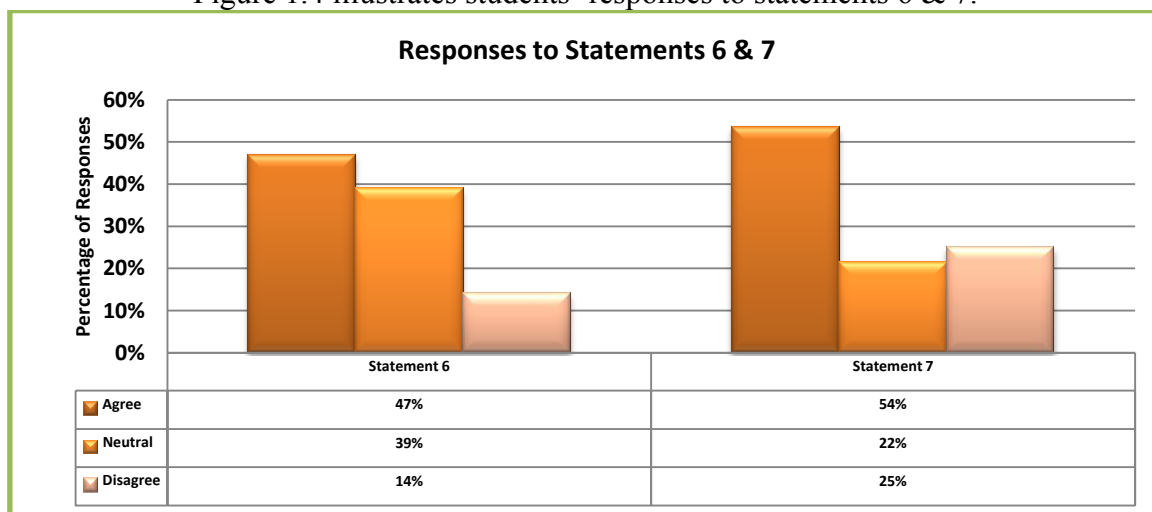


Figure 1.4

The statement, ‘I always complete answering all the questions within the specified time’ (item 5), received only 57 per cent of agreement from the learners. A minority of 21 per cent of the learners opined positively with the statement, ‘I answer all the questions correctly, (item 8). This throws light on the importance of using reading techniques that help the learners to improve the pace of their reading. Some of these techniques are skimming, scanning and deducing word meanings from the context etc. that help the learners to manage time and also answer all the questions on the reading comprehension that leads to effective comprehension skills of the learners.

Figure 1.5 illustrated students' responses to statements 5 & 9.

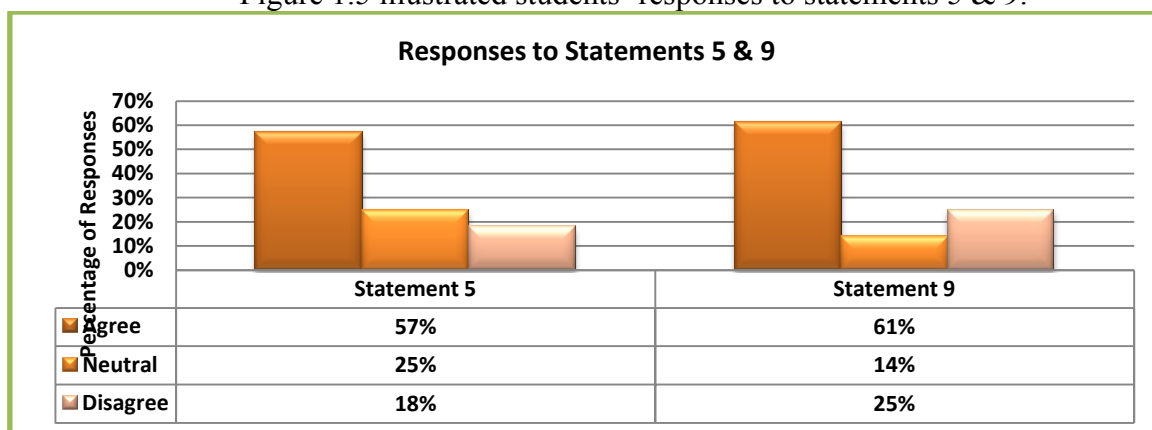


Figure 1.5

61 percent of the learners expressed agreement with the statement, ‘I can paraphrase the sentences in the reading text’ (item 9) and 25 per cent of them expressed disagreement. On contrary to the low percentage of students agreeing that they can paraphrase, Shin, May (1992) opines, “Students can benefit from formal training in note-taking with an emphasis on paraphrasing and on connecting ideas to prior knowledge.” Only half of the learners agreed with the statement, ‘I can summarize the passage after reading the entire reading text’ (item 10). The percentage of agreement for items 9 & 10 are low. Paraphrasing and summarizing are difficult skills for the ESL/EFL learners. However, numerous studies have examined the effectiveness of various studying techniques such as underlining, note-taking, summarizing, student questioning, outlining, elaboration, and diagrammatic techniques in improving the reading comprehension skills of the learners. (See reviews by Anderson, 1980; Anderson & Armbruster, 1982, 1984b; Caverly & Orlando, 1991; Flood & Lapp, 1990, and McAndrew, 1983.)

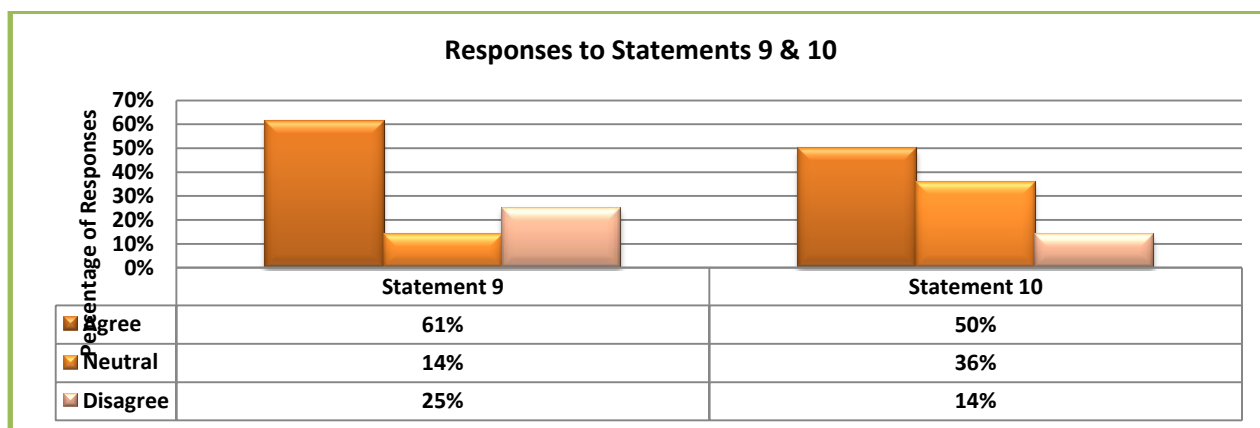


Figure 1.6

Conclusions

In view of what has been discussed, certain conclusions as to the perceptions of the learners on reading comprehension could be drawn. A significant conclusion is that the learners have realized the importance of skimming, scanning and guessing meanings of the words from context. The learners also expressed their inability to manage time during comprehension exercises. Only fifty per cent of the learners were able to use reading techniques such as skimming, scanning and guessing word meanings form context though they expressed their understanding of the sub-skills and their application. 47 per cent of them read the passage word by word in spite of expressing their awareness of using reading techniques and strategies. Just above fifty-percent of the learners opined to be able to paraphrase and summarize. The study confirms that the learners are able to comprehend the reading text; however, they need to be taught the techniques in a more

comprehensive manner using more challenging reading texts. This would enhance opportunities for the learners to use reading techniques to comprehend texts.

Pedagogical Implications

- Teachers should be aware of reading comprehension problems of the learners as English is a second or a foreign language to these learners.
- Teachers should observe the strategies that the learners employ in comprehending texts and guide them towards successful comprehension.
- Teachers should promote pair work and group work. Learners should be paired or grouped based on mixed abilities. For example, slow learners and fast learners.
- Techniques and strategies of reading have to be demonstrated to the students on varied reading comprehension texts covering several topics
- Reading comprehension tasks should be timed. Timed reading facilitates the learners to completely answer all the questions within the specified time.
- Reading tasks and tests should be designed based on the techniques of reading such as skimming, scanning, guessing word meanings from context, paraphrasing and summarizing etc.

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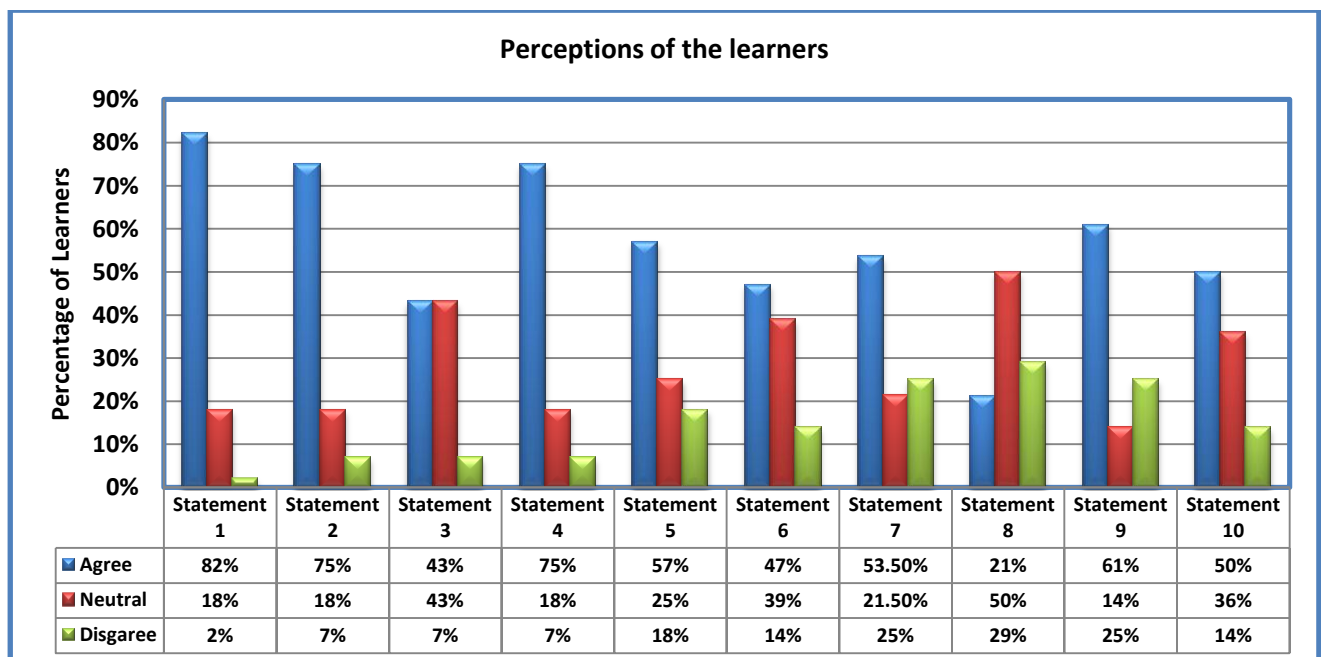
Appendix – i. Learners’ Questionnaire

