

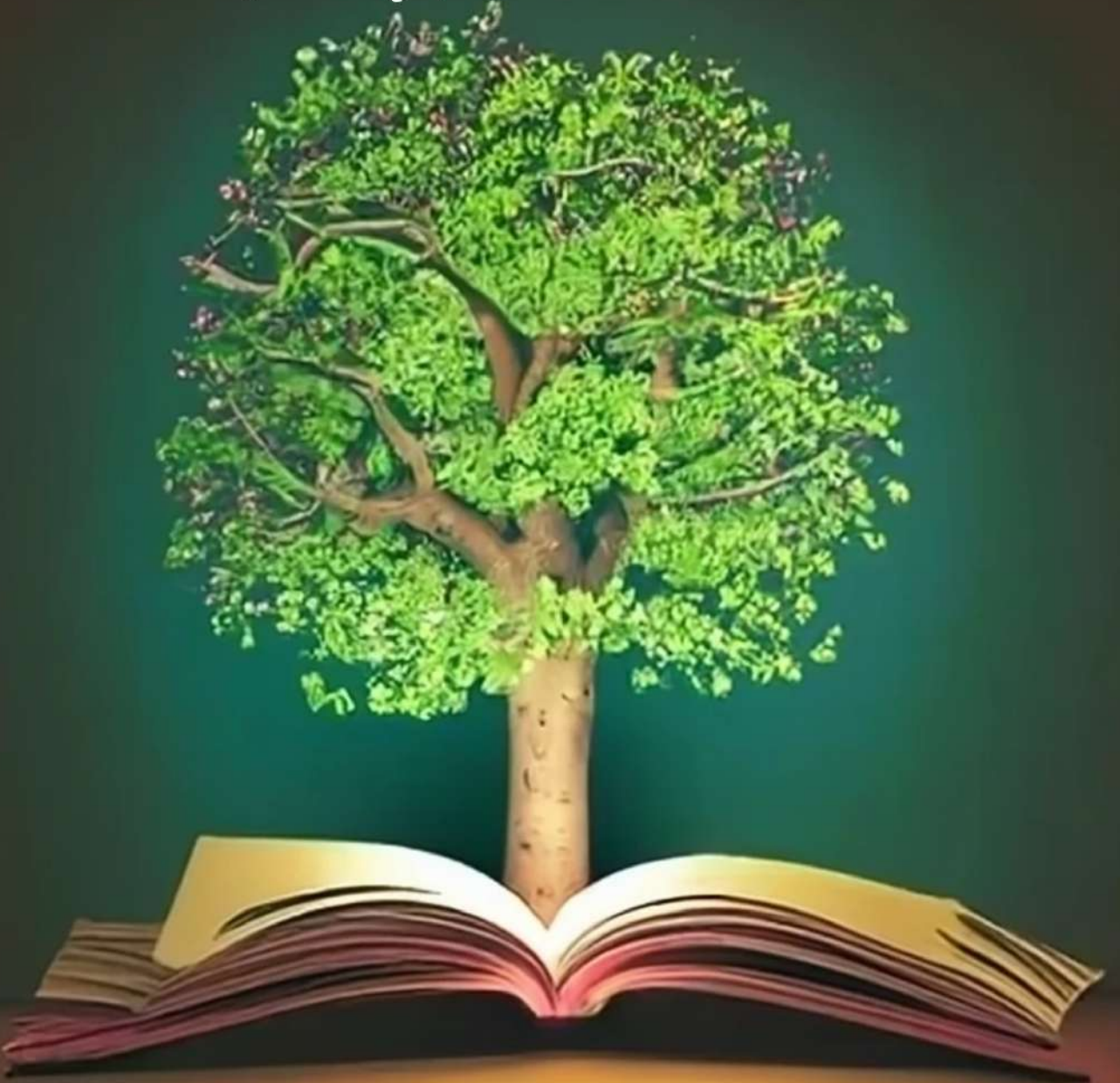


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(अर्धवार्षिक शोध पत्रिका)

सम्पादक

डॉ. मधु रानी शुक्ला

सम्पादक मण्डल

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सह सम्पादक

सुश्री शाम्भवी शुक्ला

अतिथि सम्पादक

डॉ. मुकेश यादव



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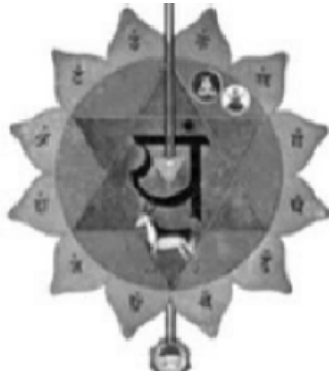
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सम्पादकीय

अनहद लोक विशेषांक-7 आप सभी के शुभ हाथों में सौंपते हुए अत्यंत प्रसन्नता का अनुभव हो रहा है।

भाषा किसी भी समाज में अभिव्यक्ति का सबल माध्यम है मनुष्य अपनी भावनाओं को भली-भाँति भाषा के माध्यम से ही व्यक्त कर सकता है काल, समय, लिंग, भेद के साथ ही भाषा नित नवीन होती जाती है कहा जाता है -

**कोस-कोस पर बदले पानी,
चार कोस पर बानी।**

साहित्य का अस्तित्व भाषा में होता है। उसकी प्रयोग विधि उसे साहित्यिक स्वरूप प्रदान करती है तथा भाषा ध्वानात्मक होकर रसात्मक होती है। जो रस, छंद, अलंकार, व्यंजनात्मक शक्ति के द्वारा श्रेष्ठ भावों का प्रकटीकरण करती है इसी भाषा का प्रयोग ही साहित्य में ग्राह्य है जो अनुभवपरक तथा रोचक रूप धारक कर सुंदर साहित्य रूप धारण करती हैं और ये जो समृद्ध भाषा के नींव पर सृजित हो सकता है। आज का युग वैश्वीकरण का है ऐसे में वैश्विक संदर्भ में देखें तो भाषायी सामंजस्य एवं समाजीकरण अत्यन्त आवश्यक है। यही भाषा व्याकरण के अनुशासन पर सृजित होकर साहित्य का रूप धारण करती है। जिसमें सर्व सम्मति से अंग्रेजी भाषा को वैश्विक भाषा के रूप में मान्यता दी गयी है।

हमारे अतिथि संपादक डॉ. मुकेश यादव ने इसी भाषा एवं साहित्य के परस्पर सम्बन्ध एवं नवीन दृष्टि से पल्लवित-पुष्पित आलेखों को संकलन बड़ी सूझ-बूझ के साथ किया है जिसमें अंग्रेजी भाषा तथा उसके साहित्य में प्रयोग पर समृद्ध एवं सारगर्भित आलेख हैं जो निश्चित रूप से चिंतन-मनन की ओर अग्रसर करते हैं साथ ही विषय पर नवीन दृष्टि प्रदान करते हैं। मैं उनको हृदय से आभार व्यक्त करती हूँ। प्रस्तुत अंक के समस्त संपादक मण्डल को मैं संपादकीय सहयोग हेतु तथा मार्गदर्शक मण्डल एवं पियर-रेबड कमेटी के विद्वतजनों को आभार व्यक्त करते हुए भविष्य में भी इसी प्रकार सहयोग की आकांक्षी रहूँगी। अंततः त्रुटियों के लिए क्षमा मांगती हूँ। आपकी प्रतिक्रिया का इंतजार रहेगा

डॉ. मधु रानी शुक्ला

Guest Editorial

Exploring the Intersections of Language and Literature in Digital Age

Dear Readers,

It is my pleasure to serve as the Guest Editor for this special edition of our esteemed journal, dedicated to the intricate and symbiotic relationship between language and literature. In this edition, we bring you 31 compelling articles that delve into various facets of this dynamic interplay, showcasing the richness and complexity of the nexus between language and the written word.

Language as the Canvas :

Language, as the fundamental medium of expression, serves as the canvas upon which literature unfolds its myriad narratives. The articles in this collection explore the ways in which language shapes and is shaped by literary creations. From the exploration of linguistic devices to the examination of narrative structures, our contributors offer insights into the nuances that make language a vibrant tapestry in the world of literature.

The Evolution of Literary Forms :

Literature, in all its diversity, reflects the evolution of language and the societies that produce it. Our contributors engage with a wide array of literary forms, from classical to contemporary, shedding light on the dynamic nature of language as it adapts to the ever-changing landscapes of human experience. Whether it be the exploration of linguistic experimentation in postmodern literature or the analysis of traditional forms in the context of cultural shifts, these articles provide a panoramic view of the evolving relationship between language and literature.

Cross-Cultural Dialogues :

One of the most fascinating aspects of the study of language and literature is its ability to bridge cultural divides. Several articles in this collection delve into the cross-cultural dialogues that take place through the medium of language and literature. Through the lenses of translation studies, comparative literature, and multicultural perspectives, our contributors illuminate the ways in which language serves as a conduit for understanding and appreciating diverse cultures.

Challenges and Opportunities in the Digital Age :

In the age of digital communication, language and literature face both challenges and opportunities. The impact of technology on the way we write, read, and interpret literature is a theme explored by several articles in this edition. From the rise of digital storytelling to the implications of artificial intelligence on language processing, our contributors grapple with the profound transformations occurring in the realm of language and literature.

Looking Forward :

As we navigate the fascinating landscape of language and literature in this collection, it becomes evident that the intersection of these two realms is not static but constantly evolving. The articles presented here contribute to an ongoing conversation that invites scholars, students, and enthusiasts to explore the multifaceted dimensions of language and literature.

I extend my sincere gratitude to all the authors who have contributed their valuable insights to this special edition. Their dedication to advancing our understanding of language and literature is truly commendable. I also want to express appreciation to the editorial team for their meticulous work in bringing this collection to fruition.

I invite you, dear readers, to embark on this intellectual journey with us, as we navigate the intricate pathways that connect language and literature. May this collection inspire further exploration and foster a deeper appreciation for the profound ways in which language and literature shape our understanding of the world.

Happy reading!

Dr Mukesh Yadav

(Guest Editor)

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Constructing Student Agency : Nexus on Classroom Activities and Engagement

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Abstract

Student agency refers to the quality of students' self-reflective and intentional actions and interactions with their activities and engagements. The engagements and activities help change increasing the level of personal agency. This study mainly proposed to find out the nexus of constructing student agency with engagements and activities in EFL classrooms with the support of teachers and peers in higher education institutions. This study adopted a sequential explanatory mixed method. For quantitative data, a survey was conducted with a set of five-point Likert scale questionnaires among 107 students studying at the bachelor level. Semi-structured interviews were conducted among three teachers teaching at the same level for collecting qualitative data. The result shows that teachers' and peers' support and students' efforts through activities and engagement are vital aspects of constructing agency. These all phenomena are related to each other to construct student agency. This study contributes to the development of agency when students have opportunities to be selective in actions, engagements, and interactions in classrooms.

Key words : *EFL classroom, HEI, agency, engagement, activities*

Introduction :

Recent literature has presented a wide discussion on the issues of student agency. The practice of the agency plays a crucial role in developing students' self-reflective actions and behaviors. When the students can reflect and behave themselves in different situations, they enhance their ability to cope with the situations. Their involvement in interactions, debates, and discussions in the classroom helps shape their behavior and attitude. They can influence the course of events through the

practice of agency (Bandura, 1986, 2001). Teachers' role in the classroom plays a huge interest in shaping students' behavior. Teachers can mold their students into active agents involving them in different activities (Jaaskela *et. al.*, 2021). Placing students in the center of activities helps shape their thoughts and actions.

Moreover, in the present context, the ongoing advancement of technology in educational pedagogy has sought changes in the roles of students and teachers. Agency in practice brings together the tasks of the

students and the teachers to be done inside classrooms and outside society. Thus, the agency is not separated from action rather it is co-constructed with the teachers or any other communities (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Students are by nature agentic. They themselves try to influence their educational courses for future lives (Klemencic, 2015a). Additionally, teachers need to engage students in different agency-boosting activities.

Teachers have a dominant role in carrying out activities to boost agency in the classroom (Stolp *et. al.*, 2022). The development of student agencies has a connection to those activities and engagement in the classroom. Besides, teachers' and peers' support is assumed in the course of building agency. However, very little is known about the issues of student agency in higher education (Jääskelä *et. al.*, 2017) in connection to activities and engagements. Thus the study aims to find out the nexus of co-constructing student agency with engagements and activities in EFL classrooms by the support of teachers and students (peers) in higher education institutions.

Agency and Activities :

Agency and activities are co-related. One boosts the other. Activity is the core aspect of classroom dynamics. Teachers can best practice critical pedagogy based on different activities. Students in the classroom like to get involved in activities of their interest. It's difficult for the teacher to find activities to satisfy each student every time. Participation is another main aspect of activities. It is challenging to engage every student in the classroom as per their interest. On the other hand, activities need to be academic which means to

be observable (Finn, 1989). The engagement of a student in class or activities is called participation. Participation and engagement are understood as similar phenomena. Moreover, Newman (1992) sees engagement as a part of a student's psychological involvement and attempts to learn, understand, and acquire knowledge, and skills to promote them academically.

Literature has pointed out that there is a relationship between academic achievement and engagement or activities (Finn & Zimmer, 2012). Further, Finn and Zimmer stated three types of engagement: academic engagement, social engagement and cognitive engagement. Academic engagement is related to the learning process. Students' assignments, homework, project work, etc. are the core part of this engagement. Following rules and regulations of class and school come under social engagement. It sees how students follow the rules of class, and how they communicate with teachers and peers. Cognitive engagement refers to the thought process of a student. It comes under how the student comprehends difficult problems and issues in order to solve them. All three types of engagement play significant roles in constructing agency.

On the other hand, teachers' role in activities motivates students to engage in the given tasks and situations. The students may show unwillingness or apathy to participate. It is difficult to find all the students showing their interest to engage in the same activity. Ninin and Magalhaes (2017) point out that there may be contradictions in order to create chances for engaging students in similar activities. In that situation, the teacher has a significant role in adjusting the environment to a co-create

agency (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Stolp, *et al.*, 2022). Therefore, teachers need to consider that student's actions in the classroom generally reflect their identity, their aim in life, and their existence (Biesta, *et al.*, 2008) as a whole.

Class Room Environment and Engagement :

An environment of the classroom means conditions for shaping out behaviours and learning outcomes of students. The classroom provides multiple platforms for students to grow their abilities, interests, and skills. A large amount of a student's time is spent in the classroom (Ryan, 2013). Both tangible and intangible environments affect students' learning behavior. The classroom seating, walls, floor, and materials used in the classroom represent the tangible environment. Teacher's role, motivation, pedagogy, etc. change the mindset of the students as an intangible environment. Both affect the learning situation and the agency-building process. Thus, Ryan (2013) advocates the importance of the classroom environment for all-round development of the students. In the classroom, students learn various skills necessary to achieve success in further life. Actions and interactions of students within the classroom help their learning skills (Klemenèè, 2015b). This is the related phenomenon of student agency.

On the other hand, students' engagement in the classroom becomes part of agency building. The agency is a process of self-reflective actions and interactions through engagement (Klemencic, 2015a). The actions and interactions in the classroom help shape students' learning

and critiquing skills. Engagement promotes academic work. It creates students' psychological investment towards learning which promotes understanding, knowledge, and skills (Newmann, 1992). Engagement provides opportunities to exert individual as well as collaborative actions and interactions.

Agency Theory :

Bandura (2001) positions social cognitive theory into three modes of agency: personal agency, proxy agency, and collective agency. Personal agency is direct. It is gained through personal involvement and efforts. Proxy agency depends on others to act on one to achieve personal outcomes. Collective agency is maintained by the help of groups or interdependent efforts. Similarly, Klemencic (2015b) conceptualizes student agency as a process of students' self-reflective and desired actions drawing from social cognition theory which is related to sociological theories of human agency. Bandura (1999, 2001) claims that social cognitive theory classifies three types of environment: imposed environment, selected environment, and constructed environment. These environments play crucial roles in increasing personal agency. For Ninin and Magalhaes (2017), agency involves noticing the differences to offer chances for expanding one another's possibilities for transforming realities. Therefore, the agency, in a way understood from a critical collaborative, relational and transformative perspective. The agency assumes that individuals develop means to face the contradictions and engage in transformation processes (Liberali, 2020). The agency depends on the activities and engagements made by the individuals. The

agency provides chances to transform individual capacity into collaborative action through engagements. The collaborative activities help in transforming the lives of the learners. Thus, as mentioned by Battilana and D'Aunno (2009) agency can also be relative towards the future.

Objective of the study :

To find out the nexus of co-constructing student agency in line with engagement and activities in EFL classrooms perceived by teachers and students in higher education institutions.

Hypothesis :

There is a relation between construction of student agency with engagement and activities in EFL classrooms.

Research Questions :

What is the relation between constructing student agency, classroom engagement and activities with the support of teachers and peer?

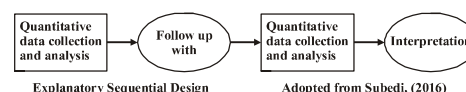
How do teachers perceive relational aspect of student agency, engagement, and activities?

How do students perceive relational aspect of student agency, engagement, and activities?

Methods and Materials :

The design of the study is an explanatory sequential mixed method which is highly popular among researchers (Subedi, 2016). This design requires the collection of quantitative data in the beginning and then the collection of qualitative data for the explanation of quantitative results (Creswell *et. al.*, 2011). A survey was adopted to collect quantitative data which is widely used in

quantitative research in education and social science (Lodico, Spaulding & Voegtli, 2010; Leavy, 2022). The survey using a five-point Likert Scale was made to have wider coverage of the sample population among the practitioners of student agencies (teachers and learners) in higher education institutions. The survey could obtain data from many respondents (Glasow, 2005) among ten higher education institutions of Dhading district. Questionnaires were distributed to 150 students from ten different campuses of the district. However, 107 responses were duly obtained for the processing of the result. Consequently, for qualitative data, narratives of teachers were taken through semi-structured interviews. Three teachers were selected randomly who have been teaching for more than nine years in higher education institutions. Follow-up discussions were made to ensure saturation. The following procedure was taken as used by Subedi (2016) for the explanatory sequential mixed method.



It is true that an overarching question necessarily invites mixed-method design. To verify the responses of students' responses, a few teachers were interviewed to explore their perceptions of the relationship between the construction of student agency, activities, and engagement in EFL classrooms. While mixing the method, the first approach entails the overarching question then expanding it into separate QUAN and QUAL sub-questions (Creswell, 2014; Subedi, 2016) for alignment of the research purpose and question. Thus this mixed method study dealt with two

research questions (one QUAN, one QUAL). This explanatory sequential design utilized a five-point Likert-scaled survey followed by semi-structured interviews. The goal of the first phase was to identify the potential predictive power of selected variables (Ivankova, et al., 2006). The quantitative phase identified students' involvement and perceptions then the second qualitative phase helped to explore and interpret the result of the quantitative phase. The qualitative phase provided a more comprehensive understanding of the relation between construction of student agency with activities and engagement.

Populations and Research Site :

The higher education population involves all the students and the teachers learning and teaching in the universities of Nepal. Dhading district has 14 higher education institutions. I selected bachelor first- and second-year students of different programs. I approached 150 students studying and three teachers teaching in different campuses of the district. However, only 107 students responded duly. Probability sampling for the survey and judgmental sampling for the interviews were applied to select the respondents/participants respectively. I considered many steps to ensure ethics in the study. The privacy, confidentiality, and anonymity of the participants were considered duly (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2018).

Data Collection Tool :

The survey is usually collected through a questionnaire as a main tool (Lodico, Spaulding & Voegt, 2010; Leavy, 2014; Leavy, 2022). A set of questionnaires in the Likert-scaled format was prepared comprising different questions concerning

to the topic and objective (Lodico, Spaulding & Voegt, 2010). The set of questionnaires was validated by three member experts. I approached 150 students from ten different campuses for the purpose of getting information. I got only 107 responses duly filled. The question followed a five-point Likert scale format. The questions are designed mainly to answer the research questions (Leavy, 2022). For qualitative data, semi-structured interviews were carried out with follow-up interactions to understand participants' perceptions and experiences of constructing student agency (Chaaban, Qadhi & Du, 2021).

Data Analysis Process :

Descriptive survey focuses on asking standardized questions which are statistically analyzable (Johnson, & Morgan, 2016). Tables, charts, and discussions are made to analyze the collected data using statistical tools (Leavy, 2022) such as descriptive statistics. These statistics help to describe and summarize the data (Babbie, 2013; Fallon, 2016). Qualitative data was transcribed, categorized, coded, and thematized. Two sets of data (Quan and Qual) were simultaneously discussed. The goal of the quantitative phase was to identify the potential predictive power of selected variables whereas the goal of the qualitative phase was to explore and interpret the statistical results obtained in the first quantitative phase (Ivankova, Creswell, & Stick, 2006, p. 6). In sequential explanatory design, the quantitative approach is given priority as the quantitative data collection occurs in the beginning. After getting the result of the quantitative data, based on these, qualitative data were obtained. In the second phase of the research qualitative components of data were dealt.

Table-1 : Hypothesis testing and statistical test

Hypothesis	IV (x)	DV (y)	Parametric	Nonparametric
The is corelation between TSA and BA	BA	SA	Pearson Corelation	Spearman Corelation
The is corelation between PSA and BA	CE	SA	Pearson Corelation	Spearman Corelation

TSA= Teachers' Support in Classroom Activities, BA=Boosting Agency, SE=Student Engagement, PSA=Peer Support in Classroom Activities

Results :

Quantatitative Results :

Based on the research question :

What is the relation between constructing student agency, classroom engagement and activities with the support of teachers and peer? The responses were taken from the students of higher education.

The quantitative data from the first phase of the study was obtained through a Likert scale. In the case of the Likert scale data, Spearman Rank Correlation is used to show the correlation between different (TSA and PAS, TSA and BA, TSA and SE) variables. Theoretically, the value of the correlation lies between -1 to 1. The actual value of the correlation between TSA and BA is 0.402. It implies that there is a positive correlation between TSA and BA. Similarly, is 0.402 to 0.567 respectively. Similarly, the correlation between SE and BA is 0.436 to 0.567 respectively. This shows that there is a positive correlation between TSA and BA. Similar to this there is also a low positive correlation between SE and BA.

Table-2

Variable	Correlation coefficient	p-value
TSA and PSA	0.402	< 0.01
TSA and BA	0.436	< 0.01
TSA and SE	0.436	> 0.05

The above table represents Spearman's correlation between assumed variables: TSA, PSA, BA, and SE. The table shows that there is a significant positive correlation between TSA and PSA (correlation coefficient = 0.402, $p < 0.01$). This means that as TSA increases, PSA also tends to increase. There is also a significant positive correlation between TSA and BA (correlation coefficient = 0.436, $p < 0.01$). This means that as TSA increases, BA also tends to increase. However, there is no significant correlation between TSA and SE (correlation coefficient = 0.436, $p > 0.05$). This means that there is no clear relationship between TSA and SE.

Overall, the table shows that there is a significant positive relationship between TSA, PSA, and BA. However, there is no clear relationship between TSA and SE. Based on the table, the variables TSA and PSA have a perfect positive correlation. This means that they move together in the same line. TSA and BA, as well as TSA and SE, exhibit moderate positive correlations. PSA and BA, as well as PSA and SE, also show moderate positive correlations. At length, BA and SE have a relatively stronger positive correlation.

Qualitative Result :

A brief profile of the participants :

Rima has a wide experience of teaching English as a foreign language in schools. She has also been teaching at a higher level for 9 years. She has completed a Master's Degree in Education. Similarly, Amrit has been engaged in teaching schools for two decades. He has 10 years experiences of teaching English as a foreign language in the college level. He has a degree of Master's in Arts. Rijan holds a degree of Master's in Philosophy. He has been teaching for master's and bachelor's students for more than a decade. Through interactions and interviews, I knew that he possessed a good understanding and knowledge regarding student and teacher agency.

Based on quantitative results, qualitative information was gathered from three English language teachers teaching at higher education institutions through semi-structured interviews. The following themes emerged in response to the research questions based on the responses collected through follow-up interviews with the participants.

What is the relation between constructing student agency, classroom engagement and activities with the support of teachers and peer?

How do teachers perceive relational aspect of student agency, engagement and activities?

How do students perceive relational aspect of student agency, engagement, and activities?

Agency through activities with the support of teachers :

Classroom activities and student engagement are crucial aspects of building student agency. If teachers can keep their students engaged in activities, the students get opportunities to enhance their capacity to achieve learning goals. While students are active in classroom activities they are focused on learning. All three participants believe:

"Classroom activities support students to improve learning achievement. Students are conscious in learning while doing works.students also concentrate on learning....".

It is important that students' interest and teacher's support play a positive role in learning. When the students feel that they are being cared for by the teachers, they put interest in doing things. They willingly want support from teachers. If teachers provide them support consistently, they do not give up working in classrooms. Rima put similar remarks,

"....When I continuously support and care my students they like to work more. They do not drop the activities".

Activities give students chances to gain the attention of teachers. The teachers

also can acquaint themselves with the student's abilities through their performance. There is a reciprocal relationship between activities and teacher support. The teachers get chances to improve students' performance. It helps the students to promote their ability to learn. Amrit adds,

"I wonder how students increase their performance when they continuously involve in activities. I found even very weak students are raising their capacity and standards...."

According to Usman (2016), good teachers foster a positive relationship with students by showing individual concern, care and demonstrating profound empathy. They inspire the students performing intelligible instructions. They become enthusiastic, assertive and humble towards the students. They amuse their students through activities. Thus, students respond them actively. Responding through the activities means creating themselves the environment of learning for improving their efficacy. In similar context, Rijan puts:

"....We are good to students when we are humble, inspiring and enthusiastic. They respond us and follow us in activities when we care them, show concern towards them. They feel really they are doing for them...."

As mentioned by Culajara *et. al.*, (2022), teachers need to adopt an ever-changing classroom environment and develop their skills and competencies to cultivate their students abilities through activities. Activities are the basis for engaging every student in learning. The teachers need to consider and build up a conducive atmosphere for everyone in the classroom. Every student should feel

consisted of their actions in the given activities. Amrit and Rima conjure up similar stand:

"When we can change and adopt different situations in classroom our students get positive vibration from us.looking us they feel the necessity of acting by themselves to change positively".

Moreover, Awuah (2015) believes that teachers who could improve their pedagogical approach by designing learner-centered activities and tasks could enhance students' overall capacity to boost their agentic aspects. If teachers adopt the classroom situation and help students in many ways, they can boost students' potential for learning. It also helps to grow individual magnitude for their further activities and achievements. Such achievements build up the students' agentic practices.

Agency through engagement with the support of teachers and peer :

Previous research has found out that engagement plays an important role in learning achievement. Adaptive and flexible teachers can interact with the course information by providing control over students' engagement and achievement (Agu, 2015). Engaging students means keeping them active in tasks. Engagement provides individuals chances for collaborative action and interactions which helps to develop students' skills and ability for improving learning. Rijan perceives,

".... For me engagement is the way to keep students active and interactive in learning courses. When they are engaged they are learning something that is helpful for their achievement.at the time of engagement we must be flexible and helpful".

Teachers can offer different lesson-related tasks to engage students. While engaging in the tasks they put in their efforts. Their attempts result in achievement. Teachers ask them to present their work. They can enhance their performance and skills for presentation. Rima and Rijan have similar experiences:

"..... I was surprised to see their progress in presentation. When students do given tasks themselves we usually ask to present individually and sometimes in groups. In the beginning they hesitated but slowly they have improved presentation skills..."

Teachers can use different supportive strategies to improve students' performance through engagement (Culajara, & Luces, 2023). Some students require teachers' support directly. They need encouragement and motivation from the teachers. They may require teachers' assistance to complete given tasks. When the teacher neglects the students may leave the tasks unfulfilled which may discourage them from doing them in further days. All three participants agree:

"...It is our responsibility to engage students using different supportive strategies...otherwise we could not further engage them effectively."

Moreover, Amrit focuses :

"... I totally believe that many students need our helps directly. They may not ask us but we need to know. We must support them. Our positive support helps them encourage to complete the tasks. When they complete the allotted tasks they enhance their potentials..."

In the case of large classes, teachers face difficulty in helping students individually. They may not have sufficient time to support students' engagements directly. They need to form peers and groups to

involve and support every student. In this aspect, Rima's practice is also similar to Rijan's. They often divide students into peers. They encourage students to help and collaborate with each other. Their experiences show that peer support is more effective in improving the performance and presentation skills of the students. As mentioned by Rima:

"...I have seen that peer support is highly effective to improve weak students' performance...When they support each other they are highly encouraged to engage in activities. They do the given tasks easily. It is easy for us to observe them."

Practice of peer is more effective than group because in peer it is easy to ensure the participation of each individual in collaboration. Teachers can easily observe peer activities and sharing. It is easy to provide support and input to each member of the peer. They also feel the close approach of the teachers. Rijan and Rima mention:

"...It is very easy to handle peer activities. We can ensure their participation in the tasks..."

Students' active and voluntary participation in peer work means they are gaining something for achievement. They are promoting their capacity to learn and do things in collaboration with peers and teachers. As provoked by Damiani (2016) engaging students in partnership leads to greater learning and a better role in society. To develop this kind of system in the classroom we must recognize the importance of teachers' involvement in peer work (Chopra, 2016). Therefore, it can be understood that through the involvement of teachers and peers in engagement and activities each individual student could enhance their agency.