Tick (✓) the right option

| S.No | Statement | SA | A | N | D | SD |
|------|---|----|---|---|---|----|
| 1 | I can skim through the passage to understand the topic of the passage. | | | | | |
| 2 | I can scan the passage to find answers to the questions given. | | | | | |
| 3 | I can identify the meanings of the new words from the context in which they occur. | | | | | |
| 4 | I can understand the main idea of each paragraph in the reading passage. | | | | | |
| 5 | I always complete answering all the questions within the specified time. | | | | | |
| 6 | I read the entire passage word-by-word. | | | | | |
| 7 | I read only the titles and main ideas, and then I read the questions and check for the answers. | | | | | |
| 8 | I answer all the questions correctly. | | | | | |
| 9 | I can paraphrase the sentences in the reading text. | | | | | |
| 10 | I can summarize the passage after reading the entire reading text. | | | | | |

Appendix – ii

Graphical Presentation of Learners’ Perceptions to the Statements in the Questionnaire



A Revolution in Education through PODCASTS

Ashesava Mazumdar

Pre-concept

Apple launched the first hand-held digital audio player, the iPod in 2001. This had 5GB memory, and was about the size of a pack of cards which had the ability to hold about 1000 songs in a pocket. Technological advances since then have inevitably resulted in smaller models but larger memories. It is only a matter of time before the pocket MP4 player finds similar status.

Apart from the obvious benefit of being able to download music and films, the boom in ownership spawned a whole new medium for broadcast or telecast of news, views and education in the form of the *podcast*. Topics available free on the internet range from A to Z.

Apart from the benefit of being able to download music, movies etc., iPods allowed the creation of a new medium: the so-called podcast. The term "podcasting" was coined by Ben Hammersly in a newspaper in February 2004. Despite the etymology, the content can be accessed using any computer that plays media files. Use of the term "podcast" predates the addition of native support for podcasting to the iPod, or to Apple's iTunes software at

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Ricky_Gervais_Show_Season_1_Cover.JPG

While Apple did not come up with the name, this was certainly interesting for the company as it provided a convenient way to generate even more the public's fascination with anything "pod" and place the iPod as enabling podcasting. The author of a podcast is called a podcaster, whereas the software that manages the automated downloading of material is called a pod-catcher. When video images are transmitted in addition to audio, it is vodcast or vodcasting.

Richard Berry says, podcasting is a converged medium bringing together audio, the web and media player, and a disruptive technology that has caused some in the radio business to reconsider some of the established practices and pre-conceptions about audiences. This idea is largely because no one person owns the technology; it is free to listen and one can create content, which does away from the traditional model of 'gate-keeping' media and production tools. It is very much a horizontal media form: producers are consumers and consumers are producers and engage in mutual exchange of thoughts, ideas and words.

Historical background about early usage

Many people and groups including Dawn and Drew, Kris and Betsy Smith of Croncast and Dan Klass of The Bitterest Pill had contributed to the early emergence and popularity of podcasts. Former MTV VJ Adam Curry in collaboration with Dave Winer, a developer of RSS feed, is credited with coming up with the idea to automate the delivery and syncing of textual content to portable audio players.

The first application to make this process feasible was I Podder X, developed by August Trometer and Ray Slakinski. Since the 1930's there have been radio talk shows and news programmes. Now through the internet, cheaper versions of hardware and software, audio podcasts are doing what was done earlier through radio broadcasting stations.

June 2005, Apple released iTunes 4.9 as a native support for podcasts. While this made receiving podcasts more convenient, it effectively ended advancement of the podcast medium by sole developers.

Podcasts, what are these? Why, one should Podcast? The Pros and Cons

Podcasts are media files that can be distributed through the Internet and played on computers and handheld devices, such as iPods or other digital audio players. Podcast can mean either the content or the method by which it is syndicated; which is also podcasting. The essence of podcasting is the creation of audio or video content for an audience that wants to listen to what they want, when and where they want, and the way they want. In addition, audio and video materials can be forwarded to subscribers, even without any user intervention. This eliminates the laborious process of searching for and downloading files on a regular basis from the net. Users can then listen to and watch podcasts on their computer (e.g., using Windows Media Player) or download to portable players and listen/watch on the move/anywhere.

Students have become more mobile than ever. They often find themselves multitasking, working in part-time jobs, or located some distance from a parent institution on professional practice placement. Thus, the idea of being able to access information without being grounded to a certain physical location is alluring.

In a broader context, podcasts may also be employed for the purposes of recording and distributing news broadcasts; recording and uploading foreign language/second language lessons to an instructor's website; developing audio/video recruiting brochures with personalized messages; recording teachers' notes as an ongoing activity; recording meeting and conference proceedings; oral history archiving and on-demand distribution; and sports as well.

Educational podcasts, which are audio recordings of items such as lectures, interviews, and book readings, are increasing in number. Indeed, the recording of lectures is one of the most obvious uses of podcasts in higher education. Lectures can be recorded by teaching/non-teaching staff and distributed over the Internet as an audio podcast (audcast) with the inclusion of images from applications, such as PowerPoint or coded as needed-the one under NPTEL by IIT's and IIM's and many more .

Traditional methods of distributing audiovisual educational material by video are expensive and restricted. The Internet has reduced these distribution costs and allowed experts in their field to be economic in distributing audiovisual material to anyone over the net. The podcasting technology has automated this process reducing technical barriers.

Among the numerous advantages of podcasts some are the following:

- 1) Podcasts allow listeners to hear recordings on demand; time and place is not a problem
- 2) Podcast production is comparatively inexpensive, so all podcast "subscriptions" are free
- 3) Podcasts are digital, thus available online to anyone in the world with online access; and
- 4) Podcasts are user-friendly and simple.

Though it has advantages, it is not devoid of pitfalls. The following are some of them:

- 1) Significant challenges for integration with existing technology infrastructures;
- 2) Lack of academically available content and difficulties with license agreements from commercial resources;
- 3) Technical limitations and lack of training resources; and

4) Lack of awareness and knowledge by faculty and students of the functions of podcasting .

In a more pedagogical context, an additional disadvantage is that a podcast is essentially a passive learning experience with a focus on an audio or audio/video facility alone. One way to overcome this problem would be to develop podcasts and vodcasts that are more interactive through the use of pauses for reflection by the viewer/listener on questions presented in the media. The viewer/listener would be instructed to pause the presentation and answer a question or reflect on a concept. When the viewer/listener completes the task, he or she could then continue to hear/view the responses to the questions. Furthermore, one important concern among educators regarding podcasting is the replacement of real-time classroom interactions with the students. In this context, it should be stressed that podcasts should complement rather than replace lectures; students still need to attend lectures and then use the podcasts while writing up or revising notes.

Teaching-Learning help through podcasts

English teaching is pretty common in the developing world these days. Not only does it provide economic opportunities, but is the most common medium of communication in many fields.

Some of the **favourite pod-games for ESL classes (in a regional medium) are as follows:**

Game1:

Rhyming:

Hickory Dickory Dock; The mouse ran up the Clock”: A classic for many of us, teaches the rhythms of English and question-and-response, and is fun in the beginning (even if the kids stumble and fumble through the words the first few times!) If this turns unfamiliar with the song, we can click the video to show the movie i.e., the action.

Game:2

Drawing a story:

Telling a story using vocabulary and language forms the students are familiar with. While students listen they draw pictures to help them remember the story. Retelling the story (depending on the level of the students), and asking them to re-tell it. They can first retell it in pairs, and can use their drawings while retelling. Focus should be on their use of language forms-use of words, vocabulary building, sentence structures etc. Now showing them a podcast to do it effectively and correct flaws that has crept inside during their performance.

Game3:

Nodding your head, shoulders and hands to identify the action:

“Head and Shoulders”: This can be adapted to feature any command. The students and teacher chant “Head and Shoulders” while touching head and shoulders, then clap three times while singing “one, two, three.” Repeat twice. The third time you repeat “head and shoulders” three times in a row, faster, then add the “one, two, three,” while clapping, at the end. Then the same sequence can be done with any command. For example: “Turn around, turn around, turn around one, two, three. Turn around one, two, and three. Turn around, turn around, turn around “one, two, three”, and this goes on with videos to move it further.

Game4:

Dancing with children: Touch_____

Teacher (or student) calls out colours, numbers, words, or classroom objects and the students have to touch them. It can be done as a whole group running around the room/space, as a race between two students, or as “point to _____” while seated. After they touch they can be asked, “What (colour, number) is it?” and they all respond “red, twenty” etc., an improvised version of the Hazel games available on the web.

Game5:**What am I? Who am I?**

Words are written from previously-taught vocabulary on cards and tape one to each student's back (without them seeing the card). They have to ask classmates yes or no questions to figure out what/who they are. Again, the focus is on language forms, so code-switching is done if they don't have all the vocabulary. For example, with foods, the Spanish-speaking students might ask "Am I dulce (sweet)?" if they don't know the descriptive words for food.

Game6:

Circling: A technique to imprint language forms from TPRS (Total Physical Response Storytelling): This is used as a follow-up to oral responses from individuals/students to a language form taught before. For example, in a lesson on pets one can introduce the question "Do you have a (cat)?" and the answer "I have (two cats)" as well as "Does he have a (cat)?" and "He has (two cats)." If a student shares "I have one cat," the teacher can ask the class, "Does he have two cats?" The students respond chorally, "No, he has one cat." Then the teacher can ask, "Does he have four cats?" and again the students respond, "No, he has one cat." If it sounds repetitive, that's the point, and the whole-class response lowers their affective filter, so even the shy kids can participate orally and do away with the inhibitions.

Hey-hey-Ho-ho: For getting students' attention! Teacher says "hey-hey," they say "ho-ho." Teacher says "ho-ho," they say "hey-hey." Then the teacher mix it up: "hey hey ho ho," they respond "ho ho hey hey". The mixture can also be hey ho- ho hey or ho-ho hey-hey as tongue twisters.

All these games can elicit response from the different video podcast available in the references that has been used.

Eliciting Response

Silent elicitation is a useful technique for reducing "Teachers Talk Time(TTT)" as well as keeping students at the focus of the learning process. It's most often used for language instruction, but can be used to work with almost any type of lessons or classroom instructions. The only thing is, it has to be synchronised.

In a smart classroom, elicitation is the process of getting the students says it instead of you. "It" can be anything, a vocab word, the answer to a question, the next step in a project, anything . The smoothest elicitors don't even have to be asked, they simply look at their class or gesture towards a student and volunteer the information. The difficulty of elicitation for the teacher depends largely on the mode of the question, but almost anything can be elicited if at least one person knows even, a part of the answer.

Sometimes, you may have to "feed" the answer to the class, but once only, in terms of cues. From then on whenever the word, fact, or step is needed, you simply wait for another student to remember what you've said. Here are some examples:

You hope to teach a new English word to a group of second language speakers. Say, the word is **pen**. Most of your students have at least had one or two English classes before, and you know that most classes use basic classroom words (including stationary) at one point or another, so, you just show them a pen and wait with a questioning look.

If it's your first time eliciting, you may have to use gestures largely, or even ask aloud. If your students are used to it, simply presenting the object and waiting will be enough. You've

trained them to take responsibility over presenting new words to the class. This can continue with learning and definitely eliciting response in case of other words as well.

A student offers the word, but with incorrect pronunciation. You can gesture or ask for more, i.e., to modify. Another student gives it perfectly. Thumbs up, and you ask her to say it again. You then move between his and the whole class, and then to other individual students using his as the correct example if there's ever a mistake.

You never say the word “pen,” but they say it many times.

You're presenting an obscure, difficult, or completely new English word to the same class: Drawing. Maybe some have heard it before, but no one is confident enough to answer when you gesture questioningly. You then try to give them the first phoneme (sound) “Dr”. You find no takers. You go for the whole first syllable, slowly, “Drrraaww”. No reply.

You give in, and provide them with the word, allowing the class to repeat it. Video-casting would help in the long run to develop language to explain the shown object. You have them repeat it all together, then motivate individual students to repeat it. If a student freezes or messes up, you go back to the whole class, then back to the student until they get it right. Masters of student centered learning who've taught the same class a few times can do this without saying a word other than “drawing.” Students should learn to take cues entirely from gestures and you can motivate the class through self-learning like a maestro conducting an orchestra.

Even grammar points or complex facts can be elicited through podcasts, although it takes a bit more talking:

You present the class with a picture of a man dressed as a pilot. You then show a picture of an aerodrome.

Teacher: Does he work here?

Students: Yes

Teacher: How long?

Students: For the last five years.

From those words it's possible to get experienced classes to produce “He works there now” (present progressive) with gestures, or:

Teacher: How can I tell that to a friend, “He....”

Then, show a picture of a House, if you've developed a gesture for past tense, use it, if not:

Teacher: This is his old house. Does he live here now?

Students: No.

Teacher: But he did, right?

Student: Yes

Teacher: How can I tell that to a friend, “He _____ live here?”

Gesturing for the two words, “used to”

Then, you never talk again. You move through the rest of the lesson showing new pictures and having students frame sentences. “He eats potatoes now.” “He used to eat roast cashewnuts.” “He drinks water now.” “He used to drink beer.” Each time a new picture is presented, you put it under the house or the aerodrome as appropriate.

In the cited examples, you're enabling students not only hear the words doubly, but practice saying them. You're also doubling the amount of students you get to check for understanding. By saying nothing you become twice the teacher.

In more sensitive cases, we would see the use more widely sought. Like the Braille.

Braille convert

I am a **convert** (someone who didn't believe but now does). For a very long time, I did not read electronic books. I like the look of books, I like the smell of it, and I even like the yellowing or reddish look of old books.

A couple of years ago, I gave up finally and bought an electronic book reader and downloaded reading **apps** (computer programmes used most often with smart phones and tablet computers) onto my smart phone. Almost immediately, I could see the benefits of e-book reading. I could carry a lot of books with me and could even read in low light.

What I didn't realize until recently is that e-book technology has also changed how the ocularly challenged reads. Many who are blind learn to read using the braille system. The **braille system** uses a series of **dots** that represent letters. Each set of dots is called a "**cell**" and dots themselves are referred to as "raised dots".

Using a **device** (electronic equipment) called a **refreshable braille display** each cell changes as the device "reads" different text. For example, one dot raised in the left corner of a cell represents the letter "a." When the refreshable display is attached to a computer, the display turns the text into braille.

That's where the current technology comes in. Reading apps allow readers to download books they want to read onto a smart phone and the like. When these devices are connected to a refreshable braille reader, a blind person has access to anything a **sighted** person does. This has opened a larger world of reading for the blind.

Podcasting involves.....

Podcasting involves three essential components: capturing, publishing, and distributing electronic media/digital content. Capturing content, although touted as a simple process, requires some level of expertise, special software, and the knowledge and skill to record and save the content as a file.

Content is then published via Really Simple Syndication (RSS), so that it can be picked up by an aggregator for distribution and ultimately sent to the end user. To distribute a podcast, a web page with space to store the podcast is required. A website acts as a contact point for users on the Internet. Many universities or Internet service providers can supply the necessary services.

Having published the contents, users need to subscribe to the podcast to be able to collect the information. Once a user has subscribed to a podcast, the computer takes over the complex task of downloading information and synchronizing a portable media player so that the user can watch, for example, a lecture whenever and wherever they choose.

Conclusions

Podcasting is being increasingly used as a tool for distribution of information by a variety of organizations and associations, such as research institutions, and scientific journals. Podcasts offer

several advantages, including low cost and ease of use. However, podcasts are not free of disadvantages. Technical issues are probably easier to resolve than might be expected; however, pedagogical aspects, such as the replacement of real-time classroom interactions with students and the interactivity of podcasts, will require further discussion.

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Integrating the Internet into the Classroom for Teaching Language Skills

Bedashree Das

Internet is the most powerful and rewarding instructional tool for today's teacher which makes learning an enthralling and wonderful experience for both the teachers as well as the students. Internet can assist the language teachers to teach in an innovative and interesting way. This paper focuses on the integrating the internet into the classroom for teaching language skills specially reading and writing skills. There are many strategies which can be used to integrate the internet for the teaching of both reading and writing but presently only hotlists, subject samplers and blogs are focused. These strategies can be utilized in the classroom keeping in mind the learning needs and expectations of the students. They give a chance to the students to learn in an interesting manner. These strategies are very effective for content based learning as well because they impart a rich content to the students about the topic they are studying. They can be very useful for the teaching of reading skill as they impart rich material and vocabulary which is the basis of teaching it. Teachers can use them for teaching reading and can form different reading activities based on them, for e.g. different types of pre-reading, while reading and post-reading activities. Similarly, they can be used for teaching writing skill. Students can be given many writing activities based on subject samplers and hotlists. They can also be given assignments on writing blogs and participate in online written discussions. There are many internet pages where they can have such discussions with their teachers and classmates.

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The easiest way to start integrating the internet into the classroom for teaching language skills especially reading and writing skills is through hot list, subject sampler, and blog.

Hot list is a collection of useful, interesting and peculiar for the topic sites that the teacher creates for her student with the hope of creating some cognitive sense in them. It works as a guidance for her student and also saves her students' hours of futile surfing.

In a subject sampler, the teacher prepares with a smaller number of intriguing websites organized around a main topic for her students. It is an effective way to engage students as the websites chosen offers pictures, real facts, stories, audio and video clips, maps etc. This subject sampler makes learning an enthralling and wonderful experience for the learner as they are asked about their personal perspectives, comparisons, interpretations etc to the web-based activities. The best part of the subject sampler is that the students feel connected and motivated to the topic as they join the community of learners surrounding the topic and see that their works are valued in this context. It is a kind of creative mental pondering that paves the way for the students to engage in reflective thinking and writing and thus fulfills its objective.

The teacher can intentionally include lots of sites that include reading and writing activities keeping in mind the learning needs and expectation of the students. Now the question is if the teacher is new to the internet and have no idea how to create these formats, then there is filamentality for them. It is easy to create hotlists and subject samplers along with other formats through filamentality.

A blog is a frequently updated discussion or informational website that often resembles an online journal. It is regarded as one of the easiest way to publish student writing on the World Wide Web. Blogging can also be seen as a form of social networking service.

Aaron Campbell (2003) has outlined three types of blogs for use with language classes. They are as follows:

The Tutor Blog: This is run by the teacher of a class. The content of this type of blog can be limited to syllabus, course information, homework, assignments etc. Or the teacher may choose to

write about his or her life, sharing reflections about the local culture, target culture and language to stimulate online and in-class discussion. In this type of blog, students are normally restricted to being able to write comments to the teacher's posts. A great example of this is Aaron Campbell's own 'The New Tanuki' <http://thenewtanuki.blogspot.com/>

The Class Blog: This is a shared space, with teacher and students being able to write to the main area. It is best used as a collaborative discussion space, an extra-curricular extension of the classroom. Students can be encouraged to reflect in more depth, in writing, on themes touched upon in class. Students are given a greater sense of freedom and involvement than with the tutor blog. A very good example of what has been done with this type of blog is Barbara Dieu's 'Bee Online' <http://beeonline.blogspot.com/> and 'Bee Online 2' <http://beeonline2.blogspot.com/>.

The Learner Blog: This is the third type of blog and it requires more time and effort from the teacher to both set up and moderate, but is probably the most rewarding. It involves giving each student an individual blog. The benefit of this is that this becomes the student's own personal online space. Students can be encouraged to write frequently about what interests them, and can post comments on other students' blog.

Some of the reasons for using blogs are as follows:

- To provide extra reading practice for the students.
- Blogs can be used as online student learner journals that can be read by their peers.
- To guide students to online resources appropriate for their level.
- To increase the sense of community in a class.
- To encourage shy students to participate.
- To stimulate out of class discussion.
- To encourage a process-writing approach.
- Blogs can be used as an online portfolio of student written work.
- To help build a closer relationship between students in large classes.

There are lots of sites where one can set up a blog for free. One such simple blogging tools to use with students is Blogger (<http://blogger.com/>). It takes only 15 minutes from setting up an account to publishing the first post using this valuable tool.