Discussion :

In this study, the agency is analysed not as a form of teacher's play but as a reaction to their practices in the classroom. On the other way, it explores the students' perception and experiences of teachers' support and peer support in building student agency. The first part of the result deals with the question: What is the relation between constructing student agency, classroom engagement, and activities with the support of teachers and peers? Previous research has supported that there is a pivotal role of agency in the transformation of teachers' practices in the classroom for overall learning achievement (Polatcan et al, 2023). The result is in compliance with this view: there is a significant positive correlation between TSA and BA (correlation coefficient = 0.436, $p < 0.01$). This means that as TSA increases, BA also tends to increase. This is also similar to what Culajara, and Luces, (2023) believe, teachers play a significant role in enhancing each lesson's quality at this stage of teaching and learning, which leads to a long-lasting transformation in educational practices (Kusters, et al., 2023) of both the teachers and the students.

The quantitative result proves the alternative hypothesis: There is a relation between the construction of student agency with engagement and activities in EFL classrooms. Engagements and activities play a crucial role in developing students' habits of doing and being active in learning. This is a kind of student-centered teaching-learning practice that focuses on students' needs, interests, and talents (Culajara, & Luces, 2023). When students are focused on their needs and interests they have more chances to enhance

their potential in learning. This helps to foster an individual calibre to set up and achieve learning goals which lead to new forms of personal and communal transformation (Guerrero & Camargo-Abello, 2023) through agency building.

Moreover, engagement and activities are major parts of classroom learning for keeping students active and interactive. Engagements keep the students active and activities let them be more interactive. Their actions and interactions with teachers or with peers assist them to increase their capacity, ability, and strength to cope the different learning situations in the classroom and social milieu. Those overall efforts ultimately enhance agency among students. This view is consistence with the idea of Moore (2022) and Hemi et al. (2023) who believe that individual student is influenced by the learning achievement of peers through engagement and activities. The students also benefit from the support of teachers to achieve perceived peers and teachers' goals. Similar to this, the findings of Moore, (2022) indicate that students desire to be facilitated by the teachers and peers. When students get help in activities and engagements they are encouraged to perform better. They have excessive chances to boost their agency. It is clear that the ability to enact agency in a such situation can be developed (McNeil, 2018; Raino & Hilppo, 2017) with the help of peers and teachers.

The result of the study is in compliance with Klemencic (2015a), who noted that current actions and interactions reflect agency. In this study, the teachers who responded believe that the students who take part more in activities have developed their agency. Students develop

their habit of doing something themselves when they are engaged in activities. Their actions, reactions, and interactions provide them the chance to boost up overall capacity for transformation of learning and doing things in society. This finding is more or less close to Guerrero and Camargo-Abello (2023) who view that practice of agency allows for new forms of individual and social transformation. Moreover, these all phenomena (activities, engagement, peer support, and teachers' support) have the potential to enhance student agency. Besides, the result of this study shows that peer support and teachers' support also have a reciprocal relationship in boosting student agency.

Conclusion and Implications :

Engagements and activities in the classroom help to activate students' learning interests. The interest pushes them towards better performance. The performance accelerates their success. Good performance also delivers a sense of achievement. The achievement provides them confidence for overall individual educational and social transformation. This overall transformation provides students to promote their individual capacity to change their educational setting for achieving learning goals (Cook-Sther, 2020; Wang & Zhang, 2021). This self-regulatory capacity to change learning situations is similar to Bandura's theory of agency. This study infers that student agency can be constructed and boosted through engagement and activities in the EFL classroom. Moreover, teachers' support and peers' support play vital roles in shaping agency among students themselves. In this sense, this study contributes to highlighting the importance of classroom engagement and activities to boost student agency.

Similarly, it shows the significance of peers' and teachers' support to strengthen students' agency. Thus, the study gives an insight into building student agency through engagement and activities.

The implication of this study is limited to the area of student agency within engagement, activities, and support of teachers and peers. In the course of agency development students feel that student voice is important. This study did not explore the place of students' voices in the process of their capacity boosting. From this study, I can infer that we should investigate methods, including student voice to increase their agency. Besides, student-centered learning pedagogies need to be incorporated to focus on students' interests, desires and intelligence to enhance their agency (Ghiasvasd, *et. al.*, 2023). Finally, as assumed by Kusters *et. al.*, (2023); and Nguyen and Ngo (2023) teacher agency is also a similar aspect to be developed for enhancing student agency concurrently, which becomes the core aspect of teachers' identity, professionalism, and success.

The primary implication of this study addresses the ways the collaboration of teachers, peers, and individual students to construct agentic practices. There is a dire need for engagement and activities in the classroom to promote agentic behaviours among the students. Similarly, teachers' support and peers' support are other aspects to be considered. Thus, this study allows the teachers to identify the necessary ideas to connect engagement and activities for boosting agency in the classroom and outside. Especially, the teachers and students of the higher level can get insight into the promotion of agency-boosting practices.

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Review of reading as a skill in the last 100 years and its Future Implications

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Abstract

Motivation for Research : An article on the significance of silent reading which appeared in 1910 in the 'Teachers' Aid' affirmed that the decision to include books for silent reading is the most powerful weapon which can be placed in the hands of a child to help him in the battle of self-improvement and self realization. One hundred years later, as per a research of the UK Department of Education, PISA results from 2009 show that in all countries, young people who enjoy reading the most, perform significantly better in reading literacy assessments than who enjoy reading the least. Though for years 'reading' has been perceived as extremely important, of late, particularly during the Covid pandemic, the investigator, a teacher educator by profession, noted that many children prefer reading digital texts, skimming quickly without attempting any in-depth reading.

Statement of the Problem : In recent times, educationists have begun to show an interest in findings of Neuroscience research. A 2005 study using magnetic source imaging found that those children who become skilled readers as early as kindergarten have an effective brain activation pattern for reading. It also found that children who had a bumpier start with reading skills showed different patterns. In 2012, Neuroscientists of Stanford University reported that reading ability in children is related to growth of white matter tracts in the brain. Now, if brain development as per modern scientific study is related to reading, the current tendency in children to show an absence of interest in serious reading is a grave problem that needs to be addressed.

Objectives of the study : The main objective of the study is to identify observations regarding reading and its effects documented since the publication of the article on silent reading 100 years ago. The specific objective is to review and compile findings on the benefits of different kinds of reading and how it can be utilized for future education of children.

Methodology : This descriptive analytical study attempts a review of both print and digital documentation on the effect and benefits of reading. Based on the findings, implications for education of children in future will be drawn.

Novelty/Author's contribution towards creation of new knowledge : The review of studies undertaken by the researcher will help both practicing teachers, educationists and Neuroscientists to come up with appropriate strategies and Course books to foster reading habits among children. This has become imperative because, only children who are the future citizens in an increasingly globalized world, possessing well developed thinking skills rather than ones who are prodigious consumers of digital entertainment data can make significant contributions to the growth of any nation.

Key words

Brain, Children, Neuroscience, Reading, Thinking

***“To acquire the habit of reading is to construct for yourself
a refuge from almost all the miseries of life.”***

— W. Somerset Maugham (1874-1965)

Introduction :

The British writer Somerset Maugham wrote about the significance of acquiring the reading habit in the 1940's. But decades ago, Bane (1910) writing about silent reading in a journal for teachers published in London observed: "...the acquisition of a love of reading both for amusement and for the sake of gaining information, is an absolute necessity if we wish to keep our country in the forefront of the nations...". (p123) Decades have passed since these references to the significance of reading was penned. Data from the National Literacy Trust of UK revealed that children's enjoyment of reading at the beginning of 2020 was at an all-time low but reversed dramatically during the Covid-19 lockdown. (1)

Background :

Shut up in their homes, during the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic, in several countries, many children turned to the Television and the Internet for entertainment. And when schools decided to continue education in the online mode a dependency on digital texts slowly became the norm among children all around the world. (2) The investigator, a teacher educator by profession noted a

series of changes in student reading and thinking habits. (3)

A reflection on the differences noticed among learners in their attitude to reading in online classes compared to face to face classes evoked in the investigator a series of questions deserving answers. And during the Covid-19 pandemic when students became dependent on digital texts, studies based on Neuroscience found that the way information is processed for print based texts and digital texts are different (4) and it also impacts the brain. (5)

Statement of the problem :

A perceptible change noticed in the reading habits of children during the pandemic when they depended on digital texts is the tendency to skim and avoiding in-depth reading. (7) It is not known how the tendency to abstain from the habit of reading affect future generations. According to Neuroscience science research reading can have an impact on brain development. Will the preference for reading digital texts now commonly seen among children have an impact on brain development? The answer to such questions will have strong implications for teachers and course book developers. It is hoped that a

review of studies and documents related to the reading habits of children undertaken in this study will help find answers to such questions.

Research questions :

The main objective of the study was to attempt a review of documents related to reading among students. So the following research questions were framed:

- 1) What information regarding reading by students has been documented during the last one hundred years?
- 2) Are there any noticeable trends in the reading habits of children in the last one hundred years?
- 3) What inferences related to reading can be drawn from the studies related to reading by students?

Methodology :

This an empirical, analytical, descriptive and explorative study of documents about the reading habits of children during the last one hundred years. For this, studies in journals, posts on websites and digital resources available on the Internet have been profusely used.

Review of reading :

For the sake of compiling related data, instead of attempting a chronological study, aspects related to reading have been classified under different heads and listed below:

i) On reading :

Reading itself has been defined differently. Greaney (1980) termed it leisure reading, reading, Krashen (2004), voluntary reading, Clark & Rumbold (2006) referred it as 'reading for pleasure'. At any rate reading is perceived as complex process. Goodman (1971) regarded reading

as a psycholinguistics guessing game in which the reader reconstructs from a graphic display a message which has been encoded by a writer. (Nunan, 1991) perceived reading as a process that involves deciphering a series of characters and symbols from the documents into their equivalent meaning. To Leipzig (2001) reading involves steps of word recognition, comprehension, reading fluency and motivation. According to Dadzie (2008), reading implies an ability to read words in a text or a document and understand them and then benefit from the knowledge acquired for personal growth.

ii) On reading as a skill :

Reading has been perceived as the most influential skill in an individual's life and is the basis for learning. (Issa et al., 2012) To Anderson et al. (1985) reading is a lifelong skill to be used both at school and throughout life. The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) revealed that boys are on an average 39% behind girls in reading in OECD countries, the reason being that boys are less engaged and less engaged children tend to show lower performance. And PISA results from 2009 reveal that in all countries, the young who enjoy reading the most are found to perform significantly better in reading literacy assessments. As per Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) data, Russia is the highest achieving country with 58% children reported reading for fun.

iii) On reading as a habit :

To Green (2001), if reading habit is formed at a young age in school, it can last for all one's life time. Deavers (2000) had echoed the same around the same time. The study found that students who

fail to start reading books in their early life, is likely to find it hard to acquire good reading habits in their later life. Parental involvement in fostering the reading ability of children it has been found to have positive results at schools (Fan & Chen, 2001). A study among middle school students in Atlanta, Georgia by Higginbotham (1999) found that girls showed a strong interest in romance, friendship, animal stories, adventure and historical fiction while boys showed a preference for sports and science. An online survey by Clark & Hawkins (2011) of over 17,000 children in the age group 8-16 from over 100 schools in the UK, on library use found that 48% do not use public libraries at all. And of the children who attend library 44% of children visited the library to access interesting reading materials. Issa et al. (2012) reported a tendency seen among students who prefer to watch movies on TV, listen to audio-CDs and watching video-CDs. With mass media alluring the young, Palani (2012) found a growth in losing interest in reading books, magazines, journals and other literature types.

iv) On factors that influence reading :

According to Clark and Pythian-Sence (2008) interest is a key factor that makes children choose books for reading. But in order to affect reading behaviour, children have to go beyond mere choosing of books. Citing research, Clark and Rumbold (2006) showed that motivation to read decreases with age, especially if children's attitudes towards reading become less positive. A study by Cremin et al., (2009) found that reading for pleasure to be strongly influenced by relationships: between teachers; between teachers and children; between children and families;

between children, teachers, families and communities. A study by Baker and Scher (2002) found that in homes where books and reading are valued, children are more likely to continue to be readers. As per an OECD (2010) report, parents' engagement with their children's reading life has a positive impact on their children's reading performance.

v) On teaching reading :

Yilmaz (2000) confirmed that a significant factor in the educational achievement of students is reading. Nuttall (1996) identified three major categories of reading skills which teachers can implement and nurture in the classroom. They include efficient reading skills, word attack skills and text attack skills. (6) To this list, can be added the ability to distinguish between fact and opinion, paraphrasing and summarizing. (McWhorter, 2002) The British Council in a post on reading and writing in their 'Teaching English' website, observed that in order to motivate students to read, teachers should use learner-related contexts whenever possible.

vi) On reading and the brain :

Studies on functional imaging identified activation of left hemisphere frontal, temporal and parietal regions of the brain during reading tasks. (Schlaggar & McCandliss, 2007) Relationships between white matter and reading was found in DTI studies of reading (Vandermosten et al., 2012) and cross-sectional studies of impaired readers report reduced gray matter volumes. (Kronbichler et al., 2008)

vii) On reading printed texts and digital texts :

Bensen in a post on *Brainfacts.org*

referred to reading comprehension research between 2000 and 2017 which indicated that it is harder to comprehend digital text. Maryanne Wolf, a professor of UCLA and advocate for children and literacy writing in the Guardian observed: No human was born to read and literacy will lead to changes in the brain as it requires a new 'plastic brain'. And during the Covid pandemic, millions of children learning at home were developing a 'biliterate brain'- one adapted for traditional print literacy and another for digital. She concluded her article by suggesting that in children's bedrooms, books and not digital devices should be the only reading option. In the context of a growing trend of online culture, Cull opined that we must remain committed to motivating students to take the time required for in-depth reading. Studies during the last three decades have found that specific brain-based differences in how children process information can result in reading difficulties. (American Psychological Association)

Limitations of the study :

The study commenced with the objective of reviewing studies on reading during the last one hundred years. But the investigator was unable to access studies conducted during the first half of the twentieth century. Further, most of the data compiled are based on secondary sources and field based studies by the investigator is extremely limited.

Summing up :

In review, the study has explored different aspects of reading and has highlighted how it impacts children and the rising responsibility among teachers to foster among children the reading habit. The study reveals how the very process

of reading has assumed different dimensions with the rise of digital texts, growing preference for online resources and shift to online pedagogy particularly in times of emergency in schools. It is an acknowledged fact that the content being read and the medium will have a significant impact on the rise or fall in levels of motivation among students, particularly children and teenagers. This implies that Course book developers, educators and neuroscientists need to work together to come up with appropriate content and strategies for fostering reading skills. Here, it would be worth recalling the significance of reading, quoted in the UNESCO document on reading:

Learning to read is an important educational goal. For both children and adults, the ability to read opens up new worlds and opportunities. It enables us to gain new knowledge, enjoy literature, and do everyday things that are part and parcel of modern life(p6)

-Pang et. al. Teaching Reading

Notes :

- 1) 'Innovate My School' in 2022 published a post entitled 'UK-wide study reveals reading habits among 1 million school pupils'. Quoting National Literacy Trust data based on a survey of 42,502 pupils, it made two observations related to this study. These include 1. Enjoyment levels have not quite reached the heights they did during school closures (56%). 2. Children in primary schools tend to read harder books as they get older, but this tendency declines during secondary level.
- 2) Branscombe (2020) found 40% to 100% rise in Internet usage compared

to pre-lockdown levels. Besides a shift from face to face to online instruction by educational institutions, there was also a rise in e-learning platforms. (Norman *et. al.*, 2023)

- 3) The study found a distinct change in thinking patterns in learners which can be directly related to the compelled shift to online learning during the spread of the Corona virus pandemic. (Praveen, 2022)
- 4) Dooley in a post Forbes with a revealing title: 'Paper beats digital in many ways, according to Neuroscience' observed that, paper based content offer special advantages in connecting with our brains.
- 5) Jabr (2013) reported a study conducted in Norway where students in Grade 10 were given the same text for reading comprehension in PDF format and print version. The study found that those students who read the texts on computers performed a little worse than those who read on paper.
- 6) Nuttall also identified sub skills for all the three reading skills. Accordingly, efficient reading skill includes reason for reading, choosing of the right material, using text effectively, utilizing resources in the text and improving speed of reading. The sub skill of word attack includes interpretation of structural clues, inference from context and the use of dictionary. The sub skill of text attack includes understanding of syntax, ability to recognize and interpret cohesive devices, interpret discourse markers, recognize functional value, recognize text organization, recognize presuppositions underlying the text, recognize

implications and the ability to make inferences and prediction.

- 7) Not only do people tend to read faster on screens, the brain might slip into skim mode when you're reading on a screen and may switch to deep-reading mode when you turn to print. (Hurt, 2021)

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The teaching of Mahesh Dattani's play *Bravely fought the Queen* through online apps during the lockdown COVID-19

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Abstract

*At the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, online education has taken a huge amount of status in comparison to the offline mode of teaching. The lockdown caused a huge turmoil in different students' and teachers' minds. However, in the period of lockdown, with empty college classes, there could have been no options for teaching offline rather than switching over to online classes through online web conferencing apps. In this paper, the teacher presented his experiences and the challenges that faced regarding online teaching. The setbacks and the honest efforts of the students made him conquer his goal. Right from his presentations to the online participation of the students with technical glitches at times and with overwhelming feedback, the teacher had enlightened the fire of education towards his students by teaching Indian playwright Mahesh Dattani's play *Bravely Fought the Queen* in the home as their theatre.*

Keywords : lockdown, teacher, apps, play, students.

Theatre and literary texts are a means of communication to bring reality in front of the readers and the audience. Watching something live creates an awareness in the minds of the spectator. They deliberately click those pictures in their mind and portray them in front of reality. During the lockdown phase, the teacher had to complete his assignment on English Honors 1st year, Second Semester, Core Course 3 syllabus of Serampore Girls' College, affiliated to Calcutta University, West Bengal. The teacher was assigned the job to complete the text of Mahesh Dattani's *Bravely fought the Queen* (1991) from 14.03.2020 to 07.05.2020.

The teacher had chosen the Blended learning strategy to complete the course of this syllabus. Blended learning is "the thoughtful integration of classroom and face-to-face learning experiences with that of online learning experiences."

(*Blended Learning: An Introduction*, p.11)

In the concept of the new uprising theatres in India, Mahesh Dattani voices out his honest opinion of theatres :

It's a hard work ... Not many people have that kind of time. Theatre companies have to trust new playwrights and their plays, too ... I'm an actor, I'm a director, so I know the craft of writing a play.

(*Contemporary Indian Writers in English*
Mahesh Dattani: An Introduction, p.5)

The subject teacher of the concerned play had taken 11 classes to complete his prescribed course. He had divided the class into 3 aspects. The first class was the introductory aspects of the text, following six classes where he talked about the text in detail analysis, one class was assigned for the online quiz and the remaining three classes were prescribed for questions and answer techniques.

On the first day (14.04.2020) of the online class of Mahesh Dattani's *Bravely Fought the Queen*, the teacher got an opportunity to use the Zoom platform, the teacher had discussed the literary genre of drama and the writer Mahesh Dattani and also his works. Through the option of screen sharing, the teacher had shown the PowerPoint presentation of the different characters in the play *Bravely Fought the Queen*. Moreover, through google image search, he had shown the place Leicester Haymarket Theatre where the play was performed in Border Crossings, the U.K. in the year 1996.

The artistic director Michael Walling of the theatre company Border Crossings gave his innovative and innocuous feedback before introducing the play *Bravely Fought the Queen*.

His plays fuse the physical and special awareness of the Indian theatre with the textual rigour of western models like Ibsen and Tennessee Williams. It's a potent combination, which shocks and disturbs through its accuracy, and its ability to approach a subject from multiple perspectives. Post-Colonial Indian and multi-cultural Britain both have an urgent need for the cultural expression of the contemporary; they require public spaces in which the

mingling of eastern and western influences can take place. Through his fusion of forms and influences, Mahesh creates such a space. This is in itself a political and social statement of astonishing force.

(*Contemporary Indian Writers in English*
Mahesh Dattani: An Introduction, p.20)

In the following few lectures, the subject teacher had used two Web Conferencing apps the Zoom and the Skype app, on dealing with the play of *Bravely fought the Queen* where there was an extreme clarity of voice between the teacher as well as his students. There was a commotion on the hacking information on the Zoom application, so the teacher had to switch to the Skype app after assigning four classes.

As the teacher and the students prepared for the online classroom in their home discussing with the text, on all the six days (15.04.2020, 16.04.2020, 23.04.2020, 24.04.2020, 27.04.2020 and 28.04.2020) of discussing the play Mahesh Dattani's *Bravely Fought the Queen*, the concerned teacher had assigned characteristic roles from the drama to different students so that students can connect with the characters of the play. The teacher had previous experience of knowing the students in the class and could understand some of their psychology so it was easy for the teacher to choose different characteristic roles to the prescribed characters. The most interesting part that the teacher had imposed on their students is to choose a voice modulation in which the students could tuned-up to the character's voice as and when required.

In the play *Bravely Fought the Queen*, we find a character Baa who suffered from

a stroke and was bed-ridden throughout the play. The teacher chose a student who could speak her dialogues in the context of an aged lady and can swim through the tide of time in connecting with the other audience or student as per se. Right from the first dialogue on “Dolly!” with a continuous stressed nasal tone, the character could assign its vigour and splendour instantly. In this play, when Baa was physically tortured and there was an element of anger in some of the lines of the play, the teacher advises the student to vociferate her voice and bring mental angst within herself as the character reproduces the words.

“You hit me? I only speak the truth and you hit me? Go on. Hit me again. The children should see what a demon you are. Aah! Jitu! Nitin! Are you watching? See your father!”

(*Bravely Fought the Queen*, p.57)

In the words of a popular American actress Ellen Rona Barkin, “Acting is a matter of giving away secrets.” (public quotes.com). The performance in which the assigned student spoke the dialogues, every other student applauded contemporaneously along with the teacher prescribed. This showed the potential that the assigned student did possess in herself, the power to make her life better and bigger in comparison to her self-proclaimed ego.

When we come across the character Jiten, the teacher chose a student who could speak in a rough male voice and can shout and laugh instantly. This assigned character had to connect with the audience so well as the students can hate her deeds and actions instantly. Jiten brought to the account of a character who is very rude in his speech and is dogmatic in approach. So, the assigned student had done justice

to the character and brought an element of hope at the end of the play. Some of the patriarchal norms as portrayed in the character were extremely uncouth and uncultivated:

Yes! Men would want to buy it for their women! That’s our market. Men. Men would want their women dressed up like that. And they have the buying power. Yes! So there’s no point in asking a group of screwed-up women what they think of it.

(*Bravely fought the Queen*, p.54)

Dattani also brought out the fact that the most virulent and rough character Jiten also can become overly emotional at the end of the third act. The prescribed student had to lessen her tone and modified her voice to come in parley.

Nitin, the youngest Trivedi brother was docile and his speech aroused an element of simplicity and liveliness. The teacher selectively chose a student who could speak in a shy manner as if to bring the characteristic empathy through her speech. The teacher at times had to show them how the students could speak out their roles and motivate them to perform their speeches diligently. Nitin’s final speech of the text and the assigned character who played the role of Nitin brought all the listeners and the readers to a standstill. They were taken aback by the emotional strain brought forward by the dramatist in his text.

On choosing the character of Dolly, the wife of Jiten and Nitin Trivedi, the teacher chose an imaginative student and some way or the other respond to the situation accordingly. The assigned student felt very difficult to cope with the character at first blush but as she could relate with the text, her confidence stemmed up.

There was a moment of silence when we come across the speech of Dolly in the third act where she exposes Jiten's cruel to do nature in the lines:

"And you hit me! Jitu, you beat me up!
I was carrying Daksha and you beat me up!"

(*Bravely fought the Queen*, p.96)

American film director Paul Mazursky quoted a line about the casting of an actor with the following lines: "If you cast wrong, you are in a lot of trouble." (Azquotes.com). The teacher knew very well who could get perform the role of the character concerned of the characters of the play. Sometimes, if there is an absence of the character in the online classes, the other students get the opportunity to perform the role of the characters and the selection process is completely unbiased. The teacher chose the selected students by their true potential and ability to perform the characters on reading. At times, the students sometimes could not speak with a proper accent and proper punctuation and also at times, it happens that the selected students get afraid to speak. It is the teacher concerned who motivated the young innocuous minds every time cause the teacher believes firmly that the students do have hidden potential and had to unleash them by facing their fears through their performances.

Alka was the youngest daughter-in-law of the Trivedi family and is an extremely rebellious and headstrong character in the true essence of its terms. We need to know the fact that she has a homosexual husband and his brother is his husband's romantic partner. The teacher had to be selective in choosing the role of a student who can be in tune with the prescribed character. The assigned student had to call

at the top of one's voice when she protested against the claustrophobic atmosphere of the Trivedi household simultaneously raised the banner of her swashbuckling charm on identifying herself with the "Queen" of Rani Laxmibai of Jhansi. The assigned student had to portray this significant character dexterously and marvellously to come in proper grip with the play.

Sridhar was a character who acts as an employee in Jiten and Nitin's advertising agency Re Va Tee. An extremely hardworking gentleman and a practical person, the teacher had to assign a student who was extremely passionate about her day-to-day activities and rise an element of righteousness in the prescribed character portrayed in the text.

By portraying Lalitha in the online classroom, the teacher had to be extra careful to bring the carefree spirit to the character prescribed. Lalitha was the wife of Sridhar and worked on The Times and dabbles in composing poems and had a habit of growing the bonsai. The teacher had to choose a creative student who can relate to the character of Lalitha very well and could come to close terms with the character prescribed in the text.

All the students portraying diverse roles played their roles efficiently and completed the text of the play *Bravely Fought the Queen*. The teacher had to help all the students to stress the important quotations of some of the characters, thus, it may help the students to focus on their answers diligently so that they could understand and grow through their minds with an updated knowledge of the test concerned. These students by rehearsing all together played a wonderful role and

brought harmony and understanding amongst all of themselves through this short process. The theatre in homes amidst the lockdown brought all of them together safe and happy. It recalls the lines of the great Oscar Wilde who stressed the topic of humanity within the following lines:

“I regard the theatre as the greatest of all art forms, the most immediate way in which a human being can share with another the sense of what it is to be a human being.” (Goodreads.com)

Even Naina Devi’s thumri music was being played from YouTube for a few seconds in the background during the class lecture to connect with its musical symphony and decipher the meaning of “symbols” from the text. The background image of “bonsai” was brought to notice through screen share from the Zoom app to get the crystal-clear image of the plant and the context in which it relates with the characters of the play *Bravely fought the Queen*.

On 2020, April 30th, the teacher after successful completion of the text of *Bravely fought the Queen* had taken an online quiz in which he could evaluate the depth and significance of the topic that the student understood. He had chosen a Skype Web conferencing app for this platform and students would keep their audio mode off. The prescribed teacher asked objective questions from the text and chose random participants to respond to the questions prescribed by unmuting themselves and then muting themselves when they were chance got over. Even the teacher asked some quoted dialogues from various characters and students could reciprocate themselves as they had practised it very well. On a scale of forty minutes, the students were extremely happy as all of them came

up with flying colours and the ambience was extremely optimistic and cheery.

On the last three days (04.05.2020, 05.05.2020 and 07.05.2020) of the online class lecture, the teacher had created the probable questions from the past years of the text *Bravely fought the Queen* and made them understand and selected the few probable questions that might turn up for the upcoming session. For discussing such questions, the teacher had used the “Share screen” option of the Skype application from his laptop and asked the students to take a pen and paper and follow accordingly. For instance, when the teacher taught the patriarchal domination of *Bravely fought the Queen*, the teacher used different colour combinations and enlarged the answer fonts, so that they could be visible to everyone. As the teacher taught his note on the first paragraph, he instilled some significant points to note down on their notebooks. The students had to note down the significant quotes, themes, lines on their exercise book paragraph after paragraph. After the explanation of the notes, the teacher randomly asks the students to describe the answers in their own words. Most of them became aware and students began to take those classes more seriously. The students get an e-mail of the notes through the college website regularly.

Every student does have the potential to relieve their life with knowledge and wisdom. It all depends on the individual’s choice as to how they could present themselves in front of a larger space of life aplomb. All of their lives are colourful and they have to make their individual colourful lives useful to shine forever in this kaleidoscopic life.

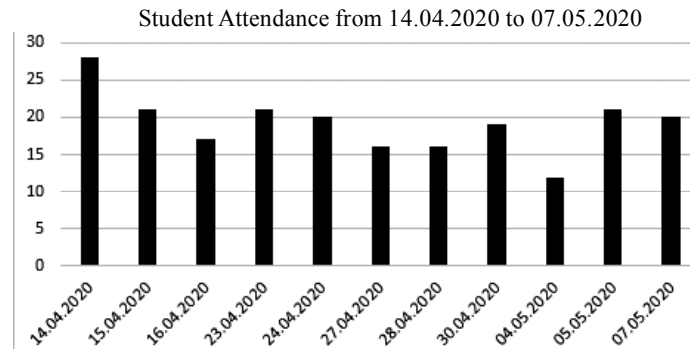


Figure 1: This is a chart to show the attendance of various students who were present in the classes of Bravely fought the Queen from 14.04.2020 to 07.05.2020.

The lockdown has impacted many of the student's families and it is extremely sad to bear the reality which they have to face. The learning desire enslaved within them and students amidst the technical glitch took the opportunity to attend the live sessions without thinking for the second time.

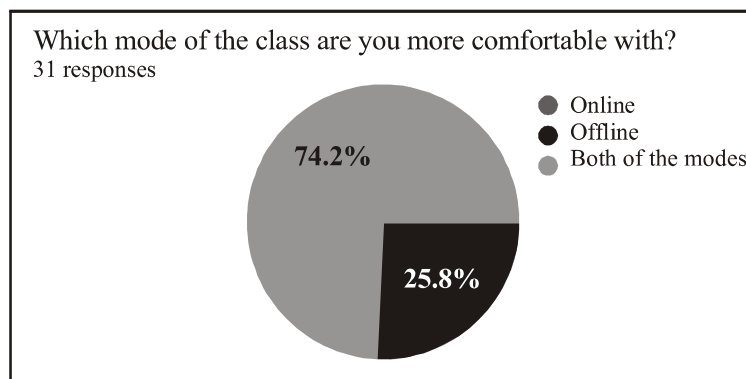


Figure 2: On a feedback form, organized by the teacher concerned from Google Forms, the teacher asked a question on which types of classes are the students more comfortable with. Besides mentioning the "offline" and "online" mode of classes, the teacher added a next option named "both the modes", majority of the students opted for both modes as enlightening the fire of teaching is more important to them be it offline or online class lectures.



Figure 3: In the above chart, the teacher had described the student's contribution to learning on this particular topic of *Bravely Fought the Queen*. We find two charts of the topic on the Contribution to learning.

On the left chart, we find the “Level of skill/knowledge at start of course” and on the right side, we find the “Level of skill/knowledge at end of course”.

As the students are not having regular online classes, the teacher decided to take a surprise quiz for the students so that the teacher may track the progress of the respective students. The students had thus,

opted for an online quiz of Multiple-Choice Questions from Mahesh Dattani's play *Bravely Fought the Queen* through a Google Form quiz conducted on 19.06.2020. Students were sent the official link from their WhatsApp College group named “SGC_Eng (2nd semester)” by the teacher concerned. Many of the students achieved full marks on the quiz, thus enlightening their learning curve.



Figure 4: The above figure brings to our notice the student's response to the student's surprise quiz conducted by the teacher. 25 students responded to the quiz, 17 of the students scored the full marks fifty out of fifty, 1 of the students scored forty-five, 4 of the students scored forty, 2 of the students scored thirty-five and remaining the 1 student scored thirty.

The teacher teaches his text for his love and passion for the subject. He does make himself a better and an improved person and always focuses on his scope for improving himself into a better teacher in the long run. He does not teach for getting good compliments or any other attractive gifts. In the feedback link for the students in two of the forms prescribed by the teacher, he received positive feedback from his students. Out of multiple feedback from his students, the teacher

shares two of them, their names are not being mentioned by the teacher for security reasons.

Any feedback about the class and the teacher concerned.

The classes were really helpful and the way the teacher taught was splendid, we got to know every point clearly and even random questions were being asked that helped us in our revision. So in my view the classes were well organized.

Figure 5 : One of the students after filling up the form for the Course Evaluation of *Bravely Fought the Queen* gave her feedback.

Your Feedback about the Quiz*

At first I want to thank my professor for always giving us this kind a support This questions are from all over the play.. in this hard situation online education not look tough or headache for us just because this kind of quiz, pdf and so on ... It's really help us to not be procrastinate... Be focused ... lastly Again thank you sir for not only this quiz but also all the supports given by you..

Figure 6: One of the students after participating in the quiz gave her honest feedback in the feedback form enlisted from Google Forms.

It is an absurd way of comparing the Web Conferencing Zoom app with the Skype app as we need to know both the apps have different features present in them and it is extremely useful in different aspects. Rather than comparing which one is better, we must be blessed as we can connect a lot of students through these new aspects of online learning technology. These online apps helped the teachers to connect with their students and thus, enlighten the lively atmosphere. This helped every learner to grow their learning curve on various angles of a single topic and cultivated the genre of learning at such troubling times.

Teachers do have an important role in teaching their pupils selflessly. Amidst the lockdown, if the teachers take the added advantage and have trust within themselves and their ability to achieve the goal of teaching, students would follow their teaching skills all of a sudden and would imbibe positive faith in themselves. Teachers do play an amazing role in bringing the best version of the student's

mind and intellect through their smart works and efforts. Their responsibility lies in shaping and moulding the students' welfare and leading them to a better future in the long run. Their altruistic concern for the students' welfare would be achieved if every student participates and learn the true aspect of hope, faith and optimism from the teacher concerned.

"You need three things in the theatre- the play, the actors, and the audience, and each must give something."

- (Theatre: Its Art and Craft, p.27)

If we honestly follow Haigh's words, similarly in COVID-19 crisis, we need three things while teaching drama – the writer's text, the actors which in this case the students, and the audience which in this case is also the students, in addition to it we need a teacher too who can captain each one of them to prepare themselves to achieve victory by performing the roles in an online platform at their respective homes and thus, bring an element of exhilaration and enjoyment in the long run. The pandemic COVID-19 taught us despite the harmful effects of the lockdown, teaching drama can be taught in their homes better and is possible through the online classroom with both the combined participation of the teacher and the students.

Thus, teaching the text of *Bravely Fought the Queen* in an online class brings a new technology that could neither be performed on a four-walled college classroom nor can be at all performed on the stage of an auditorium hall. In this lockdown stage of maintaining physical distancing, drama classes are performed in different homes of various places letting the inflow of new thoughts grow naturally on the learners of tomorrow's generation.

Its magnificence lies in the heart of both the teacher and the relevance of the student. In a way, it entertained our mind and soul to come in close quarters with human solace and profundity. Due to the lockdown phase, this is the only means of connection in which the teachers could continuously come in contact with the students through online apps.

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Chronotopes in Shakespearean plays - A Preoccupation of King Lear and Macbeth

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Abstract

Chronotope refers to the relation between space and time in a literary work. It is the way that time and space are intertwined to create a story. The concept of chronotope was given by Russian philosopher and famous literary theorist, Mikhail Bakhtin. The time and the space in a play create the depth of the play. It enhances to bring the characters to real life. The idea of a chronotope is indeed a valuable lens through which to analyze literature and drama. Shakespeare skillfully sets chronotope in his various plays in the form of settings, events, characters, and dramatic tension. Shakespearean plays accommodate a strong dramaturgic machinery. Shakespearean plays have fascinating multifaced characters and themes. By a close examination of King Lear (1608) and Macbeth (1606), investigate how the settings, character interactions, and events are shaped by the interplay of time and space. Shakespeare uses language and symbolism to tie the chronotope. Chronotope in these plays allows for the exploration of complex themes, such as power, madness, betrayal, and the nature of humanity. The imagery and metaphors related to storms in King Lear and the supernatural elements in Macbeth can be linked to the chronotopes. This paper is an attempt to demonstrate how chronotope is an essential element of Shakespeare's theatrical artistry and contributes to the richness and depth of his work.

Keywords

Chronotope, dramaturgic, fascinating, multifaced, investigate, symbolism, exploration.

Introduction :

Mikhail Bakhtin, the famous Russian literary theorist, philosopher, and classic man of letters has made substantial contributions to the fields of linguistics, philosophy and literature. Bakhtin's concepts are particularly influential in the field of culture and human behavior. The core concept of Bakhtin's work is the idea

of dialogism and the related concept of polyphony. Bakhtin's predominant archetype revolves around the notion that human communication, is inherent dialogism. This means that communication is never a one-sided process but rather dynamic and multiple voices and perspectives. Bakhtin argues that in any form of discourse, there is a multiplicity of viewpoints, voices and

ideologies in the play. Only the dialogue gives meaning and significance to a text. Graham Peachey says, “*Mikhail Bakhtin is one of the most influential theorists of philosophy, as well as literary studies*” [1] Furthermore, Bakhtin, believed that the dialogic nature of language and discourse is deeply intertwined with the very essence of human history and culture. He saw language and communication as central to the human experience and the way we construct our understanding of the world. Bakhtin’s ideas about dialogism and polyphony have far-reaching implications for how we approach the study of literature, language, and culture.

Chronotope :

Mikhail Bakhtin introduced the term chronotope. The interweaving relation between time and space in the form of art is chronotope. Time and space are the backbone of the story either in a novel or play. The concept of chronotope is typically associated with Mikhail Bakhtin rather than William Shakespeare. Mikhail Bakhtin brought life to this term to scrutinize fictional texts, and to explain the worthiness of time and space in an artistic form. William Shakespeare never used or even discussed the term chronotope in his plays or the other literary forms but he incorporated the elements of chronotope in many of his plays. The essential elements of Shakespeare’s storytelling are the characters, settings, and events and their arrangements. The term chronotope is not a term that is normally used in Shakespearean plays. Bakhtinian scholars Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist believe that the chronotope is “*a unit of analysis for studying language according to the ratio and characteristics of the temporal and spatial categories represented in that*

language”. [2] The concept of chronotope in Shakespearean plays serves as a strong dramatic machinery to develop eloquent dynamic and meaningful theatrical experiences. These chronotopes generate dissimilar atmospheres and improve the dramatic tension, and it will make the exploration of complex dramatic tensions. In Shakespeare’s plays, the chronotope is an essential element that helps to create the world of the play and bring the characters to life. “*Even in segmentation of a modern literary work, we sense the chronotope of the represented world as well as the chronotope of the readers and creators of the work. That is, we get a mutual interaction between the world represented in the work and the world outside the work*” (Bakhtin, 1988, p. 255). “*Time and space merge... into an inseparable unity... a definite and absolutely concrete locality serves at the starting point for the creative imagination... this is a piece of human history, historical time condensed into space. Therefore, the plot (sum of depicted events) and the characters ... are like those creative forces that formulated and humanized this landscape, they made it a speaking vestige of the movement of history (historical time), and, to a certain degree, predetermined its subsequent course as well, or like those creative forces a given locality needs in order to organize and continue the historical process embodied in it*” (Bakhtin, 1988, p. 49) [3].

Studying the chronotope allows us to explore the deeper meanings behind the stories. By examining the relationship between time and space in a play, we can gain a greater understanding of the characters and their motivations. Plays of different natures can apply using different chronotopes depending on the narrative structure

and their themes. Examining the chronotope used in a play, one can understand how time and space intertwine in the dramatic work and how they influence the dramatic atmosphere, and the theme of the play. [4] It's a treasured instrument for fictional and theatrical examination. Chronotope is associated with the notion of imagination. The representation of time and space in literature and its exploration of aesthetic experience is chronotope. Chronotope is not an abstract concept but it is a concrete device that gives a clear mental image and rise of emotions. It is a line of the way of configuring the narrative and fuse of time and space which makes a single meaningful unit. Individual chronotope conveys its own set of historical and artistic implications and it assists a head in revisiting and exploring human understanding and worldview.

By highlighting the reputation of chronotopes in literature, Bakhtin lays the foundation of the theory of imagination. He advocates that the configuration of time and space in a literary unit can impact our ability to imagine. In this sense, chronotope becomes the rudimentary element of literary imagination as the readers can sense and visualize their fictional world. Mikhail Bakhtin did not develop a methodical theory of literary imagination on chronotope in his essays but offered some valuable implications [5]. Bakhtin may not have developed a systematic theory of literary imagination in his essays on the chronotope but offers some treasures of perceptions regarding the shifts in literary imagination that have happened over a long time. His analysis of different chronotopes and their cultural implications demonstrate how literature can reflect the evolving imagination and

worldview of societies across various periods. Bakhtin's interest in the unspoken views of humanity surrounded by specific chronotopes also highlights the interrelation of culture, human thoughts, and literature. In short, the concept of chronotope is aesthetic imagination and the role of understanding in literature. It is the way through which literature shapes and expresses human imagination, the history of events, and the cultural behaviour of human beings.

Mikhail Bakhtin was undeniably a genius who always tried to be more flexible rather than rigid in the theoretical aspects of literature and had an understanding of human complexities, especially in language and prose. [6] Many writers never tried to maintain the richness and diversity of material but rather reduced them to non-concrete theories. Bakhtin's work is branded by its frankness to the diversity of voices and outlooks, its prominence on dialogic interaction, and its salutation of the revolving nature of context and the natural dependency of language and culture. His rejection of "theoretical coups on practical life" replicates his thoughts that theories should never be imposed on the rich embroidery of human existence. The Bakhtinian notion of the chronotope is definitely a valuable effort, as it can shed light on how the inter-relation of time and space plays an important role in the cultural context. Bakhtin has never provided a systematic theory but his theory of chronotope often gives certain powerful tools for While Bakhtin may not have provided a systematic theory, his concepts, such as the chronotope, offer powerful tools for understanding and how considerate how connotation is twisted and conveyed in

literature and explains the way in human experiences. [7] The lack of inclusive education on Bakhtin's chronotope accentuates the status of further research in this field. Such revisions can illuminate the pragmatic insinuations of Bakhtin's ideas for literary studies and can contribute more analysis of cultural studies, the idea of language, and literature and can shape the perceptions of the world. [8] In this way, rigorous analysis of Bakhtin's concepts, while respecting his resistance to systematic straitjackets, can be a valuable pursuit in advancing the field of literary theory and criticism.

It's fascinating how Bakhtin's chronotope devises its place in the broader positivist practice, rubbing shoulders with Bergson, James, Peirce and Deleuze. The emphasis on prosaics and a partiality for the mundane over the universal resonates with the rejection of metaphysical essentialism. The approach is to examine Bakhtin's theory of imagination through a philosophical dialogue with this family of thinkers, especially drawing from Deleuze's synthesis of Bergson and Peirce, which adds layers to the understanding. The connection between Bakhtin's view of temporal-spatial constellations and Bergson's idea that perception is dyed by lived time is fascinating. It seems like you're crafting a nuanced exploration, weaving together constituents of thought to shed light on the mysteries of literary imagination.

Chronotopes in Macbeth :

The chronotope of darkness and night is indeed a vital element in *Macbeth*. It is used to create a sense of evil and ominousness, emphasizing the moral decay and corruption that Macbeth and his wife experience as they chase their motivations. The shifting chronotopes of dark forests,

castles, and battlefields subsidize the sense of ominousness and menacing. They reflect the inner turmoil of the characters and the peripheral conflicts that are central to the plot. The chronotope of time, particularly the concept of the "tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow" soliloquy, highlights the tragic flight of Macbeth's collapse and the irreversible penalties of his actions. Time itself becomes a substantial thematic component in *Macbeth*.

*Macbeth. She should have died hereafter:
There would have been a time for such a word.
To-morrow, and to-morrow, to-morrow,
Creeps in this pretty pace from day today,
To the last syllable of recorded time;
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!
Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour up on the stage,
And then is heard no more; it is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing. (Act V-V-17-28) [9]*

Chronotope in King Lear : The contrasting settings of the royal court and the storm-ravaged heath serve as distinct chronotopes, representing the shifting power dynamics and the mental disorder of King Lear. The opulence and political intrigue of the court highlight the themes of betrayal, ambition, and the destructive nature of power. The court is a space where Lear's authority is initially unchallenged, but where he is ultimately betrayed by his daughters. On the contrary, the heath becomes the center of chaos and madness, which reflects the King's inner mayhem and the breakdown of societal order. The storm on the heath reflects the tempest within Lear's mind and the fragmentation

of his rationality. The chronotope of the heath is the center of the mental imbalance of the title character. Shakespeare uses various chronotopes to deepen the emotions of different characters. Different chronotopes provide a rich background and the character's inner struggles and tragic flaws are backdrops against which the characters' struggles and tragic flaws are well knitted.

The Chronotope of Madness and Chaos: The play, *King Lear* clearly envisages the chronotope of madness and chaos of the protagonist Lear. The play discovers the untying of society and the human spirit as the once-ordered eco-sphere of Lear slopes into madness and lawlessness. The disintegration of power and faith becomes the acute reason for the mental ill health of the King. The chronotope of power and challenge against the established authority reflect the breakdown of social order and transfer of power center from the King to the other hands. It is against the social system of the Elizabethan period. The chronotope of madness and chaos is central to the elements of the play.

The Chronotope of Nature and Redemption: The natural world is an important chronotope in *King Lear*. Characters find redemption and refuge in the lap of nature. The heath scenes, in particular, underscore the significance of nature as a place of transformation and self-discovery. The interaction of time and space in these scenes contributes to the play's themes of suffering, human vulnerability and ultimate redemption. Shakespeare delivers the element of contrast in the character of King Lear. Lear addresses elements of nature, and orders them to activate up on the ungrateful man.

He thinks that the redemption of ungracious man is only possible through punishment. Lear keeps the privilege of the power of the King and tries to order even nature. Nonetheless, human power is trifling; Lear keeps the thought of supernatural elements of Kingship over the natural powers.

*Lear: Blow, winds, and crack your cheeks!
Rage! Blow!*

*Your contracts and hurricanoes, spout
Till you have drench'd our steeples,
dron'd the cocks*

*You sulphurous and thought-executing
fires,*

*Vaunt -couriers of oak -cleaving
thunderbolts*

*Singe my white head! And thou, all-
shaking thunder,*

Strike flat the thick rotundity o 'th' world!

*Crack Nature's moulds, all germens spill
at once*

That makes ungrateful man!

(Act III-I-1-9) [10]

In both *King Lear* and *Macbeth*, the specific chronotopes have a significant role in shaping the thematic and narrative elements of the plays. They contribute to the exploration of human nature, power, and the consequences of one's actions, making these two of Shakespeare's most enduring and thought-provoking works. By using these different chronotopes, Shakespeare effectively deepens the themes and emotional impact of both plays. They provide a rich backdrop against which the characters' struggles and tragic flaws are illuminated, ultimately contributing to the powerful and enduring nature of these two Shakespearean tragedies

Findings :

The chronotope of the assassination of King Duncan is not shown in *Macbeth*. The protagonist is seen with the dagger and the dead body of the King is found in another room. Shakespeare is unsuccessful in demonstrating the scene of murder in the play. The blending of space and the time of murder is almost vague in the play. And also, in *King Lear*, Lear's rationality is questioned. The King is not enough wise to judge the loyalty of his daughters. The king failed to understand the weakness of human futility. The chronotope of pride and kingship is not wisely utilized in the play.

Conclusion :

Mikhail Bakhtin propounded the term 'Chronotope'. The configuration of time and space in an artistic form is chronotope. Novels are the focus point of introducing chronotope in Bakhtinian philosophy, but the other forms of literature like plays became the center of attraction, especially Shakespearian plays. The alignment of time and space is fruitfully blended in almost all the plays of William Shakespeare. The chronotope of power, jealousy, and trust are the central imagery of the two plays. The focal point of the study in this research paper is how chronotope is artistically corralled in two famous plays by William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, and *King Lear*.

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Self-Directed Learning: Leveraging NCERT Resources for English Language Enhancement in Degree Programs

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Abstract

In most second language learners' cases, language proficiency seems to be attained in the later or post-educational phase. It is chiefly evolved through a self-directed learning process. The present article investigates improving the English language skills of degree students through independently studying NCERT resources. The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), which prepares quality content for schooling students, is a highly beneficial resource for degree students in improving their language skills. The primary objectives of this study are to identify the best practices for self-directed learners, address common challenges they encounter, offer effective strategies to mitigate them and provide practical recommendations according to their language development requirements. The utility and application of this study will be countless. It will be a valuable resource for degree students, educators, and language enthusiasts. By amalgamating research insights with practical guidance, degree students can embark on a self-directed journey toward linguistic fluency and proficiency, ultimately enriching their academic and professional prospects.

Keywords

Self-directed, NCERT resources, degree programs, language skills

Introduction:

The present article explores the potential of leveraging resources provided by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) for linguistic competence. It aims to delve into the self-directed learning process and identify the key strategies that degree students can employ to foster independent language

acquisition. It also focuses on analyzing the role of NCERT resources in improving English language skills. It offers practical guidance and recommendations for utilizing NCERT materials for degree students who take their education in the vernacular medium. This article addresses these prime objectives and contributes to the existing literature on self-directed learning and language skills.

Literature Review :

This study has extensively reviewed existing literature on self-directed learning, language acquisition and using NCERT materials in language development contexts. For this purpose, a comprehensive literature review is employed. The study has drawn insights from diverse sources like research articles, papers and books. Later, it synthesizes and consolidates the findings from existing scholarly work. It distils the acquired knowledge into actionable recommendations for learners who embark on the path of language enhancement through their own efforts.

A self-directed learning process :

It is observed that second language learners who take education through vernacular medium confront multiple problems in acquiring language proficiency until graduation. With their self-study and extra efforts, they could reach their goal in their degree programmes or sometimes in the post-educational phase. It is chiefly evolved through their self-directed endeavours. It is the process that guides students to learn English on their own by using NCERT materials. Self-directed learning plays a pivotal role in pursuing English language enhancement.

Self-directed learning has gained significant attention in education as a valuable approach to fostering autonomous and lifelong learning skills¹. According to Candy, self-directed learning is characterized by learners taking the initiative and responsibility for their learning process, setting goals, and identifying appropriate resources to achieve those goals². It is a strategy wherein learners are encouraged to take ownership of their learning process³. This approach is beneficial in language

learning contexts, where learners can actively engage with diverse resources to enhance their language proficiency⁴.

Moreover, using technology-enhanced learning tools and digital resources has facilitated self-directed language learning experiences⁵. Wang and Vasquez have highlighted the significance of integrating digital platforms and multimedia resources in self-directed language learning, enabling students to access a wide range of interactive materials and authentic language contexts⁶. Various studies have emphasized the critical role of self-directed learning strategies in fostering language proficiency⁷. Additionally, the importance of learner autonomy and self-regulated learning processes has been underscored in the context of language education⁸. The existing literature signifies the valuable role of the self-directed learning approach.

NCERT :

This article focuses on another significant aspect, i.e. the role of NCERT resources in language enhancement. National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) is an autonomous body that prepares and publishes academic quality content for 1 to 12 classes. NCERT resources have been instrumental in providing a framework for language education in India. It offers a rich repository of resources tailored to the Indian educational landscape⁹. Though it provides school-level textbooks, it is a highly beneficial resource for degree students in improving their language skills. The rich content of NCERT resources not only provides the reading materials but also substantially contributes to improving the English language. It facilitates degree students in the acquisition of language and proficiency¹⁰. Several scholars have explored the potential of leveraging NCERT materials

for language learning, emphasizing the importance of culturally relevant and contextually appropriate resources for effective language acquisition¹¹.

Why to use NCERT books?

The primary reason for selecting NCERT English textbooks is their cultural context. They are especially meant for the Indian learners in the Indian education setup. They often incorporate Indian cultural themes and perspectives. This connects learners in understanding and appreciating the content and ultimately improves language skills. On the contrary, learners dissociate themselves from the content based on Western or other cultures. In short, NCERT books can be a valuable resource for learning the English language, especially for learners who want to improve the language skills on their own.

Effective language learning involves a combination of reading, writing, speaking and listening. NCERT resources are a foundation that integrates various language skills. Learners can progress steadily in learning English if they focus carefully on the following aspects of language.

Reading skills : NCERT books contain a variety of literary and non-literary texts, including stories, poems, essays, and articles. Reading these texts regularly improves learners' reading comprehension skills. Students can practice active reading and comprehension techniques while engaging with NCERT texts. Reading the texts aloud improves pronunciation and fluency.

Writing skills : Students are exposed to various writing tasks in NCERT textbooks, such as essays, letters, and short stories. Learners can complete these

exercises to practice writing in English. They can ask for feedback from teachers or peers to improve their writing skills.

Speaking skills : Though NCERT textbooks primarily focus on developing reading and writing skills, the content can also be used to practice developing speaking skills. The short and exciting lessons contain simple and meaningful structures. They can be picked up and used in daily conversations.

Vocabulary : Lack of vocabulary is the weaker part of the learners. As aforementioned, NCERT books are rich resources in themselves. Learners can pay attention to new words, phrases and idiomatic expressions encountered in the texts. Another effective vocabulary-building technique is keeping a journal to note unfamiliar words and their meanings. The best practice for retention is using these words in their daily speaking practice.

Grammar : NCERT books provide ample opportunities to study English grammar. At the end of all literary pieces, one can find diverse kinds of exercises like sentence structures, sentence transformation, error correction, tenses and grammatical rules used in the texts. Learners need to work on language exercises and practice questions provided in the books.

Recommendations/strategies :

The above deliberation substantiates the potential of NCERT materials for learning English effectively. As this article also intends to provide actionable guidance for self-study learners, they can implement the following strategies and recommendations to attain their goals.

- Before starting to use NCERT English textbooks, the major problem is choosing suitable materials. The selection of the

resources could be a big challenge for learners with different proficiency levels. NCERT follows a well-structured curriculum that progresses in complexity from lower grades to higher grades. Learners may start using the texts with the grade level according to their requirements.

- The students engaged in the degree programmes or other activities need to create a proper schedule for studying and practising English. Learning a language requires consistent practice. For this, they must set aside dedicated practice time each day. This study routine will help them stay focused and consistent.
- Learners should draw a personalized learning plan at the outset of self-directed study. They should set goals that outline specific language learning areas, target proficiency levels, and a detailed study schedule to use NCERT resources.
- Learning any text independently is a challenge in itself. NCERT has designed language guides and workbooks for self-directed learning purposes. Learners must use them to cover targeted language skills, grammar exercises, and vocabulary building.
- Learners must assess their language proficiency through self-assessment activities provided in NCERT resources. It will help them to identify their strong and weak areas for improvement in language skills. Therefore, they need to monitor their learning progress regularly, review completed exercises, and track advancements in language proficiency.
- A reflective learning journal has to be maintained to document the language learning journey, recording insights, challenges and achievements encountered while utilizing NCERT resources for self-directed language enhancement.
- They can also explore supplementary online NCERT resources, including digital learning platforms and interactive modules that provide additional language learning support and practice exercises.
- Learners have to seek peer interaction for language practice. They can engage themselves in language practice sessions with peers, discuss NCERT texts, conduct language-based activities, and participate in language-focused discussions to reinforce language learning.

By implementing these practical recommendations, degree students can effectively leverage NCERT resources to enhance their English language skills. It can facilitate a structured and independent language learning experience within the degree program context. However, the learners may encounter a few challenges in implementing the above recommendations. The following discussion underscores those challenges and offers solutions to address them.

The crucial challenge in self-directed learning is getting feedback and making corrections to improve the language. To overcome this problem, learners can seek guidance from a qualified English language teacher or tutor who can provide feedback and guide them to specify their goals and needs. They can engage themselves in discussions and analysis of the texts with

teachers or study groups. Analyzing themes, characters, and literary devices in stories and poems can deepen their understanding of the language.

Degree students, preoccupied with their academic coursework and other commitments, may struggle to allocate sufficient time for self-directed language learning. This can affect the maintenance of a consistent and structured study schedule. Students can develop effective time management strategies to resolve this issue, such as creating a study timetable, prioritizing language learning activities, and allocating dedicated time slots to study NCERT resources.

Setting attainable and measurable language learning goals may challenge students. They may struggle to determine specific steps required to achieve proficiency goals. They should outline a clear roadmap for their language learning journey with particular benchmarks to avoid this confusion. They could set realistic and specific goals to achieve the milestones. It won't be an easy task. They need to seek support from their mentors and tutors.

Some students may face challenges accessing guidance and feedback from language learning mentors and tutors. The absence of this supplementary support system hinders their ability to achieve their goals through the self-directed learning process. Other options exist to address this problem. Students can form groups of their peers, join online language learning communities, watch YouTube videos, and attend seminars and workshops that impart valuable insights on language acquisition.

Students may find it challenging to navigate the diverse range of NCERT resources available for English language

enhancement. They can get confused while selecting appropriate materials, exercises and learning modules for their language learning needs. The diverse NCERT online resources provide students with a comprehensive overview of available materials. Students can choose specific resources based on their language proficiency levels.

Sustaining high levels of engagement and motivation throughout the self-directed learning process may prove challenging for some students. They can feel demotivated, particularly when faced with complex language concepts, demanding exercises, or a lack of immediate feedback and support. Such students can design interesting language games, engaging activities and motivating exercises to stimulate interest and active participation. They can also incorporate interactive learning modules and collaborative language practice tasks to sustain their engagement and motivation throughout the self-directed learning process.

The students who experience challenges identifying and implementing effective self-directed learning strategies can implement this actionable guidance. By adopting these practical recommendations, students can overcome potential barriers and maximize the benefits of self-directed learning while leveraging NCERT resources for English language enhancement in degree programs.

Conclusion :

In conclusion, this study substantiates the significance of the self-directed learning process that helps to develop the English language. It acknowledges its inherent challenges and later, recommends effective tools and strategies to address them. It offers practical guidance for degree students

to improve their English skills. Through active learning techniques, students overcome the challenges, leveraging NCERT resources effectively, thus aiming success and proficiency in language skills. The study contributes valuable insights by fostering a supportive learning environment that promotes engagement, motivation, and active participation throughout the language learning journey. Ultimately, it helps boost academic and professional growth within the linguistic landscape.