The teacher sets up the tutor blog or a class blog. To set the class blog, teacher needs to send invitation to the students through email. Learner blog accounts can be set up in advance by the teacher or can be done at the same time with a whole class in the computer room.

It is essential for the students to learn how to validate the information on the internet as all the information available may not be authentic. So it is the duty of the teacher to teach student how to find things on the net and how to interpret what they have found.

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Enhancement of Speaking Skills: A collaborative Learning Perspective

J. Jehoson Jiresh

Objective of the Study

The present study focuses on the importance of using collaborative learning in the acquisition of speaking skills by presenting an overview on the existing theories of speaking skills. Further, this research article intends to explore the viability of using collaborative learning strategies to facilitate speaking skills in a second language classroom, for which an empirical study is conducted among the students and the responses of the students will be analysed.

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Background to the Study

India is blessed with plenty of schools and colleges which promote English language education. These institutions are successful in imparting reading and writing skills of the language to an extent. Even several rural students who have access to English medium schools and colleges are able to read and write good English. Moreover, reading and writing have become the essential skills which help them in securing high scores in the board examinations. On the other hand, they are not able to excel in speaking English.

There are quite a few reasons for this partial acquisition of language skills, such as the introduction of English Language in India which is mainly intended to create clerks whose nature of job required only reading and writing, and generally the second language learners suffer from anxiety which is a universal phenomenon. Anxiety inhibits student's performance in ESL classes. It further decreases their interest in learning English (Keeves & Morgentstem, 1992). Anxiety can be a result of underestimating themselves and may be due to the fear factor created by the classroom monotony. Thus, the students tend to keep quiet in the ESL class (Duxbury & Tsai, 2010).

In the recent past, many traditional methods like grammar teaching and many conventional methods of teaching like spoken English were tested but these methods were not able to bring desirable results in the enhancement of speaking skills. In this modern era, learners are exposed to good English through various means like media technology. It is high time for the teachers to explore many novel teaching and testing strategies based on nonconventional sources in enhancing speaking skills. One such learning method or strategy which can be used in the acquisition of speaking skills is collaborative learning.

Collaborative Learning - An Overview

Collaborative learning is based on the concept that knowledge is a social device. It is mainly based on four principles:

- The learners or students are the primary focus of instruction.
- Interaction and 'doing' are given primary importance.
- Working in groups is the major tenet of collaborative learning
- Formulated approaches are used to relate with reality based problems and to find solutions.

Collaborative learning can be understood as a classroom learning techniques which require students to work together in groups or pairs in completing tasks (Colbeck et al., 2000). Johnson, Johnson, and Smith, (1991) points out that collaborative learning needs elements of positive interdependence, individual accountability, face-to-face promotive interaction, appropriate use of collaborative skills and group processing. Students are given a platform to learn by inquiry

under the guidance of a teacher and at the same time developing communicative skills, leadership skills, and interpersonal skills (Bean, 2001). Learners will have more opportunities to interact with peers, present and defend ideas, exchange diverse beliefs, question other conceptual frameworks and be actively engaged in collaborative learning setting (Srinivas, n.d.).

Harmer (1991) proposes that collaborative learning provides maximum opportunities for students to interact and cooperate with one another as they work towards a common goal by using the four language skills speaking, listening, reading and writing. Thus it is evident that collaborative learning provides a less anxiety situation which is an ideal ambience for language acquisition as mentioned by Krashen (1988) as learning English in less anxiety situations results in effective learning. The inborn nature of our students is submissive and anxious but through collaborative learning these shackles can be broken, thus making learning a stress free experience.

Further, collaborative learning helps in developing the environment in which the learners are encouraged to work with one another. It also helps in explaining complex ideas through concrete and visual ways. The other benefits of collaborative learning include development of higher level thinking, encourage student-faculty relationship and provide a comfortable platform for the learners to acquire language skills. Therefore, the present research focuses on the fact that English speaking skills can be enhanced by using collaborative learning at primary and tertiary levels.

Research Methodology

The present study is conducted among thirty randomly chosen general English students of various disciplines. The responses of the students are collected by administering a questionnaire with ten statements with a three point liker-type responses ranging from Agree, Disagree and No idea as response options after twelve classes involving collaborative learning in facilitating speaking skills. The students were grouped in such a way that the heterogeneity of the class is purposefully utilised. Cricket commentary scripts, audios, music, songs, movies, newspapers, and common texts from canonical literature were used as tools for discussion.

Research Questions

This exploratory study is done with the following questions

- Why speaking English is considered as a difficult skill among second language learners?
- How to exploit collaborative learning in the Indian classroom context?
- Can the English teachers act as good facilitators in the class which uses collaborative learning?
- Will the students be interested in the new module of speaking skills by using collaborative learning?
- Can collaborative learning be a good strategy in the acquisition of speaking skills?

Discussion

The findings of the study depicts positive results both in terms of students' development in their speaking English performance and their notions toward the use of collaborative learning as an instructional learning tool in an English speaking classroom. Based on the findings it is quite evident that it creates a strong platform for the learners to express themselves in English. Thus all the learners in a group get benefited mutually. It sets a positive atmosphere in the classroom. Mainly, the ultimate collaboration among the students brings about a sense of oneness and greater familiarity. Frequently working in collaboration with their friends make the learners became more and more close with one another and they start to own responsibilities. As their friendship grows due to proximity and teamwork their anxiety and threats were simultaneously lowering. The

students' feedback revealed that they had no stress and felt as if in home and cherished themselves in the class. Secondly, collaborative learning is a suitable and successful instructional pedagogical tool for a large class. By arranging group-work or pair-work activities, the classroom became inclusive. This encourages students to have responsibility for their own learning and at the same time creates knowledge-sharing atmosphere. Therefore, students continue their discussions and exchange of informations even after the class hours and a few students continue to ask doubts using the social networking sites! In a group of six learners of diverse socio economic background, students with different skill levels can be identified. They help one other in his/her limitations and compliment themselves in their positives. The findings clearly state that knowledge is a social device.

As for as the demerits are concerned the researcher likes to portray three issues, two from the learners' perspective and one from the teachers' perspective. Firstly, a few students feel that they waste most of their time explaining things to the others in the group, Secondly, learners feel that it was quite difficult to involve every individual in the activity all the time due to restlessness and other physical and psychological factor which sometimes affects the performance of the whole group. Thirdly, since the students become over enthusiastic and ebullient they become uncontrollable and thus create lot of noise which disturbs the nearby classes. Though they were genuinely working, the loud noise creates a picture that the particular class is making fun and it is out of control. A noisy class in the Indian context is always compared with a 'fish market' by most of the teachers thus may bring bad reputation to the teacher.

Summary

The findings of this research article clearly suggest that Collaborative learning can be an effective tool in facilitating speaking skills. It's high time that teachers should come out of the conventional notions such as generalising the success of a few individual learners and thus concluding that the methodology adopted is successful. One must be aware of the fact that there are thousands of rural and even urban students join B.A English literature with a distant dream that they can communicate in good English but the reality shows its swindle face towards them. Teachers' ultimate concern must be to enhance students' learning. Therefore, collecting information about students' learning interests could be one of the ways in achieving this. Teachers should be aware of their needs as well as what they want to experience in their English lessons. With such information, language teachers will be able to create activities that would cater the needs of our students' learning preferences. This will lead to achieve better academic performance (Eslami-Rasekh & Valizadeh, 2004) as well as other positive learning outcomes (Cruickshank, Bainer & Metcalf, 1995). On the Whole the Findings of this study reminds the old saying "Two heads are always better than one."

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Appendix 1.0

Presentation of the collected data through research questionnaire administered among undergraduate students.

Note : A – Agree, DA – Disagree, NI – No Idea

| S.No | Statements | AG | % | DA | % | NI | % |
|------|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 1 | Employing Collaborative Learning breaks Classroom Monotony | 26 | 87 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 13 |
| 2 | English Language Teacher can act as an effective facilitator in a collaborative learning atmosphere | 21 | 70 | 4 | 13 | 5 | 17 |
| 3 | It provides relaxed and creates less anxiety space for learning | 25 | 83 | 2 | 7 | 3 | 10 |
| 4 | It Facilitates exchange of knowledge, resources and experience | 23 | 77 | 3 | 10 | 4 | 13 |
| 5 | It makes me focused on collective development rather than individual efforts | 19 | 63 | 3 | 10 | 8 | 27 |
| 6 | It enforces greater responsibilities in learning as a team | 22 | 73 | 3 | 10 | 5 | 17 |
| 7 | It makes us to actively participate in the teaching learning process | 24 | 80 | 2 | 7 | 4 | 13 |
| 8 | It was a waste of time explaining things to others | 7 | 23 | 21 | 70 | 2 | 7 |
| 9 | It was difficult to make others participate in the group activities | 9 | 30 | 19 | 63 | 2 | 7 |
| 10 | These kind of learning activities should be continued and encouraged | 27 | 90 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 10 |

Popular Fiction Inculcates Reading Habit

Dr. K. Pramila

Few professors of English literature will ever admit to it, but the truth is that popular writers have had just as great an effect on the people of this nation as Dickens, Poe, or Melville and their classic works. - Editor James L. Collins

Reading

Reading is a progressive social phenomenon

- It is used as an instrument in implementing the task of continuing education and raising students' cultural standards.
- It is a means of increasing professional knowledge and skills and drawing people into a more creative life.
- Reading enhances four areas of the individual namely, intellectual and emotional development; language development; social development; and educational development.
- Hence, reading habit must be promoted right from school. The school and college authorities and especially English teachers must help children and adults to develop skills they need to fully participate in an information society.