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Language, Literature, and Culture : Literature as a means to foster Intercultural Communicative Competence

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Abstract

Culture encompasses a collection of values, beliefs, knowledge, and practices that serve to enhance the conduct of individuals within a certain social group at a given point in time. The concept encompasses the artistic expressions, affirmations, competencies, indigenous knowledge, and available resources of a particular social collective. The utilization of literature as a means of conveying humanistic and societal ideals has long been recognized. The interplay between literature and culture arises from the cultural engagement in several domains, including traditions, ideologies, and notably, human viewpoints. Consequently, literature assumes a formidable role as a potent instrument. The relationship between literature and culture is reciprocal. The rationale behind this assertion is in the fact that poets perceive cultural aspects as encompassing traditions, beliefs, and values that serve as excellent resources for literary creation, thereby contributing to the cultivation of a society's culture. One of the fundamental aspects to consider is the profound impact that literature exerts on the refinement of individuals. There exists a clear correlation between literature and culture, wherein the two entities exhibit a harmonious alignment. Culture encompasses the collective views and values of a given society, while literature serves as a medium through which these beliefs and values are expressed in various literary forms. Therefore, literature ultimately extols and exerts effect on civilization.

Key Words

Culture, Literature, Language Teaching, Intercultural Communicative Competence, Pedagogy

Culture is a complex and dynamic concept that has been defined in many different ways. However, at its core, culture is the shared beliefs, values, customs and traditions of a group of people. It is the way that a group of people lives, thinks, and interacts with the world around them. According to T.S. Eliot (1961), culture serves as a valuable asset and foundation for the advancement of many civilizations and knowledge, enabling the resolution of shared human challenges, facilitating

economic stability, and ensuring political safeguarding. Culture is transmitted from generation to generation through a variety of means, including language, education, and socialization. It is also influenced by a variety of factors, such as geography, history and economics. Culture is important because it gives people a sense of identity and belonging. It also helps people to make sense of the world around them and to interact with others in a meaningful way. According to Edward Sapir (1956), culture can be defined as a complex framework of behaviour's and manners that are predominantly influenced by unconscious processes. Culture is acquired and disseminated among social collectives through non-genetic means (The American Heritage, Science Dictionary 2005). Culture is associated with religious & political beliefs, important values, cultural customs & traditions. Culture is manifested through various means such as language, literature, performing arts, as well as the verbal and non-verbal conduct of individuals. The various facets of our cultural identity, including our expressions, arts, language, and literature, serve as reflections and embodiments of our respective civilizations.

Culture, literature and language are inextricably linked. Culture is the shared beliefs, values, customs and traditions of a group of people. Literature is the art of written works, such as novels, poems, and plays. Language is the system of communication used by a particular society. Culture shapes literature in a number of ways. The values, beliefs, and customs of a culture are often reflected in the stories that are told and the characters that are created. For example, the literature of ancient Greece often reflects the Greek ideal of

arête, or excellence. The literature of the Middle Ages often reflects the Christian values of the time. And the literature of modern America often reflects the values of individualism and freedom.

Literature can be a powerful means to foster intercultural communicative competence (ICC). ICC is the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately with people from different cultural backgrounds. It involves being aware of one's own cultural biases and assumptions, as well as being able to understand and respect the cultural values and norms of others. Literature can help to foster ICC in a number of ways. First, it can expose us to different cultures and perspectives. By reading stories from different cultures, we can learn about different ways of life, different values and different beliefs. This can help us to become more open-minded and tolerant of people from different backgrounds. Second, literature can help us to develop empathy for others. When we read stories from different cultures, we can put ourselves in the shoes of the characters and experience their world from their perspective. This can help us to develop a better understanding of the challenges and opportunities that people from different backgrounds face. Third, literature can help us to develop our critical thinking skills. When we read stories from different cultures, we are often challenged to think about our own beliefs and values. This can help us to become more aware of our own biases and assumptions and to develop a more nuanced understanding of the world. Finally, literature can provide us with a common ground to connect with people from different cultures. When we share our experiences of reading and discussing literature, we

can create a bridge of understanding between different cultures. Literature also influence the culture. For example, the novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* by Harriet Beecher Stowe is credited with helping to turn public opinion against slavery in the United States. The poetry of Langston Hughes is credited with helping to promote the Harlem Renaissance, a cultural movement that celebrated African American culture. Furthermore, language is also essential to both culture and literature.

Language is the means by which we communicate our values, beliefs and customs. It is also the medium through which literature is created and enjoyed. Saussure posits language as a system comprised of differences. According to Saussure (1974), "If words stood for pre-existing concepts, they would all have exact equivalents in meaning from one language to the next; but this is not true". Saussure's in his seminal work said that language can be seen as a structured system of sounds (1974). According to his perspective, a sign consists of a signifier, which can take the form of a sound-image or a written shape and a signified, which represents a notion. These two components are inherently interconnected and cannot be separated from one another. As to his assertion, the sound-image is inseparable from the thought. The author draws a comparison between language and thought, likening them to the two sides of a sheet of paper. In this analogy, thought represents the front section of the paper, while sound corresponds to the back part.

The relationship between culture, literature, and language is a complex and dynamic one as each of these three elements influences the other two in a variety of ways. For example, a culture's values and beliefs can shape the literature

that is created and the literature that is created can influence the values and beliefs of the culture. Similarly, a language's grammar and vocabulary can influence the way that literature is written, and the literature that is written can influence the way that the language is used. By studying culture, literature, and language together, we can gain a deeper understanding of all three. We can also learn to appreciate the diversity of human cultures and the richness of human expression. The relationship between culture, literature, and language can be visualized in the some of the most popular works of Literature. For reference, in the Japanese novel *The Tale of Genji* by Murasaki Shikibu, the language used is highly stylized and reflects the aristocratic culture of the time. In the Chinese poem "Quiet Night Thought" by Li Bai, the imagery used reflects the Taoist belief in the unity of nature and humanity. In the English novel *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Brontë, the language used reflects the Victorian values of modesty and respectability. And, in the American poem "I, Too" by Langston Hughes, the language used reflects the African American experience of racism and discrimination.

One of the most widely acknowledged perspectives regarding the connection between language and culture is attributed to Malinowski (1964). Malinowski's approach, which centered on the examination of culture as a cohesive system, led him to the inference that the analysis and interpretation of linguistic behavior are most effectively conducted within their respective socio-cultural frameworks. The fundamental principle of Malinowski's functional theory, which posits that all elements of culture are interrelated, is commonly regarded as a prevalent notion

in the field of cultural linguistics. Language is an integral component, outcome, and medium through which culture is expressed. Hence, it is imperative to consider the pertinent socio-cultural factors that influence their communication (Behura, 1986). According to Grimshaw's (1971) diagrammatic depiction of the correlation between language and reality, there exists a reciprocal link wherein reality influences the development of language, and in turn, language shapes our perception of reality. Additionally, Grimshaw's model suggests that reality serves as the foundation for cultural constructs, while culture, in turn, influences the construction of reality. Furthermore, language plays a pivotal role in the formation and transmission of cultural norms, while culture, in reciprocation, influences the evolution of language. Consequently, it is imperative to examine language in the societal framework of the community that employs it.

Through culture, language and literature we can gain a deeper understanding of different cultures and the richness of human expression. During 1970s, literature started to be widely read through the lens of various theories. These theories can be used to interpret the amalgamation of literature, language, and culture in a number of ways. Theories re-shaped the perspective of readers and allows them to read things with new dimensions. Theories such as Formalism focus on the formal elements of a literary text, such as its structure, imagery and symbolism. They argue that the meaning of a text is inherent in its form and that external factors, such as the author's biography or the historical context in which the text was written, are irrelevant. A formalist critic argue that the language and form of a literary text reflect the culture in which it was written. The

use of symbolism in the novel *Moby-Dick* by Herman Melville reflects the Puritan culture in which it was written.

Marxism, on the other hand focuses on the social and economic forces that shape literature. They argue that literature is a product of its time and place and that it reflects the ideology of the ruling class. A Marxist critic might argue that the content of a literary text reflects the social and economic forces of the time. In the novel *Oliver Twist* by Charles Dickens reflects the social and economic inequality of Victorian England. Feminism explored the voice of women and it represents gender in literature. They argue that literature has traditionally been written from a male perspective and that it has often marginalized or oppressed women. A feminist critic might argue that the language and content of a literary text reflect the gender roles of the culture in which it was written. Charlotte Brontë in her famous novel *Jane Eyre* reflects the limited opportunities available to women in Victorian England. Postcolonialism, it focus on the literature of colonized and formerly colonized peoples. They argue that postcolonial literature can help us to understand the legacy of colonialism and to challenge its ongoing effects. A post-colonial critic might argue that the language and content of a literary text reflect the experience of colonialism and its legacy. The experience of colonialism in Africa was portrayed appropriately in the novel *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe.

Conclusion :

Literature reflects and shapes culture in a number of ways. Literature can provide insights into the values, beliefs, and practices of a culture. It can also challenge people to think about their culture in new ways. It further helps to

promote cultural understanding. Reading literature from other cultures can help people to learn about the values, beliefs, and practices of those cultures. This can help to reduce prejudice and promote tolerance. Through literature we got to know about the struggles of different communities and how they have faced suppression due to the cultural difference. Language, in literature, on the other hand is used to create a sense of cultural identity. It can further be used to either perpetuate or challenge those cultural norms. In the novel *To Kill a Mockingbird*, Harper Lee teaches readers about racism in the American South during the 1930s. Another play, *A Raisin in the Sun* by Lorraine Hansberry challenges the racism and sexism that Black women faced in the United States during the 1950s. The members of the African American community often use the word “soul” to describe their culture and music. As Larsen-Freeman rightly remarks, “When we focus on language in use rather than language as an abstract formal system, we see it rooted in the context and culture of the local speech community to which the participants belong. Given the increasing social and economic mobility of many people these days, English has become an international lingua franca that is not really owned by any one group of speakers” (23).

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Rules of English Grammar : A Study of Irregularities

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Abstract

Grammar is the backbone of any language. It is the grammar that helps the students to produce accurate language. So, its instruction is very important. Teaching grammar is a hazardous task for the teachers and they face a lot of challenges. One of the challenges faced by teachers and learners is the exceptional nature of English grammar. No rule of English grammar or vocabulary is straight forward. Even native English speakers break rules and commit spelling errors. An English learner should learn the rules of grammar as well as its exceptions to produce accurate language. The article deals with some of the rules of English grammar and its exceptions which make grammar learning complex.

Key words

Subject verb agreement, Spelling rules, Exceptional cases, Question Tag

Introduction :

There was a time-until a couple of generations ago-when grammar was generally accepted as being the foundation of language teaching, whether it is for the teaching of first or second language. If English language is taken into consideration, grammatical analysis is the application of rules and principles that were originally derived from the grammar of Latin. Since English and Latin are both Indo-European languages, rules devised for the analysis of Latin grammar were easily adaptable to explain English grammar too. There is no scientific definition for grammar. Grammar is the structure of a language. One of the main problems with the teaching

learning of English grammar is its exceptions to rules. It is nonsensical to follow English rules blindly. Many students give up studying grammar because of these exceptions and teaching will be an arduous and uninspiring job with unpredictable results. A teacher should be able to handle the exceptions to the rules of English grammar. Let us go through the common exceptions to the rules of English grammar.

Exceptions to the subject verb agreement rules :

Subject verb agreement is also known by the name 'concord'. Exceptions to the subject verb agreement do occur. The rule states that a singular subject should have

a singular verb i.e. the verb takes an '-s' form after it.

Exception 1a : All pronouns obey the subject verb agreement rule except for 'I' and 'You'. Even though they are singular, they always take a plural verb.

Eg- I - write a letter.

You go there.

Exception 1b : With 'either' and 'neither', the verb agrees with the second subject irrespective of the number of persons involved in it.

Eg - Neither the clerks nor the manager was present.

Either the students or the teacher is late for the class.

But in modern usage, a plural form of the verb is recommended.

Exception 1c : The verb agrees with the positive subject if a sentence compounds a positive and a negative subject and only one is plural.

Eg - **Incorrect** : It was the author's background and not his ideas that have provoked the riot.

The author's background (singular) is what provoked the riot, so the verb must be singular.

Correct : It was the speaker's background and not his ideas that has provoked the riot.

Exception 1d : 'Anyone', 'Everyone', 'None', 'Nobody' etc take singular verbs though they give us the impression of plurality. But a plural verb is favored in modern spoken idiom.

Eg- Is anyone here?

Everyone knows that they have a right to vote.

None of my guests has arrived.

Nobody from that village has come.

Exception 1e : Words like 'percent', 'fraction', 'some', 'none' and 'remainder' which indicate portions of a whole require a singular verb only if the object of preposition is singular.

Eg - Sixty percent of the cookies were eaten but only twenty percent of the milk was drunk.

Exception 1f : 'Who', 'That', and 'Which' can be singular or plural according to the noun directly in front of them.

Eg- Emily picked all the flowers that were growing in the garden.

Emily picked the one flower that was growing in the garden.

Exception 1g : When we connect two subjects using 'as well as', 'along with', 'together with' etc, the verb agrees with the first subject even though it gives the notion of plurality.

Eg- The President as well as the members was present.

The robber, together with his gang is captured.

Exception 1h : Modifiers between the subject and verb do not affect whether the verb is singular or plural.

Eg- The colours of the rainbow are beautiful.

Plural noun rules and its exceptions :

A noun can either be singular or plural. A plural noun names more than one person, place, thing or idea. The general rule is plural nouns often end in '-s' or '-es'

2a Exception: - Child – Children

Goose –Geese

Man-Men

Woman-Women

Tooth-Teeth

- 2b** Singular noun refers to only one person or thing and plural noun indicates more than one person or thing.

Exceptions – In English language, the words ‘trousers’, ‘pants’, ‘scissors’, ‘binoculars’ etc are treated as plurals though they refer to only one item.

Those spectacles are of no use to me.

Those scissors were very blunt.

- 2c** Some words can be singular or plural depending on the context.

Eg A sheep was run over by a car.

Sheep are meek animals.

An aircraft was damaged while taking off.

Several aircraft were damaged during the war.

- 2d** When a Plural number applies to heights, weights, distances or amounts of money, it is treated as singular and takes a singular verb.

Seven feet is a good height for an Indian.

Ten rupees is just enough for the bus fare.

Simple Present Tense talk about future:

The Simple Present Tense can be used to talk about scheduled future.

- 3a** Eg -The school reopens on Monday.

The train arrives at 4.30 am.

Exceptions of Rules in Narration change :

To change narration from direct to indirect speech, the basic rules of narration change should be followed. But exceptional rules can be seen in some special situations. The general rule is that when we convert a direct speech to indirect speech, the present tense is to be changed

to past tense. But if the reported clause speaks universal common or habitual truth the tenses of the reported clause should not be changed while converting speech from direct to indirect.

- 4a** Eg –The scientist said, “The earth is round”

The scientist said that the earth is round.

Eg - He said to me, “Delhi is the capital of India”

He said to me that Delhi is the capital of India.

Exceptions to Spelling Rules :

English is an unphonetic language ie it is not pronounced as it is written. English has 26 letters in the alphabet, but over 44 individual sounds depending on the variation of spoken English. There are several sounds represented by only one letter. For example, the letter ‘C’ can sound like /s/ as in ‘City’ and /k/ as in ‘Chemistry’. Similarly, the last sound of the words ‘leaf’ and ‘laugh’ are same ie /f/ sound but represented by different letters. Moreover, the presence of silent letters makes English spelling a difficult one for the non -native speakers. To make the English spelling easier, certain rules are formulated. But even in the spelling rules, there are exceptional cases. Though something as varied as English spelling cannot be reduced to a few simple rules, in certain cases it is possible to do so particularly when adding a suffix to a base.

- 5a** Two or three syllable words ending in a consonant double the consonant before a suffix beginning with a vowel when the stress falls on the last syllable. Eg- begin + ing - beginning, occur + ed – occurred. (Notable exceptions: enter + ing- entering,

cover + ed – covered)

- 5b** Words ending in a single ‘e’ after consonant drop the ‘e’ before a suffix beginning with a vowel but retain it when the suffix begins with a consonant.
Eg - write+ ing-writing, receive + ing – receiving but move + ment – movement. (Notable exceptions: true + ly – truly, judge +ment– judgment)

Exceptions to Question Tag :

An assertive sentence makes a statement, but to give it added force, we often attach a condensed question to it. This is called a question tag or tag question. The general rule of question tag is ‘A positive statement takes a negative tag, and a negative statement takes a positive tag’. But ‘imperative sentences’ are an exception when question tag is used. For imperative sentences, the tag is ‘will you?’ no matter the sentence is positive or negative.

- 6a** Read it aloud, will you?

Keep quiet, will you?

- 6b** For an Imperative which has the force of rebuke, ‘can’t you?’ is the tag.

Stop talking nonsense, can’t you?

Use your common sense, can’t you?

Conclusion :

The structure of English language is

its grammar. So, its instruction is important in the field of English Language Teaching. Grammar is not something that could be acquired naturally. Traditional grammar training is not an effective and appropriate pedagogical intervention. A teacher should be very careful while handling grammar in the classroom. She should teach the exceptional cases of grammar along with its rules. If the learners are taught grammar through context, they will master the language better. Teaching grammar in context will help the learners to acquire new structures and forms and they will apply it in communication if they learn them in contexts.

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Reimagining English Language Education through Digital Technology

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Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted the safe conduct of normal life, including the closure of schools. It has affected more than 240 million children in the country who are enrolled in schools. The value of English as a “link language” or “globalised language” has steadily increased. English language learning and teaching should progress in a sustainable way. The effectiveness and capacity of teaching and learning largely depend on three fundamental variables: the teacher, the students, and the mode of interaction, or learning medium. A teacher who uses digital technology to teach English to students is one who interacts with the class through the use of digital devices. Teachers & Policy makers change the curriculum being taught. By properly combining digital devices, digital technology assists in manipulating the data into useful information. Digital education has not only been promoted during the Covid-19 infection but it has been implemented post covid. Interest of the students can be developed through mentoring to watch, read and listen to authentic content generated on digital platforms that is related to the target language culture e.g., English Language related contents. Additionally, they can communicate with the native speakers of the target nation’s language via emails, shared videos, and audios, simultaneously developing their interpersonal skills. Gmail, WhatsApp and many other platforms are useful where they can interact live. This can be planned, or students can engage in viewpoint-exchange with the target culture through conferences, exchange programs etc. The advantages of using educational technology to personalize learning for each student or group of students in the English classroom enhances student participation. Learning is improved with virtual whiteboards. Online homework assignments or practice exercises creates interest. We also chose to use a movie from a few years ago about language classes in the USA, about an Indian wife who receives criticism from her husband and child for not speaking English fluently. She decides to enrol in an English-speaking course while on a visit to the US after feeling degraded.

In the coming times it is necessary that, teachers try to get quality educational material from various platforms, websites, etc. to promote digital education and develop their skills for online education so that in this era of globalization, students can get quality education. Teachers can also develop their own digital resources. Educational institutions will not only need to redesign the way they teach and learn, but also introduce a suitable method of imparting quality education through a better coordination for home schooling. The most important thing is that digital and online education can never replace the classroom teaching process. But online classes have some advantages also. It encourages flexible and individual learning of the learner and one can continuously increase the content and pace of one's learning through digital medium.

Keywords

Digital Education, English Language, Cultural Barriers, Digital platforms, Barriers, Teacher-Learner process, Effectiveness, Infrastructure.

Introduction :

E-books, audio files, videos, and internet articles are all additional resources that language teachers can incorporate into their lesson plans. These tools are useful for teaching languages since they are more customizable and simpler to update. Globally, technology is having an ever-growing impact on the learning of foreign languages. As a result of recent advancements in digital technology, the very environment in which language learning and instruction take place has undergone a considerable change. Both students and teachers can access a wide range of digital resources on digital sites. The traditional classroom is progressively disappearing which is a matter of concern.

Objective :

The main goal of this research study is to demonstrate how digital technology may be used to enhance language learning process and how it is beneficial for both teachers and students. The formal learning environment can be contrived digitally in virtual classrooms. Teachers can make informal classrooms formal by implementing techniques like tests for assessment.

Applications for e-learning have also been developed to help with the teaching-learning process. It's easy, since for years the educational system has been producing multimedia learning resources for technical students, especially among the tech-savvy. English is used differently and for distinct purposes in each region of India. There is a sizable English-speaking population in big cities. Along with being used on street signs, ads, newspapers, and magazines, colloquial English is also employed in movies and popular music. If used properly, these pictures offer motivating educational resources that can inspire students since they can identify with them. Despite the fact that English may not be spoken everywhere, it is regularly heard in isolated villages. Finding it when looking for it is easier than one might imagine. i.e., on food packaging, clothing labels and tickets, and in the music of Hindi movies. In most rural locations, people commute to or from surrounding towns and cities. These individuals can serve as resources for English as they watch and learn from billboards and commercials. They can talk about the various ways they have used English and other languages.

“Language in humans is clearly dependent on their having a society in which to learn it, other humans to speak to and the emotional motivation and intelligence to make it possible; humans also appear to have evolved with specialised neural mechanisms that subserve language” (Gleason, pg. 16)

Methodology :

This paper is based on a study that the authors undertook through a structured review of language and linguistics courses they taught to postgraduate, graduate and BCA graduates in workshops, conferences and classes. In addition, among the enrolled students, a group of local students were chosen for the study at our respective colleges. Student organizations and exchange programs were taken into account for our study. In addition, we consulted literature sources like published books and academic course syllabi. Research tools like Google Scholar journals and Jstor journals were used.

The paper is mostly based on the Teacher-Learner approach that the authors have been using recently with digital technology. The following keywords were used initially: English Language, Digital platforms, Online interaction rate, Digital education

Criteria for Exclusion was formulated for collection of primary resources :

- i. For the purpose of gathering primary resources, the following criteria were developed:
- ii. Study focus was more on hands-on experience in virtual classrooms and interaction with students.
- iii. Colloquial languages, shortcomings of online teaching and learning experiences were taken into consider-

ation through feedback survey forms.

- iv. Literature that was relevant to course syllabi.
- v. Exclusion of irrelevant literature to English Language Learners in the local environment.

We narrowed down 100 students on our respective campuses so that we could concentrate on our initial investigation. Nevertheless, we never informed the students that they were a part of our study. Irrelevant responses were placed aside as they aggregated problems. Once the survey feedbacks and projects had been evaluated and examined. After preliminary research, certain projects that were not thorough had to be eliminated. The authors shortlisted final 35 students and randomly picked individuals on the basis of Online responses, Interactive sessions and direct interaction.

Discussion :

Case Study : 1

Recently while crossing the college campus, I heard an individual's conversation on phone:

Individual A : Good morning, I was supposing to be in meeting today but supposing could not come.

Use of ‘-ing’ is very casual and taken as authentic in the contemporary time. It's difficult to explain to the local students as they are more used to Hindi dialect Bhojpuri. Deciphering between the correct usage and wrong usage becomes difficult. Digitization has certain barriers which students forgo while learning through listening to recorded lessons. Local students think and transfer their own native language while learning foreign language.

Contemporary world offers online education options and solutions, and everything is becoming more digital. The world has been turned into a global network of online learning environments using digital textbooks. Online student assessments have been made possible by software. Digital classroom-specific technologies like Google Classrooms, Zoom and Webex is available. Online conferences, lectures, interactions and classes are now a routine occurrence and frequently employ Zoom and Webex for knowledge sharing. Audio-visual content, mobile learning apps, and online learning platforms. Social media, flashcards and videos are all common resources that support the digitalized way of teaching and learning. Technology has enabled the development of online workshops and activities that facilitate learning for students. These resources assist pupils in swiftly improving their language abilities. For e.g., Quizizz, Quizlet, Padlet are study tools where teachers can create quizzes for students and allow them hands on experience during online class. The fact that these tools must be purchased and that students can only utilize the free versions is a drawback. Institutions accept subscriptions, but they are uncommon. These study tools can be used by the students for group study or self-study. They can create their own quizzes, flashcards. This makes the learning process easy and interesting. Such study tools enable the students to track their own progress. This helps the students to improve the areas where they lack with real time data analysis.

It's not so easy to switch over to technology and online classrooms was

very new at first. Getting used to online mode was difficult because most of the teachers were not trained for the new genre of technological era. Literature always focussed on digital century when books would disappear and everything would be available on screen. It was unthinkable.

Case Study : 1

“The Fun They Had”: Issac Asimov (short story prescribed in ICSE) :

The author of story “The Fun They Had,” Isaac Asimov, describes his vision for the future in this short story. The story is set in a future in which virtual classrooms are used to conduct both books and education. Instead of a human instructor, a mechanic (robot) teaches these classes. Margie and Tommy are the two children who open the story. They reside in the future, where everything is controlled by computers. The idea of books and classrooms has changed significantly from the past with the introduction of virtual schools.

“On May 17, 2157, Margie wrote in her diary about how Tommy came up with a real book. It is an old book that consists of stories. Margie remembers her grandfather, who once told that when he was younger, his grandfather used to study through printed books. Tommy and Margie were excited and started to turn the yellow crumpled pages of the book to learn more about the ancient days. They found it hilarious to read the book as the words stood at a place instead of moving around as they saw it on a computer screen. From here, it is clear that in the future there will be only tele-books and that no paper copies of the books will be available.

Tommy proclaims that it is absolutely useless to read a book and throw it away once completed. He feels that their monitor screen has millions of books and can store even more without throwing after use.” (<https://www.vedantu.com/english/the-fun-they-had-summary>)

Students of my project thought this lesson was unfathomable when I first explained it to them. 2010 is obviously a long way from 2157. They could read stories on the computers that were available. The only difficulty they ran into was not knowing how to operate the system. I, as a teacher, could not imagine a world where every book would be available online. There were virtual classrooms, but they were uncommon and unrelated. Robot teachers still need to be brought in one-on-one, but technology has advanced and we now have apps that can make still pictures talk. If technology continues to advance at this rate, even the Egyptian tombstone mummies will have voices soon. In India it seemed impossible because not everyone was techno-savvy nor they had been trained to use computers. To top it all, online learning environments were only beginning to proliferate and spread quickly. Colleges and Universities had introduced computer learning in course-curriculum but only specialised trainers were recruited. Every teacher was not proficient in computer knowledge. During pandemic teachers had to upgrade themselves for conducting online courses, workshops in order to enhance the teacher-learners process in Virtual classrooms. Both the teacher-and students had access to innumerable learning material, more effective teaching and learning techniques. More interactive and riveting experience are all made possible by online learning

and education. It gave students access to a variety of tools and resources, including online lectures, animated PPT learning, e-books, and webinars. The ability to take courses at a student’s pace and faster information access are other benefits. The use of interactive virtual and augmented reality tools in online education can also result in a more immersive learning environment. Teachers can monitor student progress and give feedback more effectively by using a virtual learning environment.

Many educators still have trouble coming up with a clear and useful framework for integrating new literacies into their lessons. Courses such as Induction courses, Orientation courses related to upgrading digital knowledge has become compulsory for aspiring English teachers to understand how connected learning concepts are both generative yet difficult to implement it in their class. As teachers work to develop technologically advanced, transformative, literacy learning experiences for their students but how much the students gain depends on many things such as language barrier, cultural barrier, and socio-economic barrier. It’s very essential that teachers get upgraded technically to explore these technological advanced tools with full dedication in mind that they are capable to develop instructional lessons that interests their students and enhances critical thinking and learning process. Digital literacy knocks at our door persistently and it’s the necessity of the hour that a future-oriented & connected teaching vision is developed to usher in the development of digital literate teachers.

While going through a rigorous course of post graduate diploma in English

Language as a teacher I had the support of multi-media and I could design my lectures and deliver to the target group more effectively. For instance, to help my graduate students become familiar with language vocabulary and structure I used multi-media for enhancing the skills of listening and speaking while I incorporated print texts, games for reading and writing skills in the same class. Students picked up very fast and got acquainted to usage of correct proverbs and sentence structure. As a teacher-trainer, I could facilitate my students to draw conclusions and form their own perspective regarding the lesson taught. While watching the videos the target group could easily practice pronouncing and using the native accent. Games like mind-mapping have proven to be superb for helping students improve their capacity for building a vocabulary. I have often used this in my classes for word building and rhetoric. In reality, mind-mapping images were added to Google Forms, the URL shared with various student groups, and feedback forms were filled out. At first, it had a 35% accuracy rate, but by the end of training, it had increased to 75%.

Mind Mapping Games :



Image : google.co.in

Case Study - 2 :

At EFLU in Hyderabad, where I completed my PGCTE program, we trainees were required to take 15 classes for graduating students from nearby technical colleges. It was necessary to use both print and digital media while teaching the four skills of Listening Speaking, Reading Writing of language acquisition. Literature lessons were used for teaching language.

The procedure of teaching : (Classroom teaching) :

The first lecture I focused on the growth of the language skills of reading and writing. For this, I made the decision to engage the students in a captivating activity. I decided to use an English advertising activity to introduce the students to the English that is used in both their local and global environments. The majority of the Amul butter advertisements are written in English or Hinglish. I assumed that since students are used to seeing these commercials, there would be no language barrier for the target demographic. They might take pleasure in viewing the advertisement and having a class discussion about it. I then began to consider how I could incorporate advertisements like these into my lessons. I decided to show the commercial video as well as project the still image on projector. I then prepared some questions regarding the advertisement and also how it related to my lecture. Instead of starting the lecture right away, the first 15 minutes of class had to be utilised discussing advertising. When I first presented the advertisement to the class, I made certain that everyone had a chance to see it. First the audio was played for Listening exercise. They all seemed to be aware of the advertisement. While the students were watching the

commercial, I distributed the print questionnaire for further group discussion.