Popular fiction vs. Literary fiction

Genre fiction is often interchangeably used with popular fiction, and it is generally distinguished from literary fiction. Popular fiction is thought to be formulaic, commercial, sensational, melodramatic and sentimental. The most common types of genre fiction are: mystery/crime, romance, horror, thriller/suspense and science fiction/fantasy. Literary fiction is presumed to have greater artistic merit and higher cultural value. Popular fiction is often conceived as the opposite of literature and it often seems as if literature and popular fiction exist in a constant state of mutual repudiation. Writers of literary fiction like, Jane Austen, George Eliot, Henry James, William Faulkner, Saul Bellow, D. H. Lawrence, Toni Morrison, to name a few, have produced works that have been popular, in which case it can be reasonably identified as popular literature. In fact, some of these writers have written what could be termed as 'best sellers'. It could be seen that even literary fiction also catered to the mass audience with thrilling and melodramatic plots. Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* is a romance, Fyodor Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* is a psychological thriller, and James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* is a coming-of-age story. These works now regarded as classics were perhaps originally written as popular fiction. But ardent supporters of literary fiction would consider popular fiction as vulgar and cheap entertainment. Jules Verne, H. G. Wells and Mary Shelley are the pioneers of science fiction; and Edgar Allan Poe is generally credited with having written the first horror stories and mysteries. Due to the fact that literary fiction deploys a set of logics and practices that are different in the field of popular fiction, literary fiction itself is now considered as another genre. The chief characteristic of literary fiction and popular fiction is that literary fiction is the identifiable concept of the author, since creativity remains routinely linked to individuality, origin and essence. As Saul Bellow said, "When we read, we are doing more than delectating words on a paper – stories, characters, images, notions. We are communing with the mind of the author." What sets apart literary fiction is the excellent language and originality of thought and style that raise it above the ordinary. Popular fiction has universal theme, the language is simple and even often told tale is refreshingly exciting. Popular fiction, contrary to popular belief, is not a swamp of barely literate escapism, but it is about ordinary people achieving extraordinary things.

Popular Fiction

Popular fiction is usually set in the 20th or present-day 21st century, these books deal with family issues, coming of age initiations, courtroom dramas, physical and mental disabilities, social pressures, political intrigue, crime etc which appeal to a large audience. Popular fiction is widely read by youngsters cutting across their chosen profession because of the proper combination of character and compelling plot and most importantly it entertains. It is a well known fact that even students who have not chosen literature as their specialization, list Dan Brown, Sidney Sheldon, Stephen King, John Grisham, J.K. Rowling etc as their touchstones. Enid Blyton is the most widely read children's author, even today Enid Blyton books remain almost as popular as it was forty years ago and are often a source of shared pleasure between the generations. The Mills & Boon, Hardy Boys and Nancy Drew books have showered enormous pleasure among most teenagers and have sowed the seeds for more mature reading. Popular fiction when introduced at a very young age starts off children's love of books and reading. Popular fiction captures children's imagination for a very long period of time and teachers need to be alert to students' interests and introduce them to the websites which give additional information about their favorite authors and guide them to track new publications. It is with great exuberance that children talk about their cult fictional characters and they share a bond which marks out particular stages in childhood development. Popular fiction promotes reading and writing and they could be used for pedagogical purposes. Once the teachers are familiar with their students' interests they could widen the choice of reading matter made available in their schools or colleges.

Criticism against Popular Fiction

One main criticism against popular fiction is that genre fiction is mainly plot driven but decent plots are impossible without interesting characters in action and popular novels are thematically rich.

Merits of Popular Fiction

But popular fiction attracts the mass and they do not cater exclusively to the intelligentsia or people with aptitude for literature. It is popular fiction that encourages the youngsters to develop their reading habits. Popular writers like Dan Brown, Jeffrey Archer, Sidney Sheldon, John Grisham, Arthur Hailey, J. K. Rowling, Stephen King, Nora Roberts, Frederick Forsyth, Danielle Steele, Chetan Bhagat etc have successfully captured the interest of the youngsters and their books continue to be popular with every generation. It is not only literary fiction, but these bestsellers have also transcended time and continue to be read with passion. Nevertheless, Dickens, Hugo, D. H. Lawrence to name a few, are still very popular because they contain a proper combination of character and plot and they dwell so deep within the heart of the readers that they cannot be forgotten or ignored. It is only the intellectual bigotry that makes people opine that popular fiction is totally devoid of artistic merit or lacks literary value for popular fiction shows the world as it is – in all its mystery, pain, complexity and beauty. They illuminate the truths of the human soul, for better or for worse, thus opening the reader to the possibility of courage, intellectual and emotional honesty and wisdom. In fact popular fictions of the present day bring together the strengths of both the genres: suspense, ambiguity and mystery, sexual tension, absorbing dialogue, complex characterization, settings the reader can identify with, compelling plots, characters the readers love and hate, and language and style refreshing. Popular fiction writers create rich, thoughtful prose even when their novels reflect the stark realities of the modern day life. They are prolific writers and churn out one book after another.

Why Popular Fiction Is Popular

Literary fiction is rather like avant-garde art and not easily accessible whereas, the hallmark of popular fiction is its accessibility. In literary fiction, the author's only concern is with the critics and they depend on positive reviews from important critics. On the contrary, in popular fiction, the only critics who really matter are the readers. Readers prefer popular fiction because they are optimistic, though the human condition might be deplorable popular fiction propagates that individuals can make a positive difference in their own and others' lives. Publishers and marketers try to understand the interests and preferences of the readers by conducting surveys and have discovered time and again that people read fiction that reinforces their inarticulate beliefs about society, life and fate. Literary fiction is the fiction of ideas and its primary focus is to evoke thought. The writer's goal is self-expression and any consideration of the reader is secondary. Popular fiction, on the other hand, is the fiction of emotion. Its primary focus is to evoke feelings and the goal of the writer is to entertain the reader and any consideration of self-expression is purely secondary. This does not necessarily mean that literary fiction is not entertaining or popular fiction is not thought provoking. Even Shakespeare, the beacon of literature, wrote genre plays (romance, comedy, tragic comedy etc) and frequently played to the galleries with vulgar innuendos to reach a wider audience. Popular fiction consists of ancient myths newly reborn, telling and retelling a simple truth: ordinary people can do extraordinary things. These are the reasons why popular fiction is most sought after by youngsters. The fact that bestseller novels are made into box office hit films is proof of the popularity of such novels. Recent examples of the authors whose novels have been made into successful movies are Stephen King, Dan Brown, J.K. Rowling, Chetan Bhagat and John Grisham Etc.

Conclusion

Good fiction should be promoted irrespective of whether it is literary or popular fiction as it enhances the reading skills of both the young and the adults. More and more people read popular fiction because it assures the readers that there is more to life than defeat and despair and also that life is full of possibilities and above all to be reminded that life is worth the pain.

A Model Programme Plan for Improving Language Skills

Rajesh Dubasi

Introduction

For improving language skills among students the teachers utilize different approaches these days. Still, we regularly listen to the common comment that most of the students are not opening their mouths even at the end of the year/programme. In my view, it is better to say that they are not opening their minds instead of saying their mouths. As we know the fact that language acquisition is a psychological process rather than an academic process, it is the responsibility of the teachers to make the students to open up with their thoughts.

As Smt. Ch. Annie Vijaya Kumari mentions in her book:

Cognitive Psychologists stress on higher mental process in learning i.e. perception, imagination and thinking. (34)

Since English is a second language to which our environment may not support the acquisition process, the students should be made aware of how to get access to the resources around them and utilize them for improving their language skills of the target language.

Plan

Taking the above mentioned idea into consideration 'A Thirty Hours Programme' is designed to improve language skills through activities utilizing the resources --- both technical and manual. It reflects in the following quotation:

The marvelous development within the field of teaching aids and education technology furnish us with a wealth of different kinds of visual aids, audio aids and audio-visual aids. (317, Dr. D. Vasundhara , Dr. Katyayani R.K.)

In this programme the students (hereafter participants) are introduced to resources and are placed in different situations by the teacher (hereafter facilitator). This programme gives importance to the major involvement of the participants in the activities where the participants are expected to use their own thinking and project their language skills or performance at the end of the each activity. To reach the above mentioned objective, the programme plan is outlined in a tabular format as follows:

An Outline of Programme Plan for Improving Language Skills In A 30 Hours programme (Activity Based)

| Sl. No. | Task | Source | Activity (Based on Instruction) | Output |
|---------|-------------|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| 1. | Listening | Audio (Speech/Conversation /Seminar) | Individual/Pair/Group presentation after listening and preparation | Listening, Writing & Speaking |
| 2. | Visualizing | Video (Role-Play/Drama/Short Film) | Individual/Pair/ Group performance after watching and planning | Planning, writing & Speaking |
| 3. | Vocabulary | Blank Cards & Words/Grammar/ Pictures | Individual/Pair/ Group presentation | Attempting Competitive Bits |
| 4. | Group Task | Situation or Roles(characters) | Group Activity --- Dramatization for the selected situation / roles | Creativity,Co-ordination & Performance |

| | | | | |
|----|---------------|--|--|-----------------------------------|
| 5. | Comprehension | Reading a Material/ Listening a talk / Watching a Presentation | Individual Activity – Answering the given queries on the paper | Reading and Comprehension Ability |
|----|---------------|--|--|-----------------------------------|

Teaching Aids:

Projector, Computer, DVDs, Mike, Handouts, Blank Cards, Pictures & Paper cuts

Procedure:

This Thirty Hours Programme is organized for 15 Days i.e. 2 hours per a day. Everyday 2 activities are conducted where the batch contains 20 participants. Each activity is allotted 1 hour time. For this, the facilitator is ready with the resources and a pre-planned Day Sheet of activities.

As the motto of the paper is to describe the idea of the working process of the programme, only the first Five Days working plan of the activities is given as a model in the form of work sheets. Each one hour activity is divided into steps under a title. Time allotted for each step of the particular activity is given in brackets under the steps heading. The remaining time is for the utilization of the facilitator. At the end of every activity's work-sheet --- the facilitated Source, Task type and Expected Output are mentioned.

Work Sheets**Day 1****Name of the Activity I: Reading --- for Comprehension**

Step 1: One short passage is given to read and pick up a sentence based on the following procedure: Options are given as follows to participants for mentioning their reason behind their selection and describing their selection ---The following options are taken from the paper of Laurel Pollard:

- A) A beautiful sentence
- B) A very interesting sentence
- C) A surprising sentence
- D) A sentence that contains the main idea
- E) A sentence that make great sense to the participant
- F) A sentence that upsets the participant

Step 2: Each participant presents his/her description to the class for one minute.

Step 3: Participants **Re-Read** the paragraph and repeat the first step.

Step4: Participants Re-Tell their description to the class and observe the difference.

Source: Reading Material

Task Type: Individual task

Expected Output: Reading ability and importance of Re-Reading.

Name of the Activity II: Listening and Writing Activity

Step1: Participants listen to an audio for two minutes.

Step 2: Facilitator supplies blank cards to participants. They will select and write any one word that comes to their mind after listening on the front side of the card. And on the back side of the card the participants

- explain the reason behind his/her selection
- write a sentence using it
- Draw a picture to represent it and describe his/her views to present it to the class for one minute.

Step 3: Each participant presents his/her views to the class for one minute.