I asked the class to talk about these issues in pairs. I then asked various students to respond to the questions. Some people noticed that the advertisement's main message- "Speak less, eat more!"- was an imperative verb. In 2014, fitted in classroom systems were not available due to a lack of computers (available solely in the language lab for testing the trainees) and also due to their irrelevance, thus things had to be done differently in traditional classrooms.

Virtual Teaching Methodology :

During my virtual classes, which still continues, I used the same technique through PPTs, Direct linking of Videos for teaching and subsequently created Chatrooms on Zoom platform for separate groups to discuss. The class was very effective and feedback given back to college administration was: 95% effective teaching methodology.

As a teacher one needs to be upgraded and updated and try to initiate a consistent teaching strategy so that learners can comprehend it and catch up easily. Engaging students in a virtual classroom can be difficult for distance learners. However, technology is available to support the provision of supplemental tactics. Online discussion tools can be a

fantastic way to encourage student engagement and conversational development. Students should feel free to express their opinions and get them substantiated during online discussions because they have the opportunity to interact with one another just like in classroom. The advantage is that they don't need to pull around benches and arrange seats. The teacher just has to create different chatrooms for groups. I have used platforms like Zoom, Webex, Google Meet, Microsoft teams to take my Online classes. Students can respond to a question or task that appears on their screens by using the polling features that these platforms provide. I also use the chatbox and question generated in Google forms. I have made single or multiple-choice questions. During class, I was able to launch the poll and compile the responses from the students. Though, to use this feature I had to take instructions from my colleague and watched videos.

Case Study-3 :

Recently I was invited by an organisation to conduct a workshop on Indian Knowledge System. I used PPTs and Google form to create multiple choice Question of Google form. Besides this I used images for the students to correlate and brainstorm to get the answers. I had also used the Quizizz App to create fun games for them. I used Padlet to make my lessons more engaging by allowing students to present their own ideas through picture, ideas, presentations, link sharing during a 10-minute brainstorming session. The students were more engaged and attentive as a result, and they participated with greater zeal. With digitalization I feel more proficient because I have always preferred interactive sessions to lecture

method in my classroom. Teaching Language with digital technology makes life simpler. Nevertheless, there is still a generation of educators who favour traditional classroom settings over online learning, which has its own benefits.

Feedback of the Organisation :



Screenshot of email dt.01st Oct.,2023 Receiver: Vandana Singh. Sender: Research Culture Society

Hands-on Experience during Virtual Classes :

Most effective method to initiate class on digital platform is asking question to give students a preview of the lecture. Many platforms have Whiteboards that can be used easily to give the class room effect. I prefer to use PPT so that Questions can be toggled one by one for the students to avoid confusion. While teaching writing formal letters, emails, applications teachers can use the methodology.



Image : Google.co.in

Activity : For Hands on Experience, I instructed my students to make a table with two columns in a workbook while it's demonstrated for them during lecture. They were asked to try this on a word file or excel worksheet. Many students were not comfortable with both so I asked them to use their notebook.

1. Students were instructed to make two columns wherein they made a list of family members and friends and people they knew like their doctor, grandparents, siblings etc.
2. The students had to use the prompts on the screen to write about the likes and dislikes of the people in the second column against the names they had listed in the first column, such as what they enjoyed reading and writing in English.
3. The students had to then compare their list with the student sitting next. More points could be added or elided.
4. The students were then required to present their findings. They were taken aback by how frequently they used the English language throughout the entire process.

Case Study-4 :

On television, iPod there's a lot of English songs. In addition to listening to lots of English words and phrases, Indians

in different parts of the country are singing popular songs in Hindi, Tamil, Telugu or any other Indian language. Music with English words is an extremely effective way of motivating students to learn the language and giving them informal practice. English songs can be used for singing-along pronunciation practice, listening drills, and vocabulary learning. As a teacher, I have promoted language learning through movies in my virtual classrooms. Movie session for Better Language Learning because all the four skills can be involved for teaching the Learners and making the Teachers Learners process easier.

It so happens that the area where my college is located speaks the Bhojpuri dialect. The local students are fluent in Bhojpuri and Hindi. It is difficult to teach English linguistics and language. On top of that, they are not familiar with English landscapes. However, this issue is solved by the ability to switch between videos and images in screen sharing mode on digital platforms. Interestingly, my colleague has used music to solve similar issues.

Digital Classroom Activity :

She picked a song in English that was appropriate for linguistics classes. The song had to be comprehensible for the local students, which meant that it had to be a song that they were familiar with, found interesting, and whose level of English was not too challenging. (As the song's audio played in the background, he posted the lyrics in PPT. The karaoke event was enjoyable for the students.)

1. It was easier to find the song. It happened to be from Hindi Movie English Vinglish" On digital platform she could switch to audio with

subtitles in both Hindi and English. As the version was downloaded it could be replayed again and again in a loop. Helping one's students to listen to English on digital platform is easier as one can shift back and forth with the screen sharing tab.

2. She introduced the song to her students. Asked them to learn to pay attention and type the words they hear in English. When the song was over, she asked the students to look at their word lists with each other.
3. She played the song once more and instructed the students to write the words phonetically. They had enough time to search the words online for support.
4. One final time, the song was played and students were asked to sing along for pronunciation, accent, pitch, rhyme, etc.

I'm learning-vearning seekhun-veekhun nayi zubaan

I'm learning-vearning seekhun-veekhun nayi zubaan

Aflatoon (english vinglish)

Hain junoon (english vinglish)

Morning noon (english vinglish...)

Coffee-voffee, sugar-vugar, paper-vaper,

News-vews, clock-vock, time-vime, run-vun

Train-vain, pass-vass, late-vate, class-Vass

Friendship-vend ship, bonding-vonding, fun-vun.

For her part, she asked the students if they could identify the song for her. The majority of them were familiar with it and

mentioned the movie English Vinglish, which is about a housewife who wants to improve her English (mentioned earlier). While she continued to play the music, my colleague requested the students to write down all the English terms they had heard. She instructed them to compare their lists to those of the other students after they were finished. They matched the song with a different student after she played it once more to make sure everyone recalled the words. Before returning to the main room to present their list, the students were allowed five minutes to discuss in small groups in a different chat room set up for the purpose. I quizzed the pupils on their knowledge of the song's whole vocabulary in my role as the class moderator. The only term they knew was "bonding," and they were sceptical of i.e. student asked if the word "Aflatoon" was actually a word in

the English language. This was a difficult effort because some words are in English, others are in Hindi, and some are in "Hinglish" or another made-up language. Their animated questions demonstrated their interest in learning English. They wished to enhance their English in order to comprehend a specific song. The task of translating song lyrics from the native tongues into English, or the other way around, can always be started by teachers.

Barriers of Teaching Language with Digital Technology :

While using the digital platforms one has to keep safety uppermost in mind so that it does not have detrimental blockages. As a Teacher-Trainer one has to follow the cyber rules for everyone's safety. To overcome such barriers, teachers as well as the students have to keep in tandem and follow the safety rules.

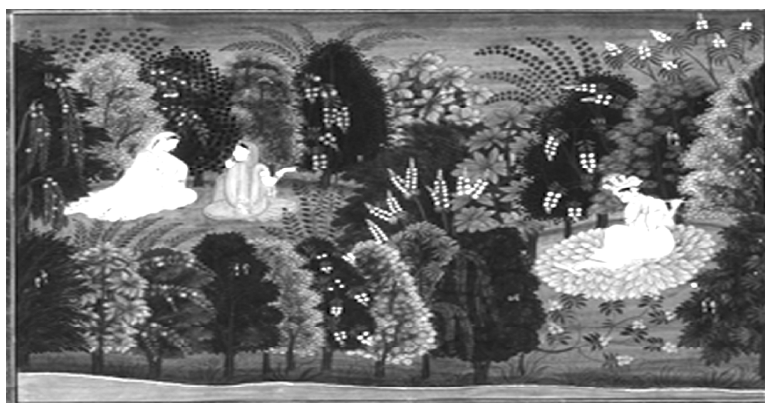


Image: Google.co.in

Online learning can occasionally cause learners to feel disconnected, disengaged or distracted because they don't feel connected, engaged, or focused in their learning activities. Furthermore, both positive and negative effects of technology on learner attitudes and expectations are possible.

Socio-Cultural & Economic Barriers :

1. Inadequate Study Facilities :

According to the 2011 Census, 64 percent of urban families and 74 percent of rural households, respectively, had more than three occupants living in the same room. There may not be more than

two rooms in their home. It is unimaginable for children to have their own study area. Online education would interrupt nearby residents' lives or prevent the young person from learning.

2. Inadequate Wi-Fi accessibility :

Only 42% of urban households and 15% of rural households had access to the internet, while only 34% of urban and 11% of rural inhabitants had used it in the previous 30 days, according to data from the National Sample Survey for the year 2020. These figures categorically demonstrate that at least two thirds (33%) of students will undoubtedly be left out of the online education system's scope of operation. The most affected groups by this process will once again be the poor, rural, and marginalized ones.



Manash Pratim Gohain / TNN / Updated: Jul 21, 2020, 09.

3. Insufficient wi-fi speed :

For acquiring their education from home online or virtual conferences are first and foremost facility for students. Due to bad/slow internet speed students are often left out from attending their classes or attending the video conferences. This hampers their studies. Data insufficiency and high connectivity are two requirements for virtual classes. Insufficient speed makes the online learning process ineffective. This incident happened recently in an international conference where

candidate from University of Jammu and Kashmir could not present his paper. Many scholars from Eastern region faced same issues. Due to bad connectivity, they could not share screen and had to depend on verbal presentation. Besides, the participant also relegated about the issues that hampers normal studies in the region of Jammu & Kashmir.

4. Absence of Adequate Standard Policy :

Digital education is vast different from class room teaching and use of lecturers written on the chalkboard or teachers using internet video as lectures. "Digital education" refers to the practice of augmenting classroom learning through the use of technology to impart interactive sessions, technical knowledge and tools, proper channelling & distribution of time, authentic study materials and pertinent platforms. The immensity of multitudinous problems that online education is currently experiencing is due to lack of an adequate digital education policy, proper supporting infrastructure, well formulated study materials that are available in different languages.

5. Social Exclusion/Inclusion :

Additionally, public educational institutions excel in terms of social inclusion and promote correlative equality. All genders, socioeconomic classes, castes, and cultural backgrounds are represented in institutions as it is considered to be the ultimate centre of knowledge. As people come voluntarily without being forced to pursue knowledge this process can be procreated online in order to make digital learning more effective. Technology is used for developing multiple strategies such as advanced audio-visual effects,

animation and gamification such as puzzles, quizzes, 3D laser simulation, to make online learning easier to adopt.

6. In genuine and fake Platforms :

It is appropriate to encourage online learning and teaching measures, but only if they are formed through the proper channels and specifically made to complement, assist, and enhance face-to-face learning approaches. It should be strongly emphasized that it be made acceptable. In this situation, switching from teacher-classroom-based instruction to digital education undoubtedly calls for sustained comprehensive efforts. Digital learning requires continuous, diversified efforts to replace teacher-classroom-based instruction.

Role of Digital technology as the Front runner in Contemporary World :

The benefits of 'Start-up-India' in the English Language are clear: increased student involvement in creating an experience that can be special for each student or student group. Virtual whiteboards enhance learning. Online homework or assignment tasks can serve as excellent catalysts for overall development and motivation. Students can be inspired by computer programmes to increase their vocabulary and reading skills. The digitisation is unquestionably a state-of-the-art technical tool for anybody wishing to advance their English language proficiency. It's a great tool for self-learning. Using a variety of resources, such as apps, online spoken practice, podcasts, e-books, blogs, video clips, shows and movies, students can take control of their education and get better results.

Recommendation :

To build the digital literacy of students and teachers in the educational system of

today and tomorrow, it is necessary to identify the curriculum for variegated target groups. Having computers available for students to use in their state's colleges and public schools is a goal shared by many constituency politicians. Others might be familiar with computers but have never used them themselves. Even if you don't have a computer, these government-sponsored projects are designed to help you make the most of the technology found in institutions. The objective is for the teachers to be inspired and equipped with the necessary skills to use the technology that is available.

1. Connecting with the world: informational structure - that is, using additional information and useful information from students for teaching and learning.
2. In conjunction with another: for support and professional development, updating various social media, netiquette, etc.
3. Creation of ICT: to develop teaching resources, documents and audiovisual materials and to use educational literature and students.
4. Communicating with ICT: understanding the truth and selecting the most appropriate tools; and understanding of practicality, problem, safety and security, usability, and instruction.

Conclusion :

Language learning with digital technology makes it simple for students to access a variety of educational resources using a variety of platforms, exposes them to lessons and tutorials from native speakers, and makes it simpler for them to participate in online courses. Digital

education has enormous potential both inside and outside of virtual classrooms. The students are free to access the internet whenever they want to do their studies. Due to some companies' free data consumption policies such as Jio Reliance, Airtel etc., it is cost-effective. Online digital learning may be less expensive than conventional classroom training because there are no costs associated with renting physical classrooms, purchasing textbooks, or traveling. When compared to a standard textbook and practice CDs, young pupils believe that utilizing a tablet or smartphone to learn is more enjoyable. With the use of technology, language learners can become active participants and experience deeper, richer linguistic immersion.

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Images :

1. Google.co.in



Reservoir of Trauma and Memory : Images of Trees in *Beloved*

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Abstract

*When Paul D had lost all the hopes of survival under the institution of slavery, then the hope of seeing the 'tree flowers' kept him going towards his freedom. For Paul D all flowering trees, "from dogwood to blossoming peach" (Morrison, 2007, p.112), from cherry blossoms, to "magnolia, chinaberry and prickly pear" (p.112), were the guiding force behind finding the "North. Free North. Magical North" (p.112). For Sethe the symbolic chokecherry tree has left an indelible mark on her memory, which she couldn't get rid of, despite multiple attempts. Nonetheless, trees in Toni Morrison's magnum opus, *Beloved* (1987), have different connotations for different characters. Iffor Denver the secret bower of trees was a place "closed off from the hurt of the hurt world" (Morrison, 2007, p.28), readers spotted the reincarnated *Beloved* sitting and leaned against mulberry tree. Sixo, one of the Sweet Home men, who finds comfort in the shade of a tree named 'Brother', later in the story, was burnt alive 'tied at the waist' to the same tree. Hence, in my attempt to explore the various symbols, metaphors and connotations the site/sight of trees evoked for different people at different space and time, I will also try to find the answer to the question as how tree, which is classified as the living organism in botany, not only become a site of trauma and memory/re-memory for people associated to it but also a source of identity.*

Key words

Slavery, tree, memory, trauma, hope

Introduction :

"Follow the tree flowers," he said.
"Only the tree flowers. As they go, you go. You will be where you want to be when they are gone." (Morrison, 2007, p.112)

When Paul D, "the last of the Sweet Home men" (Morrison, 2007, p.162), could no longer put up with his miseries, then gathering "all the memories of Alfred,

Georgia, Sixo, schoolteacher, Halle, his brothers, Sethe, Mister, the taste of iron, the sight of butter, the smell of hickory, notebook paper, one by one, into the tobacco tin lodged in his chest" (Morrison, 2007, p.113), had left Cherokee to seek "North. Free North. Magical North. Welcoming, benevolent North" (Morrison, 2007, p.133). Guided by the blossoming trees, Paul D, a broken ex-slave, reached

124 Bluestone, Ohio, a place he was looking for eight long years, a place which finally gave him stability, masculinity and an identity he lacked all his life. Flowering trees for him became guiding light, a source of hope and also a survival mechanism to beat the harrowing memories of slavery and the tormented life in prison. In contrary to him, for Sethe the chokecherry tree is not just a scar on her back, but a reminder of the savage history of slavery and the also the suppressed memory of her guilt. It is in this context of ambiguity in the symbolism of trees, as “trees remain conflicted throughout this work” (Fulton, 2005, p.189), I will study Toni Morrison’s magnum opus, *Beloved*, as a text where the site/sight of trees evoked different signs, beliefs, symbols, values and connotations for different characters at different space and time. Trees have been worshipped and used as metaphors and symbols in almost every culture and religion around the world. Albeit, in traditional African cultural practices, folklores and fables, trees are archetypal and tend to be objectified as symbol of sustainability, hope, freedom, achievement and life (Mbiti, 1989), yet the African-American culture also analysed the relation between tree imagery and slavery on two levels. If on one hand the metaphors of “The Tree of Life” and “The Family Tree” are used to convey trees as a symbol of life and sustainability, then the trees are symbolised as a reservoir of memory, loss, trauma and pain, when the imagery of tree is set up against the institution of slavery. Hence, trees have both positive and negative connotations depending on the nature of memory attached to it. We acknowledge world literature for dedicated discourse which

seek to highlight the twofold relationship between human (mankind) and nature in general and significance of trees in various culture, religion and literature in particular. In the present paper I will analyse the implication that trees, which are classified as the living organisms in botany, not only become a site of trauma and memory/re-memory but also a source of identity, sustainability and a valuable reservoir of social-ecological memory (SEM) when human and nature came in contact in the novel, *Beloved*.

Published in 1987, *Beloved* was Toni Morrison’s fifth novel to bring her worldwide acclaim. Morrison had called slavery a ‘national amnesia’ (Angelo, 1994, p.257) and the absence of any historical marker for the lost generation of slaves, had motivated her to dedicate this neo-slave narrative to the ‘Sixty Millions and More’ (Morrison, 2007, p.i) and gave voice to those ‘unspeakable things unspoken’ (Morrison, 1989, p.1) which could not find any reference in history. Morrison confessed in many of her interviews and articles that writing *Beloved* was her conscious act towards the healing process, and Krumholz agrees no more when he says, “history-making (in *Beloved*) becomes a healing process for the characters, the reader, and the author” (Krumholz, 1992, p.395) altogether. In this process of healing, Morrison has narrated the painful tales of the former slaves putting it against a literal (true) story of an ex-slave, Margaret Garner, who is Sethe of *Beloved*. Set in 1873, almost a decade after the Emancipation Proclamation ended slavery, the novel narrates the story of Sethe, who almost eighteen years ago, along with her four children, had managed to escape slavery. After 28

days of her life as a free slave, she was tracked down by her new slave owner, Schoolteacher. To protect her children from the horrors of the institution of slavery, Sethe had committed infanticide, and cut the throat of her “crawling-already” (Morrison, 2007, p.152) daughter and would have done the same with the other children had she not been stopped. Now 18 years later, haunted by the ghost of the dead daughter and the harrowing memories of her past, Sethe’s present is a constant reminder of her the past actions, and as Collingwood says, “the gap between present and past being bridged not only by the power of past thought to think of the past, but also by the power to reawaken itself in the present” (1986, p.294). The novel takes us back and forth in time, to the present and to memories from the past, which precisely “revolves around the wish to forget and a necessity to remember” as even mentioned by Mandel (2006, p.585) by almost all the characters. It is in this vicious circle of ‘forgetting and remembering’ (Parui, 2022; Terdiman, 1993; Erll & Nunning, 2008) we seek and find various images of trees-like saplings, cluster of trees, hanging trees, flowering trees, woods, bowers, buds and flowers coming and going in the memories of varied characters of *Beloved*. Trees appear constantly in *Beloved* and have both physical and spiritual significance for almost all the characters of the novel. Trees - symbolic and real, at Sweet Home Plantation or elsewhere become reservoir of past memories for those who worked and lived there. When the novel opens, Sethe’s memories took her back to Sweet Home. But ironically, for her, Sweet Home is just a tangible memory and so are many other discrete places and trees

on the plantation. For her, though, Sweet Home always remained place where she was beaten to death and became a victim of mammary rape, yet in present, the sight of sycamore trees compels her stream of consciousness to skip the horrific memories of slave boys hanging from it, and her own traumatic experiences there, on contrary, her memory suppressed the pain and recalled only the scenic beauty of the place. Avishek Parui in his seminal work, *Culture and the Literary Matter; Metaphor; Memory* discusses the continuous conflict between the past and the present, and how past interrupting the present correlates to the intriguing cultural phenomenon in memory studies where memory becomes the “closed arena of conflict between two contradictory operations: remembering and forgetting” (Parui, 2022, p.137). Even Renate Lachman in the article published in *Media and Cultural Memory*, a remarkable work on memory studies, contemplates that forgetting is not something passive, a loss, but “an action directed against the past; and the mnemonic trace, the return of what was forgotten”, (p.303) emphasised Parui. It was while returning back from the restaurant where Sethe currently works as a cook that she stepped on the chamomile sap. The sap triggered her ‘mnemonic trace’ and in her hurried attempt to wash herself clean of the sap, returned what was forgotten. Sweet Home came:

...rolling, rolling, rolling out before her eyes, and although there was not a leaf on that farm that did not make her want to scream, it rolled itself out before her in shameless beauty... Boys hanging from the most beautiful sycamores in the world. It shamed her - remembering the wonderful soughing trees rather than the boys. Try as she

might to make it otherwise, the sycamores beat out the children every time and she could not forgive her memory for that. (Morrison, 2007, p.6)

Henceforth, the indiscreet memory of Sweet Home embarrassed her. She could not understand as why the beautified version of the description took over the pain and trauma attached to the place. I imply that the smell or the touch of the chamomile sap might have triggered her memory of Sweet Home and had brought to her mind the images of similar trees with similar smell or feel. It's ironical that though her stream of consciousness brought to her mind the vision of 'boys hanging from the sycamores', but rather than pitying the dead boys, Sethe appreciates the beauty of the sycamore. As Mandel has put it, "the mind has a powerful capacity of blocking, "forgetting", situations too difficult to cope with, in order to survive mentally" (2006, p.586), we may say that this selective memory is Sethe survival mechanism to keep her boys alive in her memory, who ran away leaving her behind in the haunted house. It is also a possibility that the vision of 'boys on the trees' subconsciously reminded her of her run-away boys, Howard and Buglar, whom she sometimes sees as 'only their parts in trees' (Morrison, 2007, p.86) in her dreams. Or there's a possibility that seeing 'hanging bodies' reminded her of her mother whom she last seeded, hanging on a tree. Hence, her remembering the beauty of the tree and forgetting the 'dead bodies hanging from it', is her mechanism of not to mingle two memories of death of her mother and disappearance of her boys. Though, sycamores, which are "generally inoffensive", (2014, p.197) as says, Max Adams, in his *The Wisdom of Trees* and

depicted as "Tree of Life" in ancient Egypt" (2020, p.153) as mentioned by Fred Hageneder, in his *The Living Wisdom of Trees*, though replete with horrific memories of slavery and her personal pains, are beautified by Sethe's subconscious mind to avoid the confrontation with her past. Similarly, Paul D, a Sweet Home inmate, despite suppressing gruesome memories of Sweet Home, could not resist describing the trees around the plantation as beautiful, emphasizing that "Sweet Home had more pretty trees than any farm around" (Morrison, 2007, p.10). As most of the traumas Sethe experienced at Sweet Home are replaced with tree imagery, the scar on her back is yet another painful memory which Sethe distanced herself, and hence, conveniently replaced it also with an image of a chokecherry tree.

Sethe, a fugitive slave, has got her back scarred from the whippings of Schoolmaster's nephews, which has resulted into forming horrid image on her back, which Amy Denver, the white girl who rescued her from the woods, called a 'chokecherry tree':

It's a tree, Lu. A chokecherry tree. See, here's the trunk-it's red and split wide open, full of sap, and this here's the parting for the branches. You got a mighty lot of branches. Leaves, too, look like, and dern if these ain't blossoms. Tiny little cherry blossoms, just as white. Your back got a whole tree on it. In bloom. (Morrison, 2007, p.79)

The 'symbolic chokecherry tree', "along with its trunk, branches, and even leaves" (Morrison, 2007, p.16) has left an indelible mark on Sethe's memory, which she couldn't get rid of, despite multiple attempts. This symbolic tree is assessed by many characters in the novel and all of

them have got distinct reactions and responses after looking at it. The irony is that Sethe herself had never looked at the scar, “I’ve never seen and never will” (Morrison, 2007, p. 16), Sethe tells Paul D. Her description of the scar is based on how Amy had described it to her. Sethe’s description is mere a repetition, based on her memory of Amy. Kritin Boudreau too consider that majority of the characters in *Beloved*, often, “return repeatedly to the sites of physical, psychological and sexual victimization, suggesting that these characters are scarred in an unfolding variety of ways, representing the product of a system of torture” (Boudreau, 1995, p.453). The scar on Sethe’s back becomes, as William Terrill describes, “a powerful and complex symbol in the novel” (2015, p.130) which, represents “the horrors of slavery, the resilience of the human spirit, and the ongoing legacy of racial oppression in America” (p.130). In the novel, Sethe first described the image on her back to Paul D as, “I got a tree on my back ... Schoolteacher made one open up my back, and when it closed it made a tree. It grows there still” (Morrison, 2007, p.17). Sethe always referred to her scars/trauma as “a tree” as first defined by Amy. Substituting the scars with a ‘tree’, a symbol from nature, makes it convenient for Sethe’s sustainable memory to forget the pain attached to it, “it is easy to forget her past pains, then the savagery she had faced in the hands of the nephew boys” (Terrill, 2015, p.133).

It is also observed that while narrating the events Paul D about her running away from the plantation, Sethe began to talk about the tree on her back and rather than narrating the horrific incident of whipping,

she beautified the tree’s presence by talking about how the tree has grown branches, flowers and little fruits over the past year. Her reference to the tree scar growing flowers and fruits alludes to her dream prospect of having a family with Paul D and also a reference to chokecherry tree becoming a symbolic genealogical tree, where blooming depicts the hopeful assertion on the wellbeing of her children. She remembers the whipping with anger and hatred towards schoolteacher and his nephews, but the description of the resultant scar is rather appealing to her. On contrary, Baby Suggs, her mother-in-law and a ‘woods preacher’ (Morrison, 2007, p.247) rejects the glorified description of Sethe’s scar and “hid her mouth with her hand” (Morrison, 2007, p.93), when looked at the “roses of blood blossomed in the blanket” (Morrison, 2007, p.93). Albeit ‘Hiding her mouth’ suggests her shock and cry of pain after looking at her daughter-in-law’s scarred back, yet the idea of plant imagery inscribed on Sethe’s back is not completely rejected by her. Even Paul D, after the unsatisfied sexual encounter with Sethe, rejects the idea of scar as a chokecherry tree and said that the scar is unpleasingly “a revolting clump of scars” (Morrison, 2007, p.21) but nothing like a tree and he continues, “maybe shaped like one, but nothing like any tree he knew” (Morrison, 2007, p.21). For him trees are welcoming and “inviting; things you could trust and be near (21) and symbols of life, liberty and fellowship, like ‘Brother’ a tree at Sweet Home, a specific tree named so by Paul D and his fellow slaves at the plantation, became a companion and also ‘like a brother’ (p.25) to him and others in every aspect of the life. Many critics like Bonnet

and Fluton have emphasised the significance of 'Brother' as not just a physical tree, which gave shade to the slaves, but a tall tree which also became a foil to that missing women companionship which all men on the plantation longed for, "The tree's very name, Brother, emphasises not only its animate but human-like nature" (Bonnet 1997, p.). Later, when Paul D was at Alfred Georgia prison he longed for the similar companion and hence, planted a sapling there. 'Brother' at the Sweet Home plantation and that sapling at Alfred, Georgia were something more than merely plants, they became the objectified human companions to Paul D. Brother was also referred by Fluton as that 'community tree' which every African traditional society has at the centre of the home or village or community, which is centre of gathering and community meetings.

Hence, for Paul D trees and plants are symbol of hope, survival and companionship. Even later in life, as the last of the escaped men from Alfred, Georgia, Paul D yearned for the 'flowering trees'. For him, all flowering trees; from "dogwood to blossoming peach, from cherry blossoms" (Morrison, 2007, p.112), to magnolia, chinaberry, "pecan, walnut and prickly pear" (p.112), became the guiding force behind finding the "Magical North" (Morrison, 2007, p.112). Now talking about the duality of tree imagery, trees were not always promising for Paul D. Woods and forest were dark and deep for Paul D too. Paul D, "Crawling out of the woods, cross-eyed with hunger and loneliness" (Morrison, 2007, p.131), an escaped prisoner, he was horrified and frightened of the woods. If flowering trees symbolise hope, in woods and forests,

which he crossed as a fugitive slave and a prisoner, alongside with other men, he had "to run for his life" (Tjerner, 2009, p.9). Woods and forests have dual connotation for other characters too. Ella shares her fears with Paul D when she said, "anything white floating around in the woods-if it ain't got a shotgun, it's something [she does not] want no part of" (Morrison, 2007, p.93). For Sethe woods were both - a symbol of hope and fear. As a runaway slave, dark woods protected her from the slave catchers and also it is where she met Amy and delivered Denver when she had no chance that she could make it through. Later, she was horrified and frightened being alone in woods, "alone and weak, but alive, and so was her baby" (Morrison, 2007, p. 90). Woods for free Sethe and her daughters was a place to enjoy the merriment together, "Walking back through the woods, Sethe put an arm around each girl at her side. Both of them had an arm around her waist" (Morrison, 2007, p.175).

It was cultural in every African traditional society to have a tree at the centre of the home/village/community for general gathering and community meetings. Baby Suggs, an ex-slave, now a community healer, converts the open place in the inside of the dark woods into "Clearing"-community centre, where she took the role of the community mother, guided and supported the rest of the community, sitting on a huge flat-sided rock, every Saturday afternoon and prayed silently while the people waited and "watched her from the trees". Woods for her and the entire community of the ex-slaves became a holy place, a guiding force and a healer. Many critics are also of the view that Morrison's description of clearing in

Beloved was an attempt on her part to connect to her African heritage.

Clearing in the *Beloved* serves as a holy place, which not only reconnects the black community of slaves or ex-slaves or fugitive slaves with their African ancestry, but also functioned as a source of empowerment to these voiceless people. It became a place where people forget their pasts and love every part of themselves as they are. The freedom from the past lies in acceptance. Similarly, it was when Sethe accepted her past, and take claim of her actions and reclaimed it, only then she was called out to the Clearing. Sethe decided to go to the Clearing, back where “Baby Suggs had danced in sunlight” (Morrison, 2007, p.86), when she had accepted *Beloved* as reincarnation of her dead daughter and confessed to her the reason for doing what she did.

Trees were also promising for Denver, Sethe’s daughter who was born in the woods with the help of a “white woman come out the tree” (Morrison, 2007, p.187). Trees appealed to her till she stayed inside the home, 124 Bluestone. Though she has created a bower, a secret place in the boxwood trees, “closed off from the hurt of the hurt world” (Morrison, 2007, p.28), it was safe and secured only when she was alone in there. With the arrival of the winters and *Beloved* as the reincarnated sister, the secret place was no longer safe for her. Once it snowed, the place was chilly and uninviting.

Beloved’s reincarnation as Sethe daughter is the centre plot of the novel. Chapter four of the novel marks the appearance of a young girl of age eighteen

sitting against a tree, “A fully dressed woman walked out of the water. She barely gained the dry bank of the stream before she sat down and leaned against a mulberry tree” (Morrison, 2007, p.50), narrator introduced *Beloved* to the readers. *Beloved* sitting beside the mulberry tree, becomes a symbolic tree to Sethe, who both helped and impede Sethe’s ‘ritualistic healing’ (Krumholz, 1992, p.366). After her appearance at 124, Bluestone, *Beloved* is seen either “hiding in the trees” (Morrison, 2007, p.263), or “far side of the trees” (p.165) or “standing in the trees whispering” (p.101), or “watching her (Sethe) from the trees” (p.95). After women of the community casted *Beloved* out of Sethe’s house, Ella was not so sure of her disappearance and said, “‘Maybe,’ ‘maybe not. Could be hiding in the trees waiting for another chance’” (Morrison, 2007, p.284). Hence, the girl who was found sitting under the Mulberry tree, disappeared in the tree. Mulberry tree is also mentioned when Baby Suggs celebrated the arrival of Sethe and her grandchildren at 124 Blue stone and baked 3 mulberry cakes for the community people. In ancient African Culture Mulberry tree is a symbol of family tree. Though mulberry tree became a home for Sethe’s dead daughter, till she was found out by Sethe and Denver, the extravagant mulberry cakes caused animosity between community and Baby Suggs.

Tree was also symbolic for Sixo, “the wild man” (p.11), “the unsuitable” (p.228) of the Sweet Home Men. Tree become a source of resilience and his dancing around the tree at night became a narrative of resistance and also a source of interactions between humans and nature. Every night, he engrossed in those solitary rituals,

where other slave inmates weren't allowed to be a part of, partly explained his unusual behaviour, his wilderness and his wildness:

Sixto went among trees at night. For dancing, he said, to keep his bloodlines open, he said. Privately, alone, he did it. None of the rest of them had seen him at it, but they could imagine it. (Morrison, 2007, p.25)

He was a man of nature who exhibited a kinship to the natural world and respects the spirits of the dead. But ironically, he was tied to the same tree and burned down by schoolteacher. Sixto was a character who in many sense matched the free spiritedness and the wildness of the nature.

Conclusion :

Hence, trees and images of trees are symbolised as both benign and harmful, and these varying representations permeates *Beloved*. Throughout the novel, trees have been represented and given both positive and negative meanings. We also see that the relationship between trees and various characters in *Beloved* is complicated and complex and one cannot just label those as good or bad. It was the situation in case of the characters which governs the action taken by them as good and evil. Similarly, the memory evoked by a specific tree denotes the imagery related to it. As William J. Terrill justly puts:

Beloved, however, explores trees within the specific consciousness of American slavery, where they have multi-valent meanings: whips, switches, scars, and paradoxically, the healing and regenerative power of nature and community (2015, p.126).

Hence, various trees - symbolic and natural have powerful and multi-layered connotations in the novel. The choke-

cherry tree of Sethe's scar represents both the physical and psychological scars of slavery, the importance of memory and remembrance in confronting the past and reclaiming the self. By showing her scar to Paul D and Baby Suggs, Sethe confronted her suppressed past, and overcame the trauma of her past, and the guilt of her actions. By revealing it to Paul D, she strongly asserted her agency and reclaimed her own narrative. Many critics and scholars have studied Sethe's scar(s) as a symbol of her resilience and survival as well. The viny quality of the scar also suggests growth and regeneration, and thus Sethe's ability to overcome her trauma and create a new life for herself and her children. However, one imagery which permeates the novel is tree as the reservoir of pain and trauma caused by the institution of slavery. Trees become a site of trauma and memory/re-memory but also a source of identity and sustainability and a valuable reservoir of social-ecological memory (SEM) when human and nature came in contact in the novel, *Beloved*.

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Digital Teaching of Grammar and Vocabulary Creatively

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Abstract

At present the role and status of English in India is higher than ever as everyone realized the importance of English for global communication. It is evidenced as many parents, whether from rural or urban areas, are opting for English as medium of instruction for their wards. At the same time, the growth and availability of educational technology like the internet, computer, LCD and digital board are making the teachers use them as teaching aids and adapt to the different teaching methods. As a result, in the present age, it is the innovative teachers who have been trying to bring all the advantages of information communication technology (ICT) to the classroom and enhancing the result of the teaching-learning process. The learners too are taking advantage of different gadgets, which are easily available in the market, to enhance their learning.

This paper discusses how the students can be involved in classroom activities to improve their knowledge of grammar and vocabulary creatively through digital board (smart board) and gain hands-on experience in operating the web tools and apps. Further, it explains how the study was conducted in a B.Tech first year classroom where the researcher used the digital board, which was newly installed with access to the internet. The activities using this board were conducted in the classroom setting of Geethanjali College of Engineering and Technology located in Hyderabad where the researcher teaches.

Key Words

Information communication technology, digitization of higher education, digitalization of learning, digital board)

Introduction :

Information communication technology (ICT) has made an impact on the quality and quantity of teaching, learning and research in the offline and online mode of

education. The different ICT tools and apps are helping us to access higher education. Further, the new technology is strengthening the relevance of education to the workplace and raising educational

quality by creating an active process connected to real life. Furthermore, the information revolutions made the language teachers of the day to up skill and update their respective subjects to catch up with the digital world where new tools and apps for learning of grammar and vocabulary are easily available. Today, learners have an option to get their doubts clarified by prompting Google whereby they get answers and access to innumerable audio clips, video clips on the subject. In any case, computers, Generative AI and AI ChatGPTs can never substitute a teacher just as they cannot provide the same feel and concern for the learners as shown by a face to face teacher. Hence, the enthusiastic teachers are not leaving a chance to be on par with the knowledge demands of the learners of the day. Thus, the new era assigns new challenges and duties on the teachers of the day.

Digitization of Higher Education :

The traditional method of teaching has been drastically changed with information communication technology (ICT). The arrival of communication devices or applications which we use include radio, television, cellular phones, networks, software and satellite systems, as well as the various services and applications associated with video conferencing and distance learning. These scientific gadgets give information which is a key resource for undergraduate teaching, learning, research, and publishing. This information thus helps the teacher to mould tools for educational change and reform. In fact, older technologies such as the telephone, radio and television, although now given less attention, have a longer and richer history as instructional tools. ICT is now regarded as a utility such as water and electricity and hence has a major role to

play in education, learning and research in general. Thus, ICT is an indispensable part of the contemporary world. The field of education has certainly been affected by the penetrating influence of ICT worldwide and in particular developed countries' remarkable exploitation of technology. It can be stated that the several gadgets created by ICT have become handy and helpful to the teachers and learners to learn any subject and the list includes computers, the internet, e-dictionary, e-mail, blogs, audio clips, videos clips, ipod, powerpoint, digital board etc. Thus, digitization of education is facilitating the teachers at tertiary level to reorient their approach to the teaching of English.

Application of Information Communication Technology (ICT) in Classroom :

The English learner of the day has got several avenues to acquire the knowledge of the English language as educational technology is easily available and is being used in educational institutions and at home. Educational systems all over the world are under increasing pressure to use the new information and communication technologies (ICTs) in the classroom for effective learning. The students of the day are eagerly waiting for the teacher to bring new technology to the classroom. Also, they are expecting the teacher to come to class with all his experiences and skills as a critic, Robert Davidson said,

“Text is only a pretext for the teacher and he has to carry all his experiences to the classroom”

When the teacher comes to class with experiences, skills and ICT enabled teaching aids and adapts them as a suitable method of teaching then the learners not only understand what is taught but they adapt the same lifelong. Their technological

knowledge allows them to work and learn from experts and peers in a connected global community and also they in turn invent new communication devices or applications. Further, technology provides so many options to make teaching interesting and more productive in terms of improvements. Both social and linguistic transformations are significantly influenced by technology.

In this regard the British linguist David Graddol (1997:16) states,

“Technology is the cornerstone of the globalization process, influencing various aspects such as education, work, and culture. The prevalence of the English language has seen a significant surge post-1960. Currently, English holds a pivotal role and status as it is the language used in social contexts, politics, socio-cultural activities, business, education, industries, media, libraries, and cross-border communication. It is also a key subject in curriculums and the primary medium of instruction. It is also a crucial determinant for university entrance and processing well paid jobs in the commercial sector.”

Thus, in view of the technological advantages, a teacher still is viewed as ‘a sage on the stage’ and the students expect a teacher to be tech-savvy to guide them properly.

Digital Board :

ICT has given us many learning tools and of those the latest one is the digital board which is also known as smart board or white board. Just as the smart phones revolutionized the entire world, so also the entry of digital board into classrooms, the teaching-learning process is going to make great strides hitherto unheard of. The interactive displays that are possible on digital board can be used by teachers to create more dynamic lessons by typing on

the screen. They have an option for calling attention to certain topics with highlights, circles, arrows or zooming in and sharing multimedia content such as videos, web pages, presentations and images. Thus, in the world of digital learning learners learn easily when they are fully engaged and exposed to hands-on experience. Further, a classroom with the facility of digital board enhances learners’ learning experience by allowing them to see diagrams, charts, maps and videos on a large screen in front of them. If we compare the usefulness of digital board with that of black board, the blackboard is limited to a single user as it requires to wipe out and no chance to annotate or point to previous part of the lesson whereas digital board is interactive and allows the content to be annotated through available app and it can be exploited much more. Taking advantage of the utility of the digital board, a classroom action research was initiated by the researcher who happens to be a teacher for the students of B.Tech first year studying in Geethanjali College of Engineering and Technology located in Hyderabad.

Action Research :

Before describing the classroom interaction that took place with the help of the smart board, it is essential to know what ‘action research’ which the researcher used is. It can be stated that action research is different from conventional academic research as its purpose is to directly bring about change in a learning activity conducted in the classroom and to understand the reasons that contribute to the change. Thus, ‘The classroom activities when conducted systematically and recorded to find the marked change in learning outcomes of the learners can be loosely

defined as 'action research.' In this regard, it is appropriate to quote Lawrence Stenhouse, who did extensive research on 'action research',

"It is the teachers who, in the end, will change the world of the school by understanding it."

Further, the observations of Valsa Koshy (2011) on action research are an inspiration to all teachers who are involved in research oriented teaching. She states,

"I believe that ultimately the quality of educational experiences provided to children will depend on the ability of a teacher to stand back, question and reflect on his or her practice and continually strive to make the necessary changes."

The 'action research' in this paper pertains to 'the teaching of grammar and vocabulary' through web tools and apps as all the students in the class are from rural background and not aware of availability of such learning resources and when they were made to interact in the classroom situation, they made mistakes. As a facilitator of learning this researcher made them get their mistakes corrected with the help of web tools.

Technology for Teaching of Grammar:

The influence of educational technology on learning of language and grammar skills is felt unimaginably great as never before. We know that the application of technology in the teaching of grammar creates opportunities as well as challenges for the young minds. Further, technological affordances help for easy explanation and understanding of grammar and enriching vocabulary. When technology is put into practice, rules of grammar need not be memorized as students develop their

communicative competence which is nothing but 'the ability to communicate using readily accessible second language technology aids. In other words, it is the ability to make appropriate linguistic choices in face to face, remote, written and oral modes and the ability to choose appropriate technologies for communication and language learning' (Chapelle, 2009).

There are many creative ways to make students learn English grammar depending on their age. Here are a few of them:

1. **Songs :** Songs like 'Yesterday' by the Beatles can be used to make the learner learn past forms of verbs. 'Yesterday' is a melancholy song which is about the breakup of a relationship. The singer laments and records his feelings nostalgically.
'Yesterday all my troubles seemed so far away
Now it looks as though they're here to stay.
Oh, I believe in yesterday
Suddenly, I am not half the man I used to be'
2. **Games :** Games like Scoot, Fly Swat or Around World help in identifying the grammatical inaccuracies, play like Splat and Uno with cards that have sentences with different parts of speech. Even one can use online games like gamify grammar lessons and assessments. Visual aids can be used to make students remember grammar rules. Thus, one can use videos and animations to illustrate grammar concepts in a fun and engaging way.
3. **Podcast :** A podcast is an audio programme which can be heard by downloading from the internet.

Podcasts are prepared by teachers and hence they are full of ideas. They are freely available on the internet on topics like teaching grammar, phonetics etc. They are a fun way of learning. For instance, Grammar Girl, a podcast clears up confusing grammar concepts and helps us improve our writing. On the Espresso English Podcast we will learn grammar, vocabulary, phrases, idioms and more.

4. **Grammarly.com** : It is an automated online tool application that helps us write and edit documents. Grammar Checker checks for grammatical mistakes, unclear sentences and misused words whereas Essay Checker is one which checks for typos, punctuation and spelling errors and sentence clarity. After exposing the students to the above tools on grammar, I made them write one page, as part of 'action research', on the 'Importance of Discipline'. The class wrote, then the researcher made one of the students open QuillBot's online grammar checker tool to correct their writing. It promptly corrected their spellings and punctuation errors. After getting their write up corrected the students felt that writing is difficult but getting it corrected is easy.

Next, in view of the importance of 'building of vocabulary' an 'action research' was taken up in the classroom as presented below.

Technology for Teaching of Vocabulary :

Critical reading involves deep and active reading with total concentration to follow the complex textbooks of engineering. To comprehend the textual matter, strong vocabulary is required which really helps

the individual to use appropriate words appropriate to the occasion. So learning vocabulary is a continuous process. It's like embarking on a lifelong project. Aldous Huxley, the great writer about improving vocabulary, says,

‘A man with a scant vocabulary
Will almost certainly be a weak thinker.’

This researcher made the students adopt five steps of learning model to make them learn vocabulary on the digital board, viz., 1. Engage 2. Explore 3. Explain 4. Elaborate 5. Evaluate. This model helps the students build a strong foundation of knowledge through active participation. As stated in 'Introduction' to this paper, the researcher conducted activities pertaining to learning of vocabulary and grammar creatively by using the digital (smart) board as a teaching aid in the classroom setting of B.Tech first year. While engaging the students to learn vocabulary, to make classroom teaching-learning process (TLP) more effective, they were asked to select difficult words from the lesson 'Patriotism Beyond Politics and Religion' by A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, which is one of the five lessons from the prescribed textbook, 'English for Engineers.'



1. **Engage** : Each of the students was asked to pick out five most difficult words from the above lesson. One of the students was asked to come on to

the stage and made to google search the meaning of the difficult word. He typed the word 'fortitude' in the search box and clicked Enter. Within seconds the meaning of the word and phonetic transcription appeared. All in the class copied the word, its meaning and phonetic transcription. The action was just like finding the meaning of a word in the dictionary but in the 'explore' stage the students scroll up where they will find 'word coach- learn new words'



2. **Explore** : To continue the activity, then the researcher called a girl student to come and scroll up and she did as suggested. There is 'Word Coach-Learn new words.' Then one word appeared on the screen with two alternate answers on the screen, apparently only one answer is right and another wrong. Now, the student has to touch the correct answer. She did touch the screen then again one more word with two alternative answers surfaced but this time the correct antonym of the word needs to be touched. Like that four words with two alternative answers were seen on the screen and the last two pictures were shown to touch the correct one as questioned. Overall five students participated in this exploration of synonyms or antonyms of a word. Finally, the students got three answers right and two wrong.
3. **Explain** : Following the above, an explanation appeared on the screen for all the words. Thus, one can get eight explanations which really add up to the existing vocabulary of the students which he/she learns within five minutes.
4. **Elaborate** : Further, 'Learn why', appeared on the screen. When touched a clear explanation is given why an answer is appropriate or inappropriate. Thus, an elaborate explanation for each of the eight words whether correct or wrong choice made by the learner is given which makes them learn more than what is expected.
5. **Evaluate** : And to encourage the learners, a scoring too appeared on the right side corner wherein marks were added for each correct answer.

Apart from the above, the following are web tools with the help of the students whether they hail from rural or urban areas, can make use of them to improve their vocabulary. In fact, these web tools can be used for any subject. The web tools include dictionaries, thesauruses, flashcard creators and virtual learning environments (VLE) like Quizlet, Word Bucket, Lexipedia, Ninja Words, Snappy Words etc.

Quizlet : AI enhanced learning platform which is more than flashcards. It was opened on the digital board by the students who experienced the personalized quizzes as per their level and speed. The class was involved in the quiz competition in which they participated enthusiastically.

Word Bucket : It is a wonderful word gaming app. which is designed for iPhone. It can be used by an individual as a dictionary and a notebook. It supports contextual learning and speaking. It is useful in finding and learning new foreign words like French, Italian, and Russian etc. It was practically observed on the smart board when students downloaded Word Bucket for the first time, they got 50 words to practice with and it all started moving from simple words to difficult.

Ninja Words : A ninja is a Japanese combatant and so named to tell us that to know the meaning of a word is prompted, it responds very fast and when students tried much to their excitement that it was very fast in providing meanings to the prompted words.

Snappy Words : This is an online interactive dictionary and Thesaurus that clears the doubts of the prompter. It not only gives the meaning of word typed but also its related meanings visually. Word and its meanings appear in the form of

branching. If the cursor is clicked on any node then the connected meanings of that word are displayed. Students enjoyed keeping the cursor at different nodes and understanding the meanings of new words.

Fly Swat Game : It is a game that can be used to practice vocabulary and grammar skills. As per the rules of the game this researcher wrote idioms on the board relevant to the lesson and then divided the class into two and made them stand in two lines by giving a fly swatter to the first student of each line. The researcher gave a clue and whoever the student from each team first swats got the point. The following ten idioms were displayed on the board and each of the team was asked alternately to point with fly swat.



1. Between the cup and the lips– On the point of achievement.
2. A damp squib– Complete failure.

3. A dime a dozen – Anything that is common and easy to get.
4. Cast iron stomach – Someone who has no problems, complications, or ill effects with eating anything.
5. A mare's nest – A false invention.
6. A chip on your shoulder – Being upset for something that happened in the past.
7. Bite your tongue – To avoid talking.
8. At sixes and seven – Persons who have different opinions.
9. Bite off more than you can chew – To take on a task that is too big to handle.
10. Don't count chickens before they hatch – Don't rely on it until you are sure of it.

This game when played builds speed and confidence when correct words are identified on the board and get practice in learning of idioms. All the web tools presented above, if properly used, help the students to enrich their vocabulary.

Conclusion :

The students of first year B.Tech. were involved in learning how to operate the web tools and apps on the digital board pertaining to grammar and vocabulary for a period of one month. They practically learned the operation of the digital board as all of them got an opportunity to find the functioning of a particular web tool or app. Thus, it can be stated that educational technology encourages and motivates

students to gain new knowledge through easy methods. The total involvement of the students was very encouraging as they learned grammar rules and enriched their vocabulary. The activities performed in the classroom situation were result oriented as all of them passed the mid-term test that was conducted following this learner-centered learning.

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English classes with game integration boost language learning for second language learners-A research experiment

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Abstract

English as a second language (ESL) is becoming inescapable and inseparable from the Indian educational system. Learning a second language requires a blend of mental, physical, and emotional work to send and comprehend linguistic information correctly. This study investigated the advantages of employing language games when teaching English as a foreign language in Karaikal Government Schools. The study looked at how playing games with 40 students between the ages of 13 and 15 affected their level of cognitive activation. Different aspects of cognitive development, particularly mentality, were at play when the research technique compared the methods used in running language games with kids in the experimental and control groups. The experimental groups executed the tasks more skillfully and were more likely to be aware of cognitive processes and activities than the control groups. According to a study, planning to turn didactic games into a focal point of children's high school preparation and striving to increase game activity increases cognitive activity. According to studies, language games are substantially connected with enhanced cognitive activity. The results demonstrated that games for language instruction can be helpful for EFL students. Playing language games with the class might help students form good relationships. Based on these findings, the researcher advised curriculum designers to fill the syllabus with adequate language games. Teachers should shift from dictatorial lecturers to facilitators who support and motivate students as they learn a foreign language.

Keywords

Language Games, School students, Game Activity, Language Education.

Introduction :

It is well known that learning a language is challenging and challenging to master. We possess inherent abilities that allow us to learn languages from

infancy (Chomsky, 1986). Language is a vital aspect of communication. To picture a civilization without language is quite tricky. It improves cognitive clarity and controls all of a person's behavior. It is a

conduit for civilization and culture (Bolinger, 1968). The young child picks up the mother tongue fast because of the favorable environment and extensive exposure. However, it takes deliberate effort to learn a second language, and most individuals only have limited exposure to it (Bose, 2007). Most students depend on classroom instruction when studying a second language (James, 1996). Numerous factors, such as one's attitude, level of self-assurance, motivation, amount of time spent immersing oneself in the language, classroom environment, upbringing, and availability of qualified teachers, impact learning a second language (Verghese, 2009).

Different strategies and methods have been developed and used in ESL classes to give students positive learning experiences. These include Communicative Language Teaching, the Direct Method, the Bilingual Method, the Grammar Translation Method and the Audio-Lingual Method. However, these techniques and approaches must be adapted and modified according to the situation and the level of the learners to achieve effective learning results. The communicative language teaching approach (CLT) has been introduced to fill the gaps between the preceding techniques. CLT has recently been recognized as India's best ESL teaching strategy.

Review of Literature :

The development of mental and cognitive processes in adolescents, which strongly favors language games, has always been a concern for teachers. (Gasim qz, 2020)

Game-based learning was developed in the 18th century by academics like Christian Gotthilf Salzmann. (Contributors

to Wikimedia projects, 2005). They employed a range of activities to make learning enjoyable for kids while meeting their developmental needs. F. According to Ferebl (2000), he uses these games in his lessons as a didactic tool. According to him, the game's great educational value comes from its capacity to foster better communication, imagination, and thought processes. According to F. Ferebl, using the game in classrooms as a teaching aid makes sense. For children's video games, he produced several instructional titles. (Gasim qz, 2020)

The fact that Tikheeva recognized the purpose of didactic games is particularly commendable (Tikheeva, 2013). She had a good reason to suppose the kid's most varied skills-perception, communication, attention and thinking-could all be developed through the instructional game. According to various researchers, playing with toys is the core of life when children are in school. It served as a safe refuge for them away from concerns, the battle-field, the gaming polygon, victories, and successes, as well as from consolation and hopes (Petrovska et al., 2013). The child's requirements for physical activity in its environment and desires, aspirations, feelings, and thoughts take center stage. The game helps children grow in morality, intelligence, emotion and social development in addition to meeting their biological and psychological needs. The numerous characters in the games allow the youngster to experience good and evil and what behavior is and is not appropriate while being the product of a child's imagination. Playing games is an essential form of enjoyment for both children and adults. They have particular educational significance and aid children in organizing them-

selves autonomously. Games are a good teaching tool because they allow youngsters to learn new things, expand their horizons, and develop new habits (Petrovska et. al., 2013).

In instructional environments like schools and institutions, didactic games are becoming increasingly well-liked. In recent years, plays and games have come to life again. It offers undeniable didactic benefits when comparing learning with them to the traditional teaching paradigm (Surdyk, 2007; Kapp, 2012). The effectiveness of teaching different subjects and using didactic plays and games has been the subject of several research studies. Johan Huizing proved Roger Caillois' contention that play is a fundamental human activity. They are regarded as the most significant pioneers of ludology or the study of games (Surdyk, 2007). The advancement of didactic game theory and its use. (Gasim qz, 2020) Through traditional games, children learn the value of movement, acquire significant experiences, develop and feel emotions, confront perceptions of what is beautiful and ugly, what makes them happy or unhappy and excite all of their senses. These games help players socialize, self-organize, discuss, and agree in the game, learn to choose their leader (captain) democratically, fit into the group, activate all of their senses, develop imagination and form abstract opinions. These games also help players meet their social needs, such as contact with peers and adults who serve as their role models (Obradovich, 2012).

Research has consistently shown a connection between learning and gaming, and the basic structures and methods for didactic game guides have been established. Because of this, the issue persists

despite the advent of didactic games and their vital role in kids' cognitive development. (Gasim qz, 2020)

According to the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (2003), a game is an unfair but legal technique for obtaining what you want. A game is an activity that has guidelines, a purpose, and a sense of amusement. The elements of a game are objectives, regulations, difficulty and interaction. According to Jill Hadfield, games can be divided into two categories: competitive games, in which players or teams race to be the first to achieve the goal and cooperative games, in which players or teams cooperate to achieve the goal (Jill Hadfield, 1998). A game can be cooperative as well as challenging or competitive. Wright divides the games into five categories, including those that are educational or informational, sports-related, sensorimotor (such as action or arcade games), other vehicle simulators, and strategic (such as role-playing, adventure or puzzle games) (Andrew Wright, 1984).

The games are similarly divided into two categories by Brewster and Dennis Girard: code control and communication. Code-control games aim to score more points than opponents, and a winner is frequently declared. Teams or the entire class can participate. Conversation games rely on knowledge gaps or correctness to enhance fluency and meaningful "communication." Playing it in pairs or small groups is common (Brewster and Dennis Girard, 1992).

Brumfit and Ray Tongue claim that games have the following qualities: Games are activities with specific rules with definite objectives, entail competition between players or between players and the objective, and are meant to be fun (Brumfit and Ray

Tongue, 1995). A game is an enjoyable activity with rules that allow people to compete. Kids like participating in enjoyable activities. Children need to be immersed in anything active, according to Harmer, because “they will often not sit and listen!” (Harmer, 1991) It implies that kids like playing a lot. Children require regular activity changes. Teachers need to use more imagination and creativity while developing a teaching strategy. Kids enjoy playing games.

Teachers can use any available communicative activity or game to teach kids English. Many traditional games can be converted to foreign language instruction, as Roger Gower, Diane Phillips and Steve Walter noted: “As with any communication activity, the areas of languages produced may be predictable and therefore valuable as a guided activity” (Roger et al., e Walter, 1995). This means that the game can assist the teacher in teaching the students a foreign language. According to John Haycraft, games are a fun technique to encourage students to take initiative when speaking English. They boost motivation because they are subtly competitive (John Haycraft, 1997). In addition, games are enjoyable activities that can inspire students to participate in the teaching-learning process. It might catch the pupils’ interest. It is a beautiful idea to use games to teach English. Playing with the language this way is highly typical in first language development. It is a natural stage in the early stages of learning a foreign language, according to Scott and Ytreberg (Scott and Ytreberg, 1990). Using games in language instruction can aid pupils in the early stages of language development. It implies that children are fundamentally playful.

In addition to being an enjoyable pastime, games can aid children in improving their linguistic abilities. Children learn through play, according to Brumfit and Ray Tongue. They converse while playing together and via interaction, they learn linguistic abilities (Brumfit and Ray Tongue, 1995)

Problem identification :

According to the researcher, the issue with the current study is due to students’ poor performance on English language examinations, lack of desire and low level of involvement in class. Exam results, data analysis, the researcher’s extensive experience teaching English as a foreign language and discussions with other English teachers all contributed to the identification of this issue. Therefore, conducting this study in English is crucial to ensure student achievement through recommended language activities.

However, it has been found that despite years of instruction and analysis in the classroom, students still need help communicating in the target language in practical contexts. In India’s vernacular medium schools, teachers and students can teach and learn ESL in under 40–50 minutes, but they are rarely placed in situations where they can apply what they have learned outside of the classroom. India has various cultures and languages, where bilingualism and multilingualism are not considered social or personal weaknesses but are greatly praised instead. Hence, these students come from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds (Sharma, 2001).

These language learners do not have the opportunity to speak the target language at home with their friends, family, or

neighbors since they do not speak English as a first language. English is not taught in schools as a language; instead, it is treated as a subject, just like science, math, and other subjects. English language instructors spend much time writing assignments rather than speaking to their students. Repetition, memorization and innumerable meticulous and intense drills on sentence patterns and grammar rules are central to instruction in English schools, but communicative skills are rarely exploited (Wang, 2010). Real conversation is absent from ESL classes. Instead of assisting students in learning how to use the language correctly in real-world contexts, language teachers emphasize teaching grammar rules and improving exam scores. It is regularly seen that some students can understand the fundamentals of grammar but need to be more open to using them in real-world contexts.