Step 4: Participants **Re-Listen** the audio with subtitles for comparing their description

Source: A two minutes audio

Task Type: Individual task

Expected Output: Listening ability as well as Designing and Delivering thoughts.

Day 2

Name of the Activity I: Visualizing ---- for receiving communication

Step1: Watching a performance and expression based video talk without voice for one minute.

Step 2: Preparation for guessing the talk and presenting his/her views about the video talk to the class for one minute.

Step 3: Participant presents his/her views to the class for one minute.

Step 4: Re-Watch the video with voice this time.

Step 5: Participants Re-Prepare the talk on their note book.

Step 6: Participants Re-Present their views and observe the difference.

Source: One minute video talk

Task Type: Individual task

Expected Output: Guessing the talk by observing Expressions and Body language.

Name of the Activity II: Vocabulary Usage --- Words Often Confused

Step 1: Selecting and writing a confusable pair on the front side of the card from the list of pairs given by the facilitator.

Step 2: On the backside of the card, the participants

* explain the reason behind his/her selection

* write a sentence using it

* draw a picture representing their views and describe it for presentation.

Step 3: Participant presents his/her views to the class for one minute.

Source: List (10 pairs) of confusables with explanation

Task Type: Individual task

Expected Output: Using confusables practically

Day 3

Name of the Activity I: Visualizing ---- for Role-Play

The participants are divided into pairs.

Step 1: The participants are divided into pairs. The pairs watch a Role-Play video of their mother tongue for two minutes.

Step 2: Each pair translates it and prepare a conversation for performing the Role-Play in front of their class. For two minutes.

Step3: Each pair performs their Prepared Role-Play for two minutes.

Step 4: Participant pairs Re-Watch the Role-Play video in English this time and Compare (10 mins) their prepared conversation with this

Source: A Two minutes Role-Play video

Task Type: Pair task

Expected Output: Conversation Preparation and Translation

Name of the Activity II: Describing picture ---- for Creative Writing

Imaginative oriented Pictures are displayed

Step1: Participants select a picture from the pictures displayed

Step2: The participants will give a title for the picture on the front side of the given card and prepare a story on the picture on the backside of the card.

Step3: Each participant presents his/her story to the class for one minute.

Source: Display of some imaginative oriented pictures

Task Type: Individual task

Expected Output: Creativity and Hypothesis

Above activity is designed out of the idea taken from the following quotation:

Rather than simply being responsive to stimuli in the environment, learners were seen to be much more actively responsible for their own learning, engaged in formulating hypotheses in order to discover the rules of the target language. Errors are inevitable and were actively testing their hypotheses. (53, Darine Larsen – Freeman)

Day 4

Name of the Activity I: Group Task ---- for Dramatization

Step 1: Facilitator forms groups with five members in each group and displays some (may be 30) characters. Eg: king, Chief Minister, Socialist, Innocent person Expert etc.

Step 2: Each group select five characters from the list of characters displayed.

Step 3: Each group prepare a Drama among the selected characters by creating a situation

Source: Characters display

Task Type: Group Task

Expected Output: Co-Ordination, Team spirit and Performance skills

Name of the Activity II: Grammar ---- Usage of Tense & Structure

Step 1: Participants select 3 structures from each of the given 5 sets (i.e. 15 in total).

Step2: Participants fill the blanks with prescribed function of inputs in the selected structures and prepare a paragraph out of the combination of the filled structures.

Step3: Participants present their paragraph to the class for one minute

Clarification: As it is a grammar activity, to give clarity to utilize the above steps, I would like to give an example exercise for this activity. In the following example I prescribe the inputs for converting the structures into sentences. And the participants are instructed to utilize any connecting words (like so, but, because etc.) to combine the sentences for forming a paragraph.

Exercise: The exercise makes the participant to introduce himself/herself by utilizing proper structures by following tense.

Select 3 structures from each of the following sets.

Note: The 3 structures should be ---1st one is anyone from 1,2,3; 2nd one is anyone from 4,5,6; 3rd one is from anyone from 7,8,9.

➤ **Set-1**

- | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|
| 1. I always <u>verb1</u> +... | 2. I usually <u>verb1</u> +... | 3. I generally <u>verb1</u> +... |
| 4. I used to <u>verb1</u> +... | 5. I preferred to <u>verb1</u> +... | 6. I practiced to <u>verb1</u> +... |
| 7. I will utilize it <u>verb1</u> +... | 8. I will prefer to <u>verb1</u> +... | 9. I will practice to <u>verb1</u> +... |

➤ **Set 2:**

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. I have <u>Object</u> +... | 2. I had <u>Object</u> +... | 3. I will have <u>Object</u> +... |
| 4. I am <u>Adjective</u> +... | 5. I was <u>Adjective</u> +... | 6. I will be <u>Adjective</u> +... |
| 7. I may become <u>Noun</u> +... | 8. I should become <u>Noun</u> +... | 9. I have to become <u>Noun</u> +... |

➤ **Set 3:**

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. I expect <u>Object</u> +... | 2. I got <u>V3</u> +... | 3. I will play <u>Object</u> +... |
| 4. I need to <u>V1</u> +... | 5. I ought to <u>V1</u> +... | 6. I must <u>V1</u> +... |
| 7. I never <u>V2</u> +... | 8. I seldom <u>V2</u> +... | 9. I often <u>V2</u> +... |

➤ **Set 4:**

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| 1. I am <u>V1+ing</u> ... | 2. I was <u>V1+ing</u> ... when I <u>V2+</u> ... | 3. I will be <u>V1+ing</u> ... at this time... |
| 4. I have <u>V3+</u> ... | 5. I had <u>V3+</u> ... before I <u>V2+</u> ... | 6. I will have <u>V3+</u> ... by this time... |
| 7. I justified <u>Object+</u> because... | 8. I performed <u>Object+</u> and ... | 9. I explored <u>Object+</u> ...so... |

➤ **Set 5:**

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| 1. I should have <u>V3+</u> ... | 2. I would have <u>V3+</u> ... | 3. I might have <u>V3+</u> ... |
| 4. I am going to <u>V1+</u> ... | 5. I am too <u>Adjective</u> ...to <u>V1+</u> ... | 6. I am willing to <u>V1+</u> ... |
| 7. If I <u>V1+</u> ... I will <u>V1+</u> ... | 8. If I <u>V2+</u> ... I would <u>V1+</u> ... | 9. If I had <u>V3+</u> ... would have <u>V3+</u> ... |

Source: 5 sets of structures, with prescribed blanks, where each set contains 9 structures.

Task Type: Individual task

Expected Output: Using Tenses & Structures' combination in paragraph/description

Day 5

Name of the Activity I: Visualizing ---- for comprehension

Step1: Participants watch a video with voice for ten minutes

Step2: Participants are given a question paper on which they will answer the questions based on the video they have watched

Step3: Participants present their answers to the class in one minute

Step 4: Participants Re-Watch the video for correction.

Facilitator will give the answers at the end

Source: A 10 minutes video and a question paper

Task Type: Individual task

Expected Output: Comprehension ability

Name of the Activity II: Vocabulary Usage ---- One-Word Substitutes

Blank cards & a list of One-Word Substitutes with explanation are given

Step1: participants will select any One-Word substitute from the list and write it on the front side of the card

Step2: On the back side of the card, participants

* explain the reason behind their selection

* write a sentence using it

* draw a picture representing their thought & describe it

Step3: Participants present their views to the class for one minute

Source: A list (may be 15) of One-Word substitutes

Task Type: Individual task

Expected Output: Applying thoughts to incorporate One-Word substitutions.

This programme also aims at learning by using that considered generally in communication as stated in the following quotation:

It is neither possible nor desirable to separate 'learning' and 'using'. Use of language has to be achieved through use itself, that is, by communication.(121, K.L.Sharma)

Conclusion

In this programme, what we have done is not important but in what way we have done the activities is important. The way is the method we used which enables the participants to get access with the resources for utilizing them in their language skills improvement. Page | 296

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Employability through Finishing School

Sobhana Unni V

Introduction:

The concept of Finishing School started in Switzerland as a “private school where girls from wealthy families are taught proper behavior and manners” and expected to be ‘absolutely lovely’. The ‘Charm School’ as it was known then, was emphasizing on ‘Etiquette’. Once a young girl becomes a woman of a marriageable age, she received training in the social graces like dancing, manners and etiquette to become accomplished. Apart from this, cooking, cleaning, household keeping, entertaining (hosting a ball) to manage the social life of their spouses were part of the curricula. Learning French was also compulsory as it was considered official language of polite society. These schools were meant to give more complete education after their highest educational level and hence it was termed ‘Finishing School’. Though superficial in nature, they were practical skills intended to mentally prepare the young woman for a successful adult and married life.

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The first Finishing School in history is Chateau-Mont-Choisi founded in 1870 and closed in 1996. Maidens from elite and noble class attended these schools for the purpose of being “marriage ready”. Wikipedia defines Finishing Schools as "private schools for men or women that emphasizes training in cultural and social activities." Since the 1960s, many of these schools have become defunct as a result of financial challenges faced by parents and also decreased interest in paying for such an education for their daughters. The societal change that brought young maidens out of their chambers to pursue academic and professional routes resulted in these schools losing their ‘Charm’ as well.

In Genevieve Antoine-Dariaux's book, "A Guide to Elegance ", she writes about “The social evolution which women now compete with men on equal grounds for equal pay.”

Centuries later...

The concept and meaning of Finishing School has completely changed. In India, Aviation and Hotel industry, during boom-phase, renowned for ‘hospitality’ gave importance to training in Soft Skills, especially Customer Care before confirming employment. Grooming and interpersonal skills along with English Speaking Ability became the core area in Hospitality Industry. These two industries gave rigorous training in making their employees ‘professional-ready’ and spread their ‘Charm’ around.

Present Concept:

Though India can boast of having more than 1500 Engineering Colleges across the country, we are facing an Engineering education dilemma. With the advent of Software Industry, requirement for skilled professionals was and, is still in huge volumes. Apart from core engineering subjects, the aspirants were expected to know System and Application Software, Telecom technologies and Software Management, DSP applications, VLSI Design etc, in order to be technically sound.

In today’s parlance, technical acumen alone is not enough for a successful career as an Engineer. The industry demands professionals who can add value to the Organization. Any academy that prepares young job-seekers to become industry-ready or ‘employable’ came to be known as Finishing School. They groom them in workplace etiquette especially as country’s booming IT sector call out for urbane talent. The term “Employability” means to possess skills that match the expectations of an Organization, varying degrees of proficiency in language and cognitive skills.