Games that Aid Second Language Acquisition :

Students can practice their language abilities by participating in various activities to be played and learned from. Additionally, ESL classes might employ these games. Play-based learning, in which students actively participate in the teaching-learning process, has been a participative method of language instruction (Froebel, 1837). We often think that the “Play-way Method” refers to a method of instruction that is only used for young children when we hear that phrase. It may also be attractive to teenagers who are learners. Game-based language instruction is a unique approach. Using games as language learning activities helps students learn new vocabulary, practice grammar, and review previously taught information more quickly while piquing their interest in the subject.

Second language acquisition is acquiring a second language after being fluent in the first. However, it is usually stated that first-language proficiency facilitates the study of second languages, but a few other factors must be considered. The language games may, therefore, satisfy the four criteria for learning a second language-motivation, teaching, exposure, and use (Willis, 1996).

Teachers’ attitudes toward a specific teaching strategy, like games, classroom utilization, and appropriateness, all impact the teaching-learning process (Valipour and Aidinlou, 2014). In order to test the relationship between various learning theories and game-based language learning, as well as the actual application of these theories through games in ESL classrooms, these theories are analyzed. To teach their impression of language games as a new approach to teaching and learning languages is done in ESL classes. This study illustrates how these ideas could be integrated into language games in the ESL classroom to provide the students with a fruitful learning experience. It explicitly discusses incorporating games and gaming ideas into language classrooms (EdTech Review, 2013). Communication-centered games are an excellent resource for implementing CLT in ESL courses. CLT offers pupils a wide range of understandable input in the target language. It enables students to communicate successfully in the target language in everyday circumstances through interactive games and activities like songs, role plays, and other enjoyable activities.

In contrast to lengthy “sermons,” children absorb information in an engaging game format faster, stronger and more accessible. It is a simple idea that everyone seems to understand, but as is frequently

the case, it takes time to implement. The topic of children's play is thus one of the most recent in pedagogy. This has made game-based training and education, especially didactic games, crucial. Every child enjoys playing video games. A child's memory, imagination, reasoning, emotions, volition and character develop while playing a game. The development of cognitive character, intellectual moral and volitional features, and the formation of cognitive curiosity are all supported by educational games. When working with children, one might convince them that playing helps them understand program material better and complete challenging activities efficiently and successfully. The usage of didactic games boosts the effectiveness of the educational process while also fostering children's memory and cognitive development, which significantly impacts the child's mental development. By teaching young children while they play, researchers try to turn the fun of games into the fun of learning. It should be fun to teach! (Gasim qz, 2020)

Language games include many elements, including rules, rivalry, relaxation and learning. Rules must be simple, concise, and well-explained to avoid confusion. They are created with various levels and topics appropriate for students, making everyone involved enjoy themselves and achieve the finest outcomes.

The factors that support personality development in educational and developmental games include the harmony of cognitive and emotional principles, external and internal activities and children's group and individual activities. Researchers work to ensure that all these requirements are met when conducting games, i.e., that each game introduces the youngster to

new emotional abilities, broadens their understanding of communication, and fosters both group and individual action. Researchers provide games that range from the most basic and kid-friendly to the most sophisticated, considering the essential progression of stages. Researchers base their findings on what a child already knows and enjoys doing in each game. There are at least three different sorts of students in almost every school group, and they perform differently during any activity, including in the playroom, necessitating a varied strategy.

Children of the first type are highly active, mobile and prone to intense enthusiasm. They eagerly participate in any new game and accept it with open arms. Usually, kids pick up on the game's goal quickly and try to play an active part. However, a lot of the time, these kids need more time to showcase their skills and pay attention to others. The regulations that prevent these kids from engaging in spontaneous play are the most challenging for them: waiting their turn, refusing to move until given the all-clear, and letting others have the spotlight or the desirable item. The application of these guidelines is also highly advantageous to them. When playing these games with the students, the researchers aim to convey the value of adhering to the rules and make sure making is enjoyable for them.

Children of the second type are more reserved, wary and careful. They typically are not too eager to switch to a new activity and only sometimes immediately understand the game's goal. They initially cling on firmly and watch the other kids' behavior without showing any interest. Such a child is only forced to participate in studies once he is old enough. He first

observes the game and participates passively, but over time, he slowly picks up an older child and his peers' enthusiasm for it, and eventually, he starts to take the lead. With the instructor's encouragement and consent, this is undoubtedly made feasible.

Not all kids participate in the game, even with the teacher's assistance. There may be drab, inactive students in each class who fall behind their classmates and need help to behave on a level with them. They need to understand the game's goal after numerous playthroughs, avoid taking on active roles, and misbehave when they do. Special care must be given to these kids. They are ineffective for team or group projects. They require adult attention, personal touch, explanation, and encouragement.

Numerous types of research have demonstrated the value of didactic games in developing the mind. A didactic game can teach preschoolers while simultaneously serving as a form of learning, independent play and most importantly, a tool for comprehensively developing the child's personality.

Significance of the study :

The results of this study have significant implications for English language teachers, who should devote more time to games and much more time to exercises. It also has significant implications for curricula, which should choose the best strategies for utilizing games by enhancing curricula with game activities.

The study's objectives :

The objectives of this final project are:

- To describe the process of teaching English skills to children by using games.

- To describe how practical teaching English skills is by using games.
- Educate English language teachers on the value of employing language games. Questions of the Study

Methodology :

Study Design :

To determine the benefits of playing language games in English classrooms in the Government schools of Karaikal district, Puducherry. This quasi-empirical and analytical study evaluates these benefits.

Individuals and Sample :

The population consisted of students aged 14 to 15 from Government high schools in Karaikal, Puducherry, India. Following the stratified random selection technique, 40 students from the ninth and tenth grades were chosen as the sample from the population. The district of Karaikal's rural and urban areas were represented in the sample.

Methodology :

A class of 40 students was chosen, and the learners had to complete a pre-test of 50 questions objectively examining their knowledge of the English language. The questions were all age-appropriate, and proficient English teachers thoroughly evaluated the reliability of the test paper. Additionally, their scores were noted for analysis. The children were afterward required to do game-based English sessions for 30 days, lasting an hour each day. Every lesson was an activity-based language lesson with no repetition. The same group of students was assessed on their language skills with a new set of 50 questions following a month of 30 interactive game-based English lessons.

For analysis, the results were recorded. The outcomes showed that they had improved their abilities and attitudes about learning English, a new language.

Additionally, their youthful minds were free of their pointless hatred of English. Children volunteer to learn English and attend classes with enthusiasm. Even shy, introverted kids volunteered in classrooms with activities and broke out of their shells of restraint.

Lesson Planning :

These authors' plans have been developed for the 40 days of game-based English lessons. It was crucial to creating a lesson plan. The teacher often created the lesson plan before the materials were presented. The teachers may find it easier to explain the content with a lesson plan. A lesson plan may improve the teacher's ability to manage time. Sons have been developed. It was crucial to creating a lesson plan. The teacher often created the lesson plan before the materials were presented. The teachers may find it easier to explain the content with a lesson plan. A lesson plan may improve the teacher's ability to manage time. As a result, the learning-teaching process could be successful. The following are some benefits of good teachers having a strategy for their work, according to Scoot and Ytreberg (1998):

- It saves time.
- They are aware of what they will require for each lesson.
- Teachers can see how to balance their lessons with ease.

Making lesson plans can help teachers organize their lessons and activities. It might help instructors keep their mistakes

to a minimum while facilitating learning. Therefore, the author always prepared a lesson plan before teaching. Based on the TNSCERT Textbooks for the relevant classes, the researchers at the Government schools in Karaikal employed age-appropriate content for creating lesson plans. The author created a lesson plan appropriate for the content before teaching. Four skills are covered in the exercises the researcher created. They are listening, speaking, reading, and writing abilities. Meanwhile, the author's lesson plan includes the following:

- i. Motivation :** This step also includes the greetings part. In order to use their second language, English, in a new model class, the instructor first engages the students by posing a variety of thought-provoking questions and engaging exercises. At this point, every class begins with a different greeting from the teacher and the students. While recording attendance, the teacher gives each student's name numerous descriptors, flower names, or their favorite sweet names. Unique each day.
- ii. Concept introduction :** The teacher now asks the class questions about the upcoming lessons. Additionally, the instructor innovatively explains the subject matter. The teacher uses a variety of activities when quizzing the class or going over the rules of a game. At this point, the instructor introduced the students to the fresh information. Regarding the subject discussed, the teacher also questioned the students. The author used specific images to describe the subject and pose questions to the pupils.

For instance :

The teacher would pose the following questions to the class as they were discussing tenses:

Teacher : What are you doing? What is he doing? What is the child doing in the picture? Etc.

The purpose of this stage was to introduce the idea. Additionally, it served as brainstorming. It might prepare the students for class attendance. The teacher used visuals to help the kids better understand the content.

- iii. **Instructional activity (Main phase of learning) :** The central part of teaching and learning activities began at this point. The teacher gave the students instruction in four different skills. They were doing all four- listening, speaking, reading and writing.

For the students, it is crucial to teach listening skills. Young language learners typically pick up new languages through what they hear. Young students need to be taught speaking skills, which is fundamental. It might benefit the pupils to be able to communicate in English. They must be proficient in spoken English pronunciation. Reading instruction is also essential. In addition to teaching students how to read written English, we also covered sentence comprehension. Teaching writing is essential because it is a fundamental language production skill. Students must understand proper English writing techniques.

The teacher doped a range of game-oriented activities to teach and include students in indirect language acquisition for 30 days. The activities used to teach second languages are listed below, and they were all set up in a game-based environment that was well thought out.

Day	Activity/ Games Planned	Teacher/ Students Activities
1	Homonyms	Students would be urged to create a variety of homonyms.
2	Prefixes and Suffixes	The teacher utilizes a variety of prefix/ suffix flashcards, and the pupils construct numerous words using the proper affixes.
3	Homophones	Students partner up to create and present a variety of homophones they regularly employ in their daily speech and writing.
4	Anagrams	The students were divided into groups and each had to answer the anagrams produced by others.
5	Talk show	During a thematic role-playing activity, kids would adopt their favorite characters and voice phrases, imitating them.
6	Puppet show	Kids are invited to make their puppets to display their talent in a themed presentation.

7	Literary Exhibition	For a literary exhibition in the classroom, each participant would be encouraged to make their exhibit based on any literary theme.
8	Vocabulary game	Scramble and other word games are played in class to help students improve their vocabulary.
9	Spelling bee	Students were required to spell the words and write them on the notes by their fluency level.
10	Fill in the blanks	Students are asked to fill in the blanks using the proper grammar terms from the grammar basket.
11	Opposites	Each participant chooses a set of flashcards and is required to locate their opposing pair among the group.
12	Poster Making	Students are encouraged to design attractive, colorful posters based on literary themes.
13	Listening Comprehension	Students must listen to a story and respond verbally to the questions.
14	Drama	Students were required to read or listen to and enact a tale in class.
15	Advertisement creating	Students were given the information and tasked with creating a visually appealing advertisement.
16	Mind mapping	After reading a poem to the class, the teacher instructed them to create a mind map for the poem they had just heard.
17	Drawing a story	After hearing a story, students are invited to depict their mental images of the story.
18	Reading comprehension	A brief excerpt and some questions will be provided for students to read and respond to.
19	Crossword puzzles	Groups of pupils solve the imaginative crossword puzzles.
20	Indigenous Games	The instructor invites each student to prepare their own native game and demonstrate it in class using a pair.

21	Group Discussions	Students are urged to participate in a topic group discussion without repeating words more than three times.
22	Report Writing	Students were encouraged to compose reports on any specific event in the school.
23	Rearrange the jumbled sentences	After hearing a story read aloud, students were tasked with rearranging the disjointed sentences presented in paper strips in a logical sequence. Work is done in teams.
24	Recite it/ Monologue	Students are inspired to perform a poem dramatically.
25	Language Sudoku	This puzzle can be framed using parts of speech or other grammar items. Sudoku puzzle
26	Reporting a news	Children would listen to the news and report/narrate it in class in a profound way.
27	Notice Writing	Students take on the role of organizers and prepare a notice for their school's upcoming annual day celebration.
28	Story building from hints	Children would create a story based on the hints provided and continue it in groups. Every participant must contribute to the story.
29	Mime Shows	Students work in pairs to identify the proper sentence by miming and mixing it with their partners.
30	Mock Interview	The children were partnered up for a mock interview after the session. Their classmates asked them during the session about the previous 30 days of game-based English class and their thoughts on the event.

Without feeling the stress of learning a new language, children learn the language significantly every day. Every day during the game session, the teacher takes on the roles of facilitator and scorer, scoring the participants' performances. At the start of the session, the teacher reviewed each game's rules. Each session's winners were recognized and given little presents as tokens of appreciation.

iv. Assignment : The assignment concludes every classroom activity. The teacher gave a final assessment of the student's performance, gave scores and honored the high achievers for the day before concluding the lesson. Rewards would be given to outstanding performers. After each productive session, the students would be given homework on the day's activities.

Knowing how well the lesson has been understood could help the teacher move on to the next session in a better way. Additionally, the teacher gave the pupils homework to do at home and specific preparatory tasks to complete before the next class. The instructor recorded an evaluation of the work the pupils had completed.

After the experimental 30-day game-based English learning sessions, a final evaluation test with 50 objective-type questions was given to the students to gauge their linguistic proficiency, and the results were saved for analysis.

Findings and Analysis :

The study's findings were examined for outcomes after the 30 hours of experimental English classes for 30 days that used games as the instructional method. The pre-test and post-test results were compared to determine whether the methodology was adequate for the pupils.

As was previously noted, a pre-test was given at the beginning of the sessions to gauge the student's proficiency level and literary abilities. Additionally, a post-test was conducted to determine the efficacy of the instructional techniques used after the 30 days of experimental sessions. Each test followed the same format, consisting of 50 questions with an objective scoring system. The assessment (post-test) results were noticeably higher than the pre-test results, which supported the claim. This unequivocally illustrates the effectiveness of teaching English to students that incorporates game-based learning. The following graph, which was produced utilizing the students' scores, aids in our understanding of how well the kids performed on the pre-test and post-test. Both the scores showed a significant variance and proved that Language games and game-oriented activities play a vital role in learning a newer concept.



Graph 1: Performance of the students in pre-test and post-test evaluated.

Students' final-day interviews were compiled and analyzed :

It is helpful to use games when teaching English in a classroom. A game is a delightful and fun activity. Children enjoy playing enjoyable games. Teachers can utilize

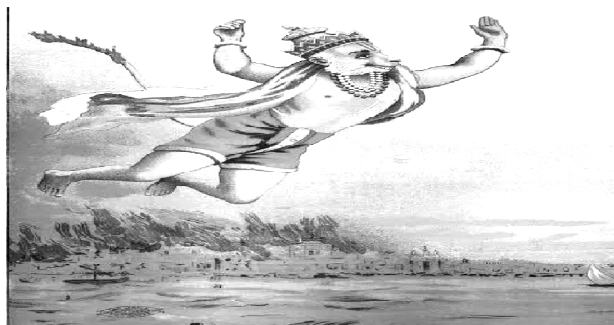
games to teach their students English and other subjects. Games play a significant part in the teaching-learning process and aid students in learning English as a foreign language. Children are entertained by English games while simultaneously

learning through play. Using games in the classroom helps the children learn while having a great time. From the fifth day of the course, some highly passive pupils begin to engage in the games form of learning. English-language games in the classroom can increase student engagement. Due to their enjoyment of playing games, students can be drawn to them during the teaching-learning process.

Additionally, games might encourage students to participate in the teaching learning process. Students can learn languages through games. Games can help strengthen

the relationship between students and teachers. Children who participate in these classes are encouraged to go to school regularly.

The pupils' engagement and performance in class are recorded daily based on their comments. To prove that the game-based learning methodology is the critical factor that inspired students to get involved and break out of their shells of inhibition to participate and outperform in their English classes, the student's participation and performance from day one have been tracked, analyzed and graphically represented.



Graph 2: evidence for the gradual improvement in participation and performance of the students

Discussion :

The student's engagement in the English language teaching process is essential. Games can assist the teacher in creating entertaining exercises, keeping in mind that students might quickly become bored when engaging in an individual job. It is great to play more games. The teacher, therefore, taught the students English skills using interactive games. The objective is for the students to adore English.

Young students typically struggled to pay attention and focus during lessons that lasted more than 20 minutes. They would play and be distracted in class if the instruction were boring. It could interfere with learning and make the class ineffective.

The children were extremely eager to participate in the activity by utilizing games in the teaching-learning process. The pupils were more attentive to the instruction so the teacher could manage the class. Games can increase students' participation in class because they are enjoyable activities. More attention will be paid to what the teacher is teaching, and they will respond actively. The lessons will, therefore, be accepted readily by the students.

Children love participating in challenge activities, on the whole. Competitive gaming pushes players to compete to win. A better approach is to use competitive games in the classroom. The students may be

encouraged to attend the class as a result. In addition to the lessons, the games were well received. They additionally awaited the opportunity to participate in the English lesson. Playing games in class can serve as an energizer and icebreaker when beginning or concluding a lesson. In light of this, the children will enjoy the class. They will continue to be excited about taking part in the teaching-learning process.

Numerous English-language games encourage communication. The game allowed the pupils to interact and converse with one another. The practice was relevant and in context, making the language vivid in their thoughts. What they had studied was retained by the students. The pupils engaged with one another while playing games, which significantly improved their language abilities. Consequently, games aid pupils in learning the language.

Most teachers aim to establish a connection with their pupils. Getting close to pupils is essential for teachers. By incorporating games into the teaching-learning process, we may demonstrate our abilities as individuals outside our instructors' roles. The teaching environment was made better by playing games. Children could unwind and have fun with their surroundings and each other. Because she wanted to be close to her students, the instructor employed games to teach English skills. In addition to teaching them, she also wants to be their friend.

Conclusion :

We can conclude that games have always played a significant role in the education of high school students, dating back to antiquity, after carefully examining the findings of theoretical literary studies,

the excellence of teachers-innovators, modern teachers, psychologists and practical activities on the issue. Playing games is one efficient way to improve linguistic abilities. In recent years, language games have become increasingly popular in the global context of English language instruction. Language games serve as active motivators, aiding in retention and creating a setting for language use and teamwork. Games should be prioritized in instructional planning since children learn via play. A critical tool that helps language teachers add color to their classes by offering challenge and pleasure is using games. Beginners significantly benefit from them since they may use them as a source of cognition to help them pick up sounds and rhythms and understand the foreign language.

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Feedbacking Through Scrapbooking

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Abstract

In the complex multilingual setup of India, the three-language policy was formulated in 1968, and the NEP 2020 also endorses it with flexibility extended to each Indian State in the education system. Incidentally, the State of Maharashtra was one of the States to have understood the significance of the English language through the curriculum at all levels of education and observed to permanently make it a 'modern language' to enhance skills amongst students.

The RTM Nagpur University, Nagpur, follows the State Government rule to make English mandatory for all undergraduate-level programmes. Similarly, the B.A. curriculum has Compulsory English prescribed to the students of all six semesters, irrespective of whether they are in Hindi, Marathi, or English medium. In the fifth and sixth semesters of the Hindi-medium class, the writer, as the subject teacher, made her students undertake a Scrapbook activity of pasting newspaper cuttings related to 'Water Issues' in 2018, 'Syllabus-related Technical Writing Components' in February 2023, and 'Environmental Issues' in September 2023. After the activity was accomplished, feedback was procured from the students of each batch, and it was observed that the Hindi-medium students faced similar challenges, gained and realised the importance of cognitive learning, developed insight for inculcating reading habits, felt the urge to enhance their English vocabulary, to improve the usage of correct English spellings, to improve English grammar for effective communication aptitude in all required language skill acquisition, and many more.

The current study has attempted to discuss several attributes of the English language's significance in higher education for self-progress and societal progress.

Keywords

Education, English, scrapbook, feedback, newspaper, articles.

Introduction :

English as a second or third language has been introduced in the curriculum of the State of Maharashtra since the school level. The regulation of the introduction

of English at the primary level was enforced in 2009, mandatorily in the regional medium schools. Through this compulsory mode, students have been provided an opportunity to learn, know,

and be exposed to English from the age of six. This is the age that is tender but more receptive towards language acquisition. The basic communicative components are learned and are useful in day-to-day life situations. As the levels increase, a more comprehensive, student-centric syllabus is executed for better application. The focus is on the four skills of language acquisition (English). Different formats of writing skills exist, especially as the examination system is based on them. Oral comprehension is administered to test the students' reading, speaking, and hearing skills. But this is usually constrained as an internal assessment as compared to the elaborate two- or three-hour written examination. Based on the marks/ grades procured by the students, the grade sheet/ mark sheet plays a vital role in helping students better study prospects or acquire jobs. This way, the hard skills essentially embark on the journey of students into the world as adults about securing jobs, entrepreneurship, and so on.

The speaking skills are important as they indicate articulation of thoughts, coordination of thoughts and expression, vocabulary, tone, subject knowledge, confidence, the presence of mind and reading and listening capacity, all of which account for the soft skills that are crucially responsible for securing a place of stability.

So, after studying for almost six or seven years or even more, students' comprehension of the English language is found to be weak. At the higher level of education, when these students study the language as a compulsory subject, it has been observed that it turns out to be a 'killer' subject. Students tend to develop a mental blockage, resulting in several attempts and can clear the subject with

basic 'passing' marks. Considering all the above-mentioned experiences, the writer of the current paper customised an activity to experiment with the students in the final year of B.A. Since the college where she works as a faculty member is affiliated with RTM Nagpur University, Nagpur, it has a subject called Compulsory English that the students have to opt for without any choice. This subject regulates the policy of letting the students study English as one of the mandatory languages, as a modern language. The syllabus for Compulsory English remains the same for all the mediums. For English-medium students, it is easy, but for regional-medium students, the same syllabus takes time to be completed by the teachers and the students find it difficult to cope with it as compared to their English-medium learners.

Though there are several challenges to teaching Compulsory English, it has the strength to provide what the teacher needs to accomplish in the classroom by changing and introducing different types of methodology.

For Humanities and theory classes, the classrooms generally turn into laboratories. A lot of experiments can be initiated to make learning and teaching interesting and approachable at the same time. In this paper, three similar activities of pasting newspaper cuttings and articles on three different topics are discussed. Surprisingly, the results, responses, or outcomes of the students in three different batches were found to be more or less similar.

The target groups were the B.A. Semester V/VI Hindi-medium students of a local girls' college affiliated with RTM Nagpur University, Nagpur.

Water Literacy Year 2018 :

This girls' college began to observe and dedicate each academic year to spreading awareness and preserving sensitive topics that essentially affect nature, the environment, the animal world and human existence. So, 2018–2019 was dedicated to the cause of water conservation in this college. Several programmes and activities were held to propagate the significance of the elixir of life evident only on the planet Earth. Seeking this opportunity, the writer of this paper made several video screenings on water-related issues. The Hindi-medium students of B.A. were acquainted with concepts like 'Water Wives,' 'Plastic Ocean,' 'Mission Blue' and similar short documentaries on the preservation of water and its effects on life.

Inspired by the screenings of these video documentaries, the students decided to work on water issues by compiling newspaper articles and their cuttings and making a scrapbook based on this theme. So, each student was able to collect at least twenty different water-related articles to make individual scrapbooks. Since this activity was executed in an English class, it was decided that at least twelve articles should be in English and possibly on different and varied aspects of water issues.

Technical Report Writing :

In February 2023, the students of B.A. Semester VI who were studying technical report writing like 'advertisements', 'accident reports' and 'event reports', through their Compulsory English syllabus in the non-textual portion, collected newspaper article cuttings from the local and national news dailies. Through these cuttings, the students were

able to study, learn and understand the format of such technical writing more precisely. The students were able to collect at least twenty-five news articles from English newspapers for personal scrapbook submission.

This way, they were able to get more clear and hands-on, professional exposure to write and practice on the reports that were prescribed in the subject of Compulsory English in their final year of undergraduation.

Save Life Save Earth, 2023 :

The college where these activities were carried out is currently observing the theme Save Life, Save Earth: *Vasundhara Samvardhan* for 2023–2024. In the Odd semester of the session, the students of B. A. Semester V, Hindi-medium, got motivated to compile English articles for the literacy year the college has dedicated to. The students of this class collected information not only from English newspapers but also from English magazines that are published by the local newspapers, dealing with the theme, and a few students also took printouts of certain articles from the internet.

The students learned about the G20 nations and their common goals to save the planet Earth, learned about different countries that they had never heard about, and could also identify the flags of the G20 nations since Nagpur city hosted and exhibited a gala two-day event inviting delegates of the G20 nations in March 2023 for the inception summit. The students developed an interest and volunteered to read articles based on the theme and compile them in the form of a scrapbook in September 2023, thus accomplishing a project on English, moving beyond the

syllabus, and working towards life skills through this activity.

Purpose of the Scrapbooks :

The main and chief objective of the scrapbooks was to motivate students to become familiar with English. The available sources, like the internet, local news dailies, magazines, and many more that are easily approachable, were sought after. The videos on different topics in English provided a chance to let students listen to the English language. Since all the topics/ themes mentioned in this paper to prepare scrapbooks were to sensitise the young minds, the documentaries that were chosen were effective enough to understand English comprehension.

Through articles on the internet and in newspapers and magazines, the students would read them and categorise them as per their personal understanding.

As the cuttings for newspapers were being investigated, students were motivated to read other news items in the process to increase their knowledge of English in terms of grammar, structure, vocabulary, spellings, syntax, synonyms, meanings, and so forth.

Since the students were in their final year, this was perhaps their last chance to read or write formally in English. Chances were or are that most of them would choose subjects in regional languages, such as Hindi, for further education or postgraduation, opt for a DEd/BED programme, or simply stop studies after their graduation. In order to inculcate interest and encourage the students to use computers and the internet, the urge to expose them to English was felt by the teacher, as most of the resources are available predominantly in English. These

regional medium students are talented, creative, and intelligent, but owing to their academic backgrounds and the medium of instruction they have received throughout in the Hindi language, they generally tend to feel left out. Though they sense that the English language is required for achieving goals or is instrumental in making life easier to achieve their aims, they automatically develop a liking for, feel inclined towards, and are interested in English. Almost all had the knowledge that English comprehension would bring them better and brighter prospects in the future, particularly in terms of job opportunities.

So, through this common activity of compiling newspaper articles in the form of a scrapbook, the collective goal was to make them learn the importance of English usage as the foremost objective in day-to-day set-up.

Feedback Resulting to Findings :

In all three cases, feedback was sought from all three batches by the subject teacher. The feedback was collected in written form, orally, and in a discussion format, contributing to another classroom activity. The outcome of this scrapbook activity was informative, instructive, and useful. The students in these three different batches had interestingly similar feedback to provide. These obviously resulted in the findings of the social experiment that the subject teacher could acquire.

In terms of the various requirements today, this common activity proved to be lucrative. To analyse the feedback of these students, post the activity, their responses can be distinctively categorised. To begin with, we first take into account how this activity helped the regional medium students in terms of –

Soft Skills :

“Soft skills are personal attributes that influence how well you can work or interact with others. These skills make it easier to form relationships with people, create trust and dependency, and lead teams.”

These soft skills, which are generally constructive in a professional setting and are in much demand today, were able to effectively formulate a sense of sensitivity amongst the students of all three batches who were able to empirically realise and learn that-

- To share is to be caring.
- Learnt the importance of teamwork.
- Learnt to be adaptable in the process of making personal scrapbooks.
- To be receptive while working toward some common goal.
- Be innovative individually in terms of the presentation of their work, in this case, their personal and individual scrapbooks.
- To be positive about learning new things.
- To be empathetic towards each other.
- Target healthy competition amongst themselves.
- To be articulate to demonstrate work, feelings, and other co-related aspects.
- To be effective in communication skills.
- To be able to ask for help.
- To be able to impart assistance.
- To be articulate is to express oneself.
- Work in the direction of the development of a confident personality.

Understanding the Importance of English :

“English is widely spoken and taught in over 118 countries and is commonly used around the world as a trade language or diplomatic language. It is the language of science, aviation, computers, diplomacy and tourism.... it is the language of international communication, the media and the internet.”

“Whether it is for professional or personal reasons, understanding the importance of English will help you reach your goals.”

The students did mention that they have learned and understood the importance of the English language in terms of :

- Better career prospects.
- Self-progress.
- The knowledge world is highly dominated by English.
- Books/ the internet/ media/ resources/ magazines/ newspapers, and so on are mostly effective in English coverage.
- Even if they become regional language teachers or any other subject teachers, teaching will hold more potential with the knowledge of English.
- They should know the correct usage of the English language.
- English usage develops more confidence and personality is enhanced.
- The vocabulary needs to be enriched.
- Reading skills need relearning.
- Listening to English will improve their pronunciation and clarity of speech.

- Speaking English is challenging and a continuous process for developing oneself.
- In order to explore new arenas, English is handier.
- Writing skills are important not only to clear examinations but also to be clearer in thoughts and expression.
- Spellings need to be understood with proper pronunciation.
- Learning the English language is challenging for sure, but it is interesting at the same time.
- English opens multiple avenues and opportunities.
- Students were exposed to and were able to learn the aspects of technical writing as a different and professional commodity.
- The students understood the subtle differences between general writing and creative writing.
- They learned how communicative English can be helpful and effective.
- More information is available through the medium of the English language.
- The basic knowledge of communicative English might boost confidence.
- The use of a dictionary was felt necessary.
- Exclusive usage of an English dictionary was more significant in the learning of the English language as compared to any regional language-to-English language dictionary.
- Students learned that proper and clear pronunciation can have an important impact.
- Students realised that the majority of the translations are available in English, so knowing the language will increase their chances of becoming acquainted with numerous components.
- English in India works as a neutral language.
- Though each State in India has a language of its own, English is unofficially the most important language to communicate.
- Few students learned the usage of apps like Grammarly and tested their personal writings online for accuracy.
- Computers are easily accessible with a knowledge of English.