According to the First employability audit done in 2013 by Aspiring Minds Computer Adaptive Test (AMCAT) almost half of Indian graduates are unemployable. Needless to mention that, India has no dearth for educated people. Every year almost 50 lakhs of engineers are coming into job market, out of which 47% of graduates are unemployable for any job due to their insufficient English language and cognitive skills. It is either poor communication skills or scant technical skills: could be both as well.

Kiran Karnik, the President of National Association of Software and Service Companies (NASSCOM) conceived the idea of Finishing School concept in India. According to him, “They are good, their raw material is fine, but they are not quite there. They need a little bit of polishing, of smoothing of the rough edges”. Sound knowledge in technical area is expected to be supported with ‘soft skills’, which has a pivotal role to play in career growth. Extensive insight and training are not included in the formal curriculum followed by professional colleges and, the managements (both Institution as well as Organization) seek the help of Training Academies, investing huge amount to impart training sufficient to give that ‘added edge’ to prospective employees.

Hence, it has become the need of the hour to bridge the gap between technical-oriented curriculum and industry-required soft skills, to give a complete educational experience. Our education system needs to lay foundation on teaching good communication skills during the formative years to mould them into well-organized and approachable professionals. The soft skills training should complement this. The training given by Finishing Schools is expected to enhance personal effectiveness; understand business functions and grooming skills related to formal and informal communication which is imperative to personal and professional growth. Keeping this in mind, many Professional Institutions came forward to narrow the skill gap faced by their students. They either developed in-house training departments or approached Training Academies to empower advanced technical skills, communication skills and cognizant skills to make their students industry-ready.

Given below are samples of such modules followed by reputed Institutions in India

Sample Modules:

- a) The Finishing School module followed by : Malaviya National Institute of Technology- Jaipur (Finishing School Programme; Jan 27-31, 2014) Department of Management Studies for 3rd and 4th year Engineering students

| Core Area | Focused Area |
|----------------------------------|---|
| 1. Communication Skill | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal Communication • Informal Communication • Presentation and Public Speaking Skills • Preparing for GD/Interviews/Résumé writing |
| 2. Personal Effectiveness Skills | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time management skills • Stress Management Skills • Team Management & Leadership Skills • Conflict Management & Negotiation Skills |
| 3. Managerial Skills | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic HR Skills • Basic marketing Skills • Basic Finance Skills • Basic Project management Skills |
| 4. Soft Skills | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Etiquette • Dining Etiquette • Cross Cultural appreciation and Sensitization • Emotional Intelligence |

(From brochure that was put on internet. Programme name: Finishing School for Engineering Students)

b) Finishing School Programme for Engineering Graduates : Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee May 26– July 18, 2008

| S.No. | Core Topics | Details |
|-------|---|---|
| 1. | Core: I a. Review of Data Structure b. Object Oriented Programming c. Information Systems and Modeling d. Development Life Cycles | 80 hrs (50 hrs lecture + 30 hrs in-class practice) 20 hrs each |
| 2. | Core II a. Communication Skills b. Management Skills c. Employability Skills d. Basics of Business e. Soft Skills | 80 hrs 40 hrs (16 lectures + 24 practice) 15 hrs 10 hrs 05 hrs 15 hrs |
| 3 | Core III Programming : a. C#/Dot net/J2EE/Java b. Web programming c. VLSI d. FPGA e. Embedded System f. DSP/DIP g. Net working | 80 hrs 50 hrs lectures + 30 hrs in-class practice |
| 4 | Open Labs & Computer Assignments: In-class assignments are important. Real life examples to be used throughout | 120 hrs Assisted by non-faculty/Teaching Assistants |

c) Finishing School module followed by Velammal Engineering College, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, (40 hrs training) Batch 2014-2015

| Technical (1 hr 30 mts) | Communication (27 hrs) | Soft Skills (11 hrs 30 mts) |
|---|--|--|
| a) Tips to clear Aptitude b) Books to refer c) How to write Coding d) Puzzles to solve | Written Comm. : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Résumé (1 hr 30 mts) • Essay writing (3hrs and 30 mts) using Mind map/ Word Cloud/ Fish bone/ Flow Chart and E-mail writing Spoken Comm. : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pronunciation & Stress (3hrs and 30 mts) • Milton Language – Theory and practice (8 hrs) • GD training & evaluation (3hrs and 30 mts) • Mock Interview (7 hrs) | a) Goal Setting and POA (3 hr 30 mts) b) MBTI (1 hr 30 mts) c) Grooming and Behavioural Skills (1 hr and 30 mts) d) Entrepreneurship (1 hr 30 mts) e) Interview Skills including Body language (3hrs and 30 mts) |

According to Australian Education Council the key Competencies for Employability, surveyed country-wise is as follows: Source: Australian Education Council (1992)

Australia: Collecting, analyzing and organizing information. Communicating ideas and information, Planning and organizing activities, working with others in teams, using mathematical ideas and techniques , Solving problems, Using technology and Cultural understanding

UK (NCVQ): Communication, Personal Skills, improving own performance and learning, working with others, Numeracy: application of number, Problem Solving, Information technology, Modern Foreign language

Canada: Thinking skills, Communication skills, Responsibility skills, Positive attitude and behavior, Work with others, Adaptability, Understand and solve problems using mathematics, Problem-solving and decision-making skills, Learning skills, Use technology, Manage information, Use numbers, Work safely, Participate in projects and tasks

USA (SCANS): Basic skills, Personal qualities, Interpersonal skills, Thinking skills, Technology systems

It is evident from above data that any Organization expects their employees to have excellent communication skills, interpersonal skills and technical skills.

Areas of Improvement:

From the above three samples, it is clear that the Institutions are focusing either on Technical aspects or on Soft Skills. Even though many engineering institutes across India, understanding the necessity of providing ‘trained professionals’, the module they come up with doesn’t cover the entire gamut. This can leave a huge gap in expected skill sets. Velammal Engineering College is concentrating more on Communication skills.

After going through various modules available online for reference the presenter proposes to revamp the module keeping in mind the expectations from the industry and also enhance competency level of the job-seekers.

Main areas to focus:

- Training has to be done in concurrence with that of the industry
- Provide short specialized training for Graduand
- An opening door to a bright career
- Module can be for Conceptual training through classroom presentations
- Do not compromise on Quality.
- Ability to convert more students into employable aspirants.
- Exposure to sharpen knowledge base.
- Provide cutting edge to interviews

Renascent Module: 50 hrs

Objective of this Finishing School Programme:

By the end of this 50hrs training programme, an Engineering aspirant must be well-versed in Technical skills, confidently fluent in Communication skills that, in turn, will help him/her to convert theoretical knowledge into practical application using Interpersonal skills as a tool.

| Technical Skills(20 hrs) | Communication Skills (20 hrs) | Soft Skills(10 hrs) |
|---|---|---|
| <p>Aptitude</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Quantitative Aptitude Verbal Reasoning (English-synonyms, antonyms and reading comprehension) Non-Verbal Reasoning (Logical Reasoning) <p>Programming Skills for Non-IT students :</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> C C++ Data Structure <p>Programming Skills for IT students:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> C C ++ JAVA Data Structure | <p>Enhance Fluency and Accuracy:</p> <p>Listening Skills :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To handle certain rounds of interviews like para-phrasing from given audio. To pay attention to Interviewer's questions and also in GD. <p>Spoken English :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance diction. Area-Specific terminologies. Power of words through Milton Language. Remove FLI – to correct pronunciation. <p>Reading and understanding independently :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To understand constructive feedback To understand written sentences and comprehend logical and verbal analytical questions <p>Written English:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impress the reader Business context i.e. brevity Language to be International How to write in simple language. Avoid flamboyant language | <p>Team Work:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Both as an individual and in team. Understand the role in a team. Applying it in different levels of situations Ability to lead a team. Understand capabilities of team members. Problem Solving <p>Goal Setting:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Clear project goals and deliverables. Planning and execution of ideas Time Management Long-term vision with strategies. <p>Strength and Weakness:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Identify one's goal and vision to move ahead with conviction. Constantly evaluate and monitor self-performance level. Allot time for self-development |

Based on this the sessions will be on:

| Technical Skills(20 hrs) | Communication Skills (20 hrs) | Soft Skills(10 hrs) |
|--|--|---|
| <p>Aptitude</p> <p>Quantitative Aptitude</p> <p>Verbal Reasoning (English-synonyms, antonyms and reading comprehension)</p> <p>Non-Verbal Reasoning (Logical Reasoning)</p> <p>Programming Skills for Non-IT students :</p> <p>C, C++, Data Structure</p> <p>Programming Skills for IT students:</p> <p>C, C ++, JAVA, Data Structure</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Telephone Conversation (2 hrs) Spoken English – Common Errors in Pronunciation and Grammar (3 hrs) Milton language – Word Power (8 hrs) Writing Skills – Common errors and effective writing (3 hrs) GD training (2 hrs) Résumé writing (2 hrs) | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Team Building / GD evaluation (3hrs) Problem Solving – Case Studies (2 hrs) Goal Setting & POA (2 hrs) MBTI (3 hrs) |

The training should be to focus on aspirants to get placed in their Dream Company – a bridge between Academia and Corporate. Since the young graduates do not have hands-on experience, they need to be given more exposure to the basics of skills. The curriculum, thus prepared for finishing School should be versatile.

Conclusion:

In this millennium era, education is still considered incomplete without a ‘finishing touch’. The traits and characteristics of each generation vary, depending upon their social and economic conditions. It will be unique and constantly evolving. The Finishing School, should thereby take up the role of blending varied capabilities that includes technical knowledge, cognizant skills, and soft skills; extending a helping hand to transform graduates into industry-ready professionals. In other words, mould them into “**individual competent personnel**”.

An Engineer should be aware of the **TASK**; he/she is expected to do. Hence, the prime aim is, through Finishing School:

Understand-**T**ask; Realize-**A**bility; Develop –**S**kill; Acquire-**K**nowledge

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Friends, Romans, Countrymen, Lend Me Your Ears - How Communication Skills Can Enhance One's Employability Potential

Dr Tamal Guha

English, being a language, is a medium of communication. Let us contemplate the word 'communication' for a few seconds. Etymologically, the word 'communication' is a derivative of the Latin root *communis* which means 'sharing'. Just as the term 'sharing' implies the presence of a giver and a receiver, so does the word 'communication' presuppose the existence of a sender and a receiver. The roles of a sender and a receiver are performed interchangeably by an interviewer and an interviewee during an interview – at times, the employer is the sender of signals and the candidate is the receiver of those signals; at other times, it is the latter who is the sender while the former is the receiver.