So, the overall importance and consequences of English were felt by these three different batches of regional medium students through the scrapbooks that they worked on.

Creativity Skills :

Since “creativity is a vital skill students need to be successful in school and life. It helps with problem-solving, contributes to our satisfaction in life, and gives us a sense of purpose. Being creative helps us relax and brings enjoyment to our lives.” It was a natural inclination of the students to, in some way, exhibit their personal creativity skills by submitting the scrapbook.

- Students’ imagination regarding their individual creativity aspects was triggered through this activity of scrapbook submission.
- Each student wanted to make and create her scrapbook different from others.
- They thought exhaustively about the presentation of their scrapbook as being exceptionally creative and attractive.

- Some of the students worked on their handwriting skills to have an effective and clear message to be written as their response to each newspaper article and cuttings they had pasted in the scrapbook.
- Their individual creativity of thought led them to segregate the articles under different and varied sub-titles schematically and systematically.
- Students began to think more comprehensively to give brief explanations and captions in the English language that they practised several times.
- A few students were automatically inclined to be more crisp in writing English and thoroughly enjoyed the draft several times.
- They discovered in the process that they have basic knowledge of English vocabulary that they can utilise as a trial-and-error method.
- They began to play with word formation, transforming their information into creative slogans, descriptions, headings, and the like.
- A few developed an interest in solving simple and basic English crossword puzzles to test their English vocabulary and knowledge.
- A few enjoyed the art of flicking through the English dictionary.
- These students attempted to speak in the English language and enjoyed the activity amongst their peers.
- A complete liberty was allowed to create their scrapbooks; however, this creativity was to be done as per the requirement of the theme of the scrapbook, since most of the issues were serious.
- A few students attempted sketches and freehand drawings in their scrapbooks.
- A few sought the help of the internet to procure images and got the printouts to explain the concept of their articles, cuttings, and write-ups that they had pasted and arranged in their scrapbooks.
- Some students were able to collect images from other accessible resources like magazines and old books to enhance the articles that they affixed.
- They were able to learn to recreate an altogether new format by reusing available materials.
- Even in the process of exploring their creativity, most of the students were able to restrict and refrain themselves from heavily decorating their scrapbooks to denote the thematic significance of the newspaper articles and cuttings that they had selected.

The students in all three batches were effectively able to enhance their creativity aspects. A few of them were taken by surprise regarding their ignorance of being creative and thoroughly relished the idea of scrapbook-making activities as an edutainment process in their final year of graduation.

Cognitive Skills :

To define cognitive skills, it is a thinking skill that helps us mentally process all that we perceive, understand, and analyse this information. "These skills are essential for problem-solving, decision-making and critical thinking. Fortunately, cognitive thinking skills can be learned and developed with practice and training."

The scrapbook activity played a major role in the understanding of certain grave issues existing in the lives of these students, who worked on it not only considering the immediate need to learn English usage but simultaneously discovering and realised a few elements and their features. Since these skills “are the basic processes, our brains use to take in, organize, store, retrieve and think about information from the outside world. That is where the learning process starts. So, if a students’ foundational cognitive skills are working efficiently and accurately, the learning process is off to a good start.” It can be further added that “So much of what happens in our brains are processes we aren’t even aware of when they happen. But while they may happen non-consciously they define our ability to learn.”

The feedback that was received from students can easily and effectively be directed towards the development of their cognitive skills.

- Most of the students were heavily affected by issues like water and environmental crises.
- One student was so motivated and inspired that she began to generate compost at her home from kitchen waste and collect *nirmalaya* (offerings to Gods) for *dhoop* (incense sticks) making.
- Almost all the students of the 2018 batch pledged to take care of water and become warriors to safeguard water waste and work towards its preservation.
- All the students used old notebooks to make their scrapbooks on Environmental Issues, thus, supporting the cause of sustainable development by

practically following it.

- Many students provided their response by stating that they were not aware of the environmental crisis that is faced by rich and progressed nations like the US, the UK, Australia, Canada, etc.
- Most of them learned about forest fires being caused generally by human negligence.
- Students learned about the balance of maintaining the ecosystem.
- They learned how other animals, creatures and reptiles are of equal importance and significance to balance the ecosystem.
- Few explored the television channels and documentaries available on animal kingdoms and ecosystems.
- Through the technical report writings, students were able to learn vocabulary specific to events, professions, and the jargon used for effectiveness.
- They learned terminologies like global warming, avalanche, landslides, deforestation, environmental crisis, drought, groundwater, ocean, pollution, faecal waste, hazard, calamity, calamity, autopsy, demise, mishap, collision, by surprise, by mistake, pillion rider, rear view and many more for lifetime with accuracy and without any confusion.
- Few students practised reports beyond the prescribed syllabus topics to enhance and explore their personal abilities resulting towards the development of cognitive skills.
- The students were able to get to learn about many English renowned newspapers like ‘The Hindu’, ‘The Hindustan Times’, ‘The Times of

India' and popular magazines like 'The National Geographic', 'India Today', the 'Time' magazine, through this scrapbook activity which in a way is an accomplishment to be acquainted with for the non- readers of English and there are chances of these students to access them in future.

Summing up :

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has stated to provide equal opportunities and prospects to students at all levels and strata of society. The same was specified by the previous Education Policies and has been practised by educators since teaching-learning pedagogy was developed and devised by humans as social animals. Various adaptations and modifications were naturally invented and created as per the needs of the generation's requirements.

It is an attempt on the part of each teacher who has now turned a facilitator for the students to initialise methodology in a customised form and implement it in a regular classroom set-up that can help and impact pedagogy in terms of the teaching and learning process. It is not at all important to always think about an out-of-the-box idea to bring about results in a positive fashion, but to implement and execute the already-known ideas as methods. These implementations and accomplishments would vary from batch to batch. What might work effectively with a particular batch does not guarantee the same or similar success for the other batches. Improvising the same activity as per the requirements of the batch might bring productive and constructive spectacles.

It is crucial to try to keep on experimenting and carry out different but simple methods to engage the students and also the teacher in teaching techniques.

As had been mentioned earlier, each classroom is a laboratory, and the results or outcomes of batches may differ. Few students might be able to individually gain through such experiments; a few might be able to contribute in the future as professionals, create more such activity-based learning and keep adding to the continuous process of sharpening the skills of education. The ultimate goal of education is to make students and future citizens independent, confident, responsible citizens, positively effective social animals and able to rise above certain limitations towards social, global, and universal well-being.

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The Power of English in the Global Start-up Ecosystem : A Catalyst for Growth and Innovation

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Abstract

The English language has become a dominant force in the global start-up ecosystem, with English proficiency being a critical factor for success. This article studies the influence of the English language on the global start-up ecosystem, exploring how English has become the language of business and technology. It discusses how the widespread use of English has facilitated communication and collaboration among entrepreneurs and investors from diverse linguistic backgrounds. Furthermore, it considers the implications of the dominance of English in the start-up world, including issues of inclusivity and diversity.

The influence of English language in the global start-up ecosystem has been a topic of much discussion and analysis in recent years. As English is the dominant language in the business world, it has become the lingua franca for start-up entrepreneurs from different countries to communicate with each other, share ideas, and seek funding. This article further analyses the impact of English language on the global start-up ecosystem and its role in facilitating innovation and entrepreneurship. It also looks at the challenges and opportunities that non-native English speaker's face in this ecosystem and how they can overcome them. The research draws on a comprehensive literature review, as well as interviews with start-up entrepreneurs and experts in the field.

Keywords

Digital Transformation, global start-up ecosystem, lingua franca, innovation, entrepreneurship, non-native speakers.

Introduction :

English has become the lingua franca of the global start-up ecosystem, with proficiency in the language being a critical factor for success. This is due in large part

to the widespread adoption of English as the language of business and technology. Entrepreneurs and investors from around the world are expected to communicate effectively in English in order to partici-

pate in the global start-up community. As such, the influence of English on the startup ecosystem cannot be overstated. This article will explore the influence of the English language on the global start-up ecosystem, considering both the benefits and the drawbacks of this linguistic dominance.

English language has become the dominant language in the global business world. It is estimated that there are over 1.5 billion people who speak English worldwide, and it is the official language of many international organizations, including the United Nations and the European Union. In recent years, English has also become the lingua franca for the global start-up ecosystem, which includes entrepreneurs, investors, accelerators and other stakeholders from different countries.

The use of English in the start-up ecosystem has several advantages. It allows entrepreneurs from different countries to communicate with each other and share ideas, which is essential for innovation and entrepreneurship. English is also the language of the majority of the world's top universities, where many entrepreneurs acquire their skills and knowledge. Furthermore, English is the language of venture capital, and many investors require that startups they fund have a strong command of the language.

However, the dominance of English in the start-up ecosystem also presents challenges for non-native speakers. They may struggle to communicate effectively in English, which can lead to misunderstandings and missed opportunities. Non-native speakers may also find it harder to build networks and relationships with investors and other stakeholders who prefer to work with native English speakers.

This article aims to explore the influence of English language in the global start-up ecosystem, including its advantages and disadvantages. It will also examine the challenges and opportunities for non-native speakers, including strategies for improving English language skills and building relationships with stakeholders. The research draws on a comprehensive literature review, as well as interviews with start-up entrepreneurs and experts in the field. Ultimately, the article aims to provide insights and recommendations for entrepreneurs and other stakeholders to navigate the English-dominated start-up ecosystem and achieve success in the global market.

Literature Review :

Several scholars have examined the role of English in the global business and technology landscape. Crystal (2003) notes that English has become the language of international communication, and that proficiency in the language is essential for participation in the global economy. Similarly, Lin and Wang (2011) argue that English proficiency is a key factor in the success of start-ups, particularly those seeking international expansion. In addition, several studies have shown a correlation between English proficiency and access to venture capital (Bechmann et al., 2015; Kerr & Lincoln, 2010).

However, the dominance of English in the start-up world raises issues of inclusivity and diversity. Karamcheti and Brown (2018) argue that the reliance on English as a lingua franca can exclude entrepreneurs who are not proficient in the language, particularly those from non-Western countries. Furthermore, the use of English can privilege certain cultural norms and perspectives, potentially

limiting the diversity of ideas in the start-up ecosystem.

The English language has become an essential aspect of the global start-up ecosystem. The literature review discusses the significance of the English language in the business world, particularly in the start-up industry. English is widely recognized as the universal language of business and this recognition has led to the widespread use of English in the start-up industry. Many studies have highlighted the importance of the English language in the global business world, and it is evident that proficiency in English is a valuable skill for entrepreneurs.

A study by Greenberg and Weber (2015) found that English proficiency was a critical factor in the success of start-ups in non-English speaking countries. The study concluded that proficiency in English

allowed start-ups to communicate effectively with investors, partners and customers from different countries. Similarly, a study by Gao, Greenberg, and Wong-On-Wing (2015) found that start-ups with founders who spoke English fluently were more successful in attracting venture capital and forming strategic partnerships.

In addition to proficiency in English, cultural familiarity and adaptability are also important factors for start-ups operating in a global context. A study by Neergaard, Ulhøi and Madsen (2011) found that start-ups that were able to adapt to different cultural contexts were more successful in establishing and maintaining international partnerships. The study concluded that cultural adaptation was crucial for start-ups operating in a global business environment and language proficiency was a critical component of cultural adaptation.

Table 1: English as a catalyst for funding

Year	English Proficiency	Impact on Funding	Role in Global Markets
2016	65%	+15%	Facilitates Global Expansion
2017	68%	+18%	Attracts International Investors
2018	70%	+20%	Enables Cross-Border Collaboration
2019	72%	+22%	Access to Global Customer Base
2020	74%	+25%	Competitive Advantage in Global Pitching
2021	76%	+28%	English as the Language of Innovation
2022	78% (estimated)	+30% (estimated)	Global Start-up Ecosystem Dominated by English

Analysis :

English proficiency has become a prerequisite for success in the global start-up ecosystem. The widespread adoption of English as the language of business and technology has facilitated communication

and collaboration among entrepreneurs and investors from diverse linguistic backgrounds. English proficiency also provides access to resources such as venture capital, which is often limited to

those who can communicate effectively in English.

However, the dominance of English raises concerns about inclusivity and diversity. The reliance on English as a lingua franca can exclude entrepreneurs who are not proficient in the language, particularly those from non-Western countries. Furthermore, the use of English can privilege certain cultural norms and perspectives, potentially limiting the diversity of ideas in the start-up ecosystem.

The analysis of the literature suggests that proficiency in English is a critical factor for start-ups operating in a global business environment. Start-ups that can communicate effectively in English have a significant advantage in attracting investors, partners and customers from different countries. Furthermore, cultural adaptation and familiarity are essential for

start-ups operating in different cultural contexts. Start-ups that can adapt to different cultural contexts and communicate effectively in English have a higher likelihood of success in the global start-up ecosystem.

It is evident from the literature review that proficiency in English is not only necessary for communication but also for accessing a broader range of resources such as international investors, markets, and talent pools. Start-ups with founders who speak English fluently have an advantage in attracting venture capital and forming strategic partnerships with international companies. English proficiency is also necessary for effective communication with customers and employees from different countries. Start-ups that can communicate effectively in English are more likely to establish trust and build lasting relationships with customers and employees.

Table 2 : Role of English in Global Expansion

Year	English as a Global Expansion Enabler	Percentage of Start-ups Expanding Globally
2016	Limited	25%
2017	Facilitator	35%
2018	Key Driver	50%
2019	Essential Tool	65%
2020	Global Connector	75%
2021	Business Catalyst	85%
2022	Global Expansion Powered by English (estimated)	90% (estimated)

The literature review also highlights the importance of cultural adaptation and familiarity for start-ups operating in a global context. Start-ups that can adapt to

different cultural contexts have a higher likelihood of success in establishing and maintaining international partnerships. Cultural adaptation is critical for start-ups

to understand the business practices, norms, and values of different cultures. Start-ups that can adapt to different cultural contexts are more likely to establish trust and build lasting relationships with partners and customers.

Conclusion :

The English language plays a crucial role in the success of start-ups in the global start-up ecosystem. Start-ups that operate in English-speaking markets tend to be more successful than those that do not. English-speaking founders also have a higher success rate in attracting investors, developing business partnerships, and accessing global markets. The dominance of the English language in start-up hubs such as Silicon Valley, London and Singapore further reinforces the significance of English in the start-up ecosystem. Start-ups must prioritize English language proficiency as a crucial component of their growth strategy to succeed in the global start-up ecosystem.

English proficiency has become a critical factor for success in the global start-up ecosystem, facilitating communication and collaboration among entrepreneurs and investors from diverse linguistic backgrounds. However, the dominance of English raises issues of inclusivity and diversity. To address these concerns, efforts should be made to promote language diversity in the start-up world, while also acknowledging the importance of English proficiency. Additionally, start-up ecosystems should strive to be more inclusive and representative of diverse cultures and perspectives.

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Applying Behaviourism to Create Online Interactive English Language Courses

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Abstract

COVID showed us the significance of online learning and teaching. The world was caught off guard. All face-to-face interactions stopped. Language teaching was shifted online, and innovative practices through digitalisation were applied in online language teaching and learning. However, that took a backseat after the resumption of normal offline classes. With an unpredictable future, there is a need to invest in online English language education consistently. Synchronous language courses might be impractical at this moment, but schools and colleges must continuously invest in creating asynchronous courses for future learners. Many platforms like Coursera, Edx, LinkedIn, Skillshare, and many others offer online courses. The National Education Policy 2020 encourages platforms like SWAYAM to prepare digital courses, and most of these online courses have a standard online course that includes videos followed by quizzes. Similarly, schools and institutes also should try to develop their own courses for English language education. The courses should follow the principles of a language theory called behaviourism that is interactive for learners. Though this is an old philosophy, our classrooms are filled with examples of behaviourist principles. Also, these courses suit the needs of modern learners. Furthermore, the majority of the theoretical concepts in language can be shifted online. As a result, learners spend most of their time in classrooms practising productive skills. This research article will focus on the behavioural theory concepts that can be applied to create Interactive online English language courses.

Keywords

Behaviourism in education, language learning and acquisition, online education, instructional design, interactive courses, E-learning tools, E-learning authoring tools.

Introduction :

Humans learn language through imitation that is by looking at a model. The mother models the sounds or words

in a language and the child tries to imitate and learn the language which is a well-known fact. This is the basic foundation of behaviourism.

According to behaviourism, language learning happens through reinforcement and reward. Positive reinforcement and reward encourage good practice in language learning and Language acquisition happens through optimal conditioning in the environment (Demarien,1988).

Behaviourism focuses on changing the behaviour of the students and teachers are the central protagonists controlling and providing stimulus. A stimulus is repeated regularly providing conditioning resulting in an expected response. It also shows a model to the students. If the teacher does good practice in class, the students will try to imitate to be a good model (Budiman, 2017). For example, according to the theory, S is the stimulus (input), and R is the response (expected behaviour). If electric shock is the stimulus, the response is to withdraw the hand. Usually, we have been conditioned to this behaviour (Watson, 1998).

It is necessary for the learning instructions to make the learners involved in learning. The targeted learning content starts with a stimulus and response to master learning. Additionally, positive feedback like reward contributes to productive learning. Also, interaction among fellow peers fosters learning. It recommends identifying an observable behaviour as an objective in an online course that is identified through group discussions, engagement and interaction by providing a supportive online environment for students to learn and improve (Yarbrough, 2018).

In this context, the article will explore various ways in which behaviourist concepts can be applied to online digital English language courses.

Behaviourism Theorists :

1. **Ivan Pavlov (1849-1936) :** He advocated classical conditioning theory in which learning happens through association which has four different stages.

Stage-1:

A bell was rung, but the bell did not produce any response. There was no salivation. Then the food was placed before the dog and that produced salivation. This was considered an unconditioned response.

Stage-2 :

A bell was rung before the food was placed before the dog. Additionally, the food was presented to the dog. The dog salivated.

Stage-3:

Stage-2 was repeated and after repetition, when the bell was rung, the dog salivated which is called a conditioned response (Communication Theory, n.d).

Application in Language Teaching (An example) : The teacher repeats a vocabulary and a sentence. After a few repetitions, when the teacher says the vocabulary, the student repeats the sentence.

2. Thorndike (1874-1949): Below are his behaviourist theories,
 - i. **Readiness :** People should be interested to learn and if that is not, the learning does not make any progress.
 - ii. **Exercise :** Repeating the learning helps learners to progress. Conducting practice with feedback enhances performance.

- iii. **Effect :** Rewarding a performance or learning strengthens learning. (Islam, 2015).

Application in Language Teaching (Example): During the English pronunciation class, after a few repetitions, the teacher corrects the students and provides feedback to the students.

3. **Watson (187-1958) :** He too emphasized the process of classical conditioning that through a planned stimulus an expected behaviour could be achieved. He also highlighted the role of environmental factors such as repetition, rewards, and punishments in education. (Philonotes, 2023).
4. **Skinner (1904-1990) :** He reiterated the process of reinforcement of good practices along with positive rewards contributes to operant conditioning in the environment. In one of his experiments, he used a machine that promotes learning according to one's pace. The learner completes lesson A and then moves to the next lesson B only after a hundred per cent proficiency in lesson A (Skinner, 1968).

Concepts of Behaviourism that can be applied to create online courses :

- A. **Behavioural Objectives :** Though it has been known by many names like learning objectives, aims, and outcomes, it focuses on the outcome after the learning instruction or content. The objectives are student-centred and are based on Bloom's Taxonomy.
- B. **Chunking :** Chunks are identified based on the goals of a lesson. The

learning materials are broken down into simple parts and meaningful chunks for learners, and it influences the behaviour of the learner (Gobert et.al., 2001). Generally, it is difficult for learners to study too much content at the same time, so it makes sense to study simpler units.

- C. **Sequence :** The lesson is arranged in a sequential order from simplicity to complexity. As a result, the learning journey is continuous and successful. Added to that, the learners are able to remember the content since sequence aids memory.
- D. **Repetition :** The learning material is practised with the help of repetition. Repeating the information strengthens memory and mastery. Practice sessions are paramount for beginners as they master the content through trial-and-error methods. The learners are provided ample opportunities to correct their mistakes prior to completing learning. The behaviour experiments focussed primarily on repeating the stimulus until the objectives or responses were achieved.
- E. **Reinforcement :** Although it is similar to repeated practice, it differs in application. The content is reinforced through a variety of methods. One method that is promoted by behaviourism is through rewards and positivity. This helps the learners to be motivated to learn the content.
- F. **Modelling :** Learners need a perfect or a near-perfect model to imitate and learn. Usually, the environment provides a model for every one of us.

Similarly, learners observe an online model in the targeted outcome and they practice it to achieve mastery.

G. Feedback : learners need positive or optimistic responses that are constructive to improve their knowledge of the learning content. It is generally considered to be the corrective steps that the learner that the learner can undertake to improve. Regular feedback motivates the learner to work on their strengths and weaknesses.

H. Association : In Pavlov's experiment, the dog associates the sound of the bell, the neutral stimuli with the direct stimuli of food. It associates both the sound of the bell and the food. As a result, it salivates. In a similar way, the learner is provided with associations with the previous learning experience. In language learning, concepts are learned in a context. This strengthens memory and language skills promoting acquisition (Keramida, 2015).

I. Outcome Measurement : Behaviourism thrives on the concept of observable behaviour that is measured. Educators need evidence to confirm if learning really took place. Otherwise, learning is considered irrelevant, because learners need to exhibit their learned skills. Appropriate language evaluation methods are reliable in measuring the learning outcome.

J. Gamification : We are aware that games are fun, but their main objective is to reinforce the learning content in an interesting manner. These days,

shops and business organisations offer points if you spend more. As a result, consumers spend more money to accumulate more points. Learners too are happy to imitate the same model in the field of education.

A Model Learning Online Grammar Lesson that Follows Behaviourist Concepts :

Lesson : English Grammar: Simple Present :

1. Behavioural Objective :

- a. Learners must be able to talk or discuss their daily routines and habits with minimum present simple grammatical errors at the end of the lesson.
- b. Learners must also score more than 80% on the online quiz after the exam.

2. Chunking :

The Learning content is divided into small chunks,

- a. Present Simple: Statements
- b. Present Simple: Questions
- c. Comparison: Present Simple and Present Continuous

3. Presentation of a Model :

A video or an animation that shows daily routine (or) dialogues based on daily activities that include present simple statements and questions.

4. Repetition :

The present simple rules with example sentences are explained in a context. Questions and statements in similar contexts are repeated in a variety of ways in the form of online practice questions and tests.

5. Feedback :

Questions based on the present simple are shown after the model is presented. They appear after a new learning objective or concept is explained to the learner. It helps the teachers and learners to check their understanding.

6. Gaming :

The lesson is followed by practice quizzes with points and achievement badges.

7. Quizzes :

The learner is evaluated based on the final quiz.

Online Classroom Tools in Implementing Behaviourist Concepts :

Power Point :

Almost all presentations are explained using PowerPoint slides since it is easy for presenters to add visuals, tests, audio and videos. All the lesson content is recorded on PowerPoint. English teachers show pictures to teach vocabulary. E-books are presented using slides. As a result, it can be considered an important tool that promotes English pedagogy. Though it is simple, it has some complicated features to enhance teaching and learning. Craig & Armenic (2006) mention teaching or learning using PowerPoint leads to better learning outcomes and grades because students are interested in learning by looking at the slides. Usually, less information is presented on a slide where chunking is employed for students and concepts are broken down into simpler units for chunking. It is not recommended to present all information at once. Additionally, some basic graphic attributes are available to contribute to learning.

Animation Software :

There are many animation software like Animaker, Adobe Animate, and Vyond in the market. Though each is unique, it has certain features that are really useful in creating online video courses. They present beautiful visuals for students. Stories can be prepared for students in a context which helps learners to understand the basic concepts. The story can be considered a model for students as they can reflect the real-life context. Pujiani et.al (2022) concluded animation was effective in teaching English and it motivated students. Furthermore, animation content helps students to get more exposure to the targeted language.

Both PowerPoint and Animation help educators teach language skills. There are also other tools like computers, interactive whiteboards, and projectors to improve their interest in the subject knowledge. However, all these tools are not interactive. Though it claims to promote active learning, students remain passive learners, and the sessions are teacher-dominated and they are not student-centric. This article will further explore more about the ingredients of an online interactive course and the software tools that can be used to create an online course that is engaging and participative.

Elements of a Digital Interactive Course and Behaviourism :

A learner needs to have a learning experience which is achieved by interaction and interactive elements offer opportunities for learners to apply and perform well. This process contributes positively to memory and improves retention in the memory. According to Bloom's taxonomy,

there are six categories namely, knowledge, comprehension, Application, Analysis, Synthesis and Evaluation. All these major categories are key elements in achieving mastery of content. Firstly, knowledge is the basic foundation since it is about storing key information that will be helpful in achieving the learning outcomes. Next, comprehension is achieved when the learning content has a context and the learner knows to recognise applying basic knowledge. This too is achieved by providing a model for the learner. Importantly, behaviourism points out the importance of a stimulus for learning to take place. Similarly, interactive courses provide the stimulation for learning to be reinforced. Lastly, mastery over the learning content is measured by performance tests, a key component to confirm learning (Adams, 1992).

An interactive course helps learners participate through repetition which can be achieved through practice tests and engaging stimulations. Also, multimedia elements allow learners to engage with the learning content through images, videos, and audio which provide stimulation and improve learning through association by giving a better learning experience. Importantly, real-life scenarios contribute to knowledge retention and develop learners' attitudes in a guided environment that helps them to contribute in real-life situations (Allen, 2023).

Behaviourism functions due to the learner's response to the stimulus that is provided. Even though online learning encourages self-learning, the objectives are determined and the tasks and activities are offered with the help of the interactive features in the online course. The students'

responses are recorded, the feedback is provided, the outcome is measured and the process is repeated to enhance deeper learning. Also, the learner is intrinsically motivated to finish all the activities available as it is interactive (Karageorgakis, 2018).

Now let's briefly look at the need for interactive courses to teach English and how they are different from the usual courses that are available online.

Interactive Courses are better than Regular Online Courses :

There are many regular online courses on English Skills that are available online. Most of them follow the same pattern. They start with the topic of the lesson which is then followed by a video and students are expected to learn the content. It is a fantastic idea to explain the concepts using videos, but there is no interaction. As a result, learners lose motivation to learn online. In some cases, they switch on the video and do not bother to listen. The data would show completed or viewed but in reality, the learner may not have watched the video. Thus, defeating the original purpose. In fact, students don't get the opportunity to practice the content, so they don't retain information. Sometimes, the videos are long and viewers don't have the patience to watch a long video and there is no motivation for the students to learn. This is the basic model that is executed on platforms like edx.com, coursera.com, and LinkedIn.

Further, to add value to the above claims, Zhang et.al, (2006) categorically mention that interactive videos are more meaningful compared to non-interactive courses with videos and without videos, and traditional classroom teaching courses. Learners were highly satisfied with intera-

ctive videos and the performance of the students was significantly better than the other three. It highly recommends the use of interactive videos in e-learning courses.

If interactive courses are more efficient, then how do we create an interactive course, and which software provides us with those solutions in which the behavioural concepts can be integrated with perfection?

Interactive E-Learning Authoring Tools to Create Online English Courses :

There are many tools which are helpful in creating engaging courses. Some of the prominent products are Articulate Storyline and Adobe Captivate. Each tool is unique, but it supports interactive courses efficiently.

Articulate Storyline supported online an English course. It was tailor-made keeping in mind the needs of the learners who were seventh-grade students and concluded the application was effective in teaching English based on the learning outcomes and performances. It recommends that English teachers integrate interactive learning into their everyday teaching (Uzmi et.al, 2023).

Another study used Adobe Captivate to create two English courses for learners whose age was between 16 and 35 years of age. They incorporated videos, presentations, games, animations, quizzes and other activities in the courses. The results showed improvements with regard to English competency. Also, the teachers reported the software was user-friendly for students. It recommends this tool for autonomous learning (Valencia, 2016).

Now, let's look at the interactive features present in the e-learning tools to create interactive English courses.

Some Interactive Features in E-learning Authoring Tools that can use Behavioural Concepts :

A. Interactive Videos : These days recorded videos are common to record useful English language lectures to explain concepts. There are so many videos on YouTube, However, the learning outcomes for the learners who watch the videos are impossible to measure. There isn't any way to find out the learning outcomes. However, interactive videos can pause the video and check for understanding. It doesn't progress until a correct answer is provided. In fact, behaviourism expects learners to achieve mastery after trial and error or ample practice. Similarly, interactive videos can be programmed to show the learning content or video continuously unless the correct questions are answered. Thus, mastery of learning over the content is achieved. Furthermore, constructive feedback is also possible.

A study conducted by Wachtler et.al, (2018) mentions that questions are asked to the learner watching the video based on the learning objective frequently to check the understanding was more productive when asked in frequent intervals like after 3 to 4 minutes. Another study evaluated the quantitative