For verbalised communication, the sender can send signals either through speaking and or through writing. On the other hand, the receiver can receive signals either through listening or through reading. Hence, for communication to be meaningful, both sender and receiver must be good at all four skills – speaking, listening, reading and writing.

Although the interviewer is an essential part of communication, this paper aims at assisting the candidates in the employment market. Towards that end, the paper embarks on a retrospective journey but with a prospective destination – I have excavated certain sites of ancient European knowledge for the purpose of suggesting some techniques for modern job-seekers.

Ancient Romans had examined human speech quite well. They identified three main functions of speaking – *docere*, *movere* and *delectare*. *Docere* is 'to inform', *movere* is 'to persuade' and *delectare* is 'to delight'. If the purpose of speaking is either to inform or to persuade or to delight, then we can use the process of elimination to shortlist the most appropriate purpose of speaking during a job interview. Quite obviously, *delectare* - that is 'to delight' - is not the purpose of speaking in an interview simply because interviewers are generally not interested in getting delighted. Hence, no purpose is likely to be served if any candidate tried to delight the interviewers. Having ruled out *delectare*, we are left with two other purposes of speaking – *docere* and *movere* – that is, to inform and to persuade. Clearly, both these purposes are relevant during a job interview since the job-seeker has to inform and to persuade the job-giver.

Now that we have identified the purposes of speaking during an interview, the next question is how to achieve those purposes. Here, ancient Greek knowledge comes in handy. The ancient Greeks had come up with three modes of speech – *ethos*, *logos* and *pathos*. *Ethos* stands for credibility, *logos* stands for reason and *pathos* stands for emotion. Let us examine the three stages one by one.

First of all, the speaker has to establish his or her *ethos* that is credibility. Let me explain the concept of credibility with a folk tale. A young man went to the village head and requested him for a job. The village head said, "I know a jeweller in the city who can give you a job. In fact, he has asked for a number of gem stones from me. If you carry that parcel, then he might give you a job." The next day, the young man set off on his journey to the city with the parcel. On the way, he thought that if he simply stole that parcel of precious stones he would not need a job any more. So, he opened the parcel only to find a few ordinary stones and a letter by the village head to the city jeweller. The letter read, "If you find this parcel unopened, and then please give the bearer a job." Clearly, it was a ploy to test the credibility of the candidate. That is the importance of *ethos*. Establishing the *ethos* starts with applying for the job and dressing up for the interview. If the

application and the dress are prepared carefully, it would create an impression of a careful candidate.

The second mode of speech, as discovered by the ancient Greeks, was *logos* or reason. *Logos* is best exemplified by an anecdote. It is about Mrs Sudha Murthy, wife of Infosys founder Mr Narayana Murthy. Before becoming Mrs Murthy, the lady had graduated in engineering – unusual for a woman some fifty years ago. During her graduation, she had come to know that the famous Tata company of Jamshedpur did not employ women for engineering work. Then, the young Sudha shot off a postcard to the company head asking the reason for such gender discrimination. After a few days, she got a call letter from the Tata group for a job interview. At the interview, the chairman of the panel told her, “So, you are the candidate who wanted to know why our company does not hire women. Well, the reason is that women leave the job when they get married.” However, the ‘leaving job’ explanation could not satisfy Sudha and she asked, “Don’t men leave your job when they get better jobs?” Her reasoning was so clear that the chairman had no answer for it! Eventually, she became the first woman to work the shop floor of the Tatas. The fact that she got the job after logically demolishing an illogical barrier proves the power of *logos*.

The third mode of speaking is *pathos* or emotion. For a long time, emotion was an undervalued if not unwanted quality in the job market. However, nowadays, the concept of emotional quotient or EQ is being recognized. Most interviewers realize that a candidate who is without any trace of emotion would be more of a machine than a human being. Although hiring a machine might appear to be an attractive alternative, in the genre of science fiction there are many horror stories of machines morphing into our masters if not monsters. Hence, despite our many weaknesses, we humans have our strengths even in the job market. And, one of the elements which differentiates us from machines is emotion. So, it is no longer considered entirely unprofessional to have a moderate EQ.

Conclusion

Readers of English literature know about Mark Antony’s speech in Act III, Scene ii of William Shakespeare’s *Julius Caesar*. While Antony’s credibility was already established, he used reasoning and emotionalism to wonderful effect in that case. That is surely a classic example of the synthesis of ethos, logos and pathos. If we can emulate those examples, our chances in the professional world can only improve.

Tasks to Develop the Intra & Inter Personal Skills of Rural Engineering Undergraduates

Dr. Varalakshmi Chaudhry

Introduction

Task-based research has been found to be an answer to any kind of teaching-learning situation in the context of ESL in the heterogeneous classrooms of India. Tasks can be designed to suit any kind of classroom – with rural or linguistically marginalized students – provided the teacher-researcher is trained in material design.

The Present Study

The present study reports the types of tasks designed to promote the intrapersonal and interpersonal skills of engineering undergraduates learning ESL. The 344 students who did the tasks in the classroom have completed their 2nd year of the B. Tech course and belonged to the 4 Branches of Engineering - Computer Science & Engineering, Civil Engineering, Electronics & Computer Engineering, and Mechanical Engineering.

This paper does not present a qualitative analysis of the data but focuses on the description of the Tasks to promote intrapersonal and interpersonal skills of engineering undergraduates learning ESL to fare well in their professional life.

The Tasks

1. The Tasks to promote Intrapersonal Skills

Intrapersonal Skills deal with emotions, feelings, thoughts, which are stirred upon within an individual which the person next to them might not even be aware of. The skills constitute:

a. Self-Awareness: Development of self-image, significant others, social comparison

(i) Write elaborately on: Hobbies, Strengths, and Weaknesses, Favorite color with 2 objects in that color, Favorite animal with 2 qualities that you like of it, Situation – you are lost in a forest and see a beautiful waterfall. What is your reaction and action? Situation – You are walking absentmindedly in the corridor and suddenly you find a whitewall in front of you. What is your reaction & action? If someone hurts you, how do you express your anger? How do you express your love to someone?

(ii)

- Write one positive & one negative point about your parents, neighbors & relatives
- Write one positive & one negative point about your teachers, peers and the activities that you do before 9am, between 9am & 4.30pm and after 4.30pm
- Write one positive and one negative point about a book you have read
- Write one negative and one positive experience in your life
- Who is your Role Model and why?
- What is your dream?
- What is your way of walking – style, speed, frequency, body language?
- What is your way of talking – speed, style, frequency, pitch, amount?
- What is your way of sleeping – posture, no. of hours in a day?
- What is your way of eating – what do you eat, amount, frequency, no. of meals in a day?
- How do you manage stress in your personal & professional life?

(iii)

- Write a description of your facial features.
- Write a description of your classmate's facial features.
- Compare your own description of facial features with that given by your friend.
- Based on the description of your friend's suggest dress code that enhances his/ her image.
- Take suggestion from your friend as to what dress code enhances your image.

b. Self-esteem – direct, honest, respectful

Tasks: Some situations that convey the sense of self-esteem the student has are given.

c. Self-confidence

Tasks – Some problematic situations that require the display of self-confidence are given.

d. Assertiveness

Tasks – Some situations that reveal the assertiveness of the students are given.

e. Dealing with negative emotions

Tasks – anger, conflict, depression. Situations that make students deal with their anger, conflict & depression are given.

2. The Tasks to promote Interpersonal Skills

Interpersonal Skills are visible to an external audience. These are called as People Skills. Leaders/ successful persons need to know these skills.

The skills constitute:

a. Communication

Tasks: Giving definition of terms & concepts, paraphrasing extracts from literary texts, explanation of news paper headlines and advertisement slogans with focus both on language and content.

b. Team building – forming, storming, norming, performing, adjourning

Tasks: Form a team to handle admissions/ examinations/ cultural events/ technical events/ NSS activities in your college

c. Supervising

Tasks: Supervise teams that are being formed and ensure that their activities are being done as per the plan.

d. Counseling

Tasks: (i) Counsel your classmate who is depressed after a failure

(ii) Counsel your younger sibling as to how to overcome the fear of facing seniors in school.

Conclusion

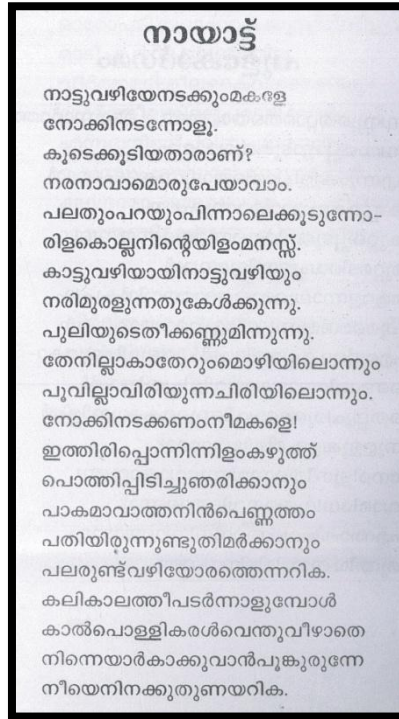
The study clearly indicates the importance of tasks to improve the employability of engineering undergraduates. Linguistically marginalized students require cognitively demanding tasks that make them concentrate on the content and meaning of the task and subconsciously develop their linguistic skills as learners of ESL.

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The Hunt

Poem by U Shankaranarayanan, Translated by Sandhya Gopakumaran



My daughter treading on country roads
 Be cautious of those who join you
 Could be a man or a mad dog
 Don't give into their sweet nothings
 Don't let your gentle heart waver
 Country roads are now jungle paths
 In sweetened words that are no honey to ears
 A hyena's laughter is neigh
 In smiles fake, where no flowers bloom
 A tiger's gaze of desire burns bright
 My daughter, tread with caution!
 There are many such stalking these paths
 To pounce on you and wring your slender neck
 And make a hearty meal of your tender youth.
 When the curse of bad times
 Is at its pinnacle
 Of a fall that leaves one with
 Blistered feet and a charred heart
 Who is there to guard you my little one
 Know that you, alone, are your guardian.

Originally published in Malayalam in his anthology of poems called "U Shankaranarayanan Kavitakal", published by Vallathol Educational Trust in 2009, distributed by Mathrubhumi Books, Kozhikode, Kerala.

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Udiyannoor Sankaranarayanan, Malayalam poet, whose poems raise their voice against the tide of times. There is anger, sarcasm, cynicism, tenderness, suspense and the voice of a radical in his poems.

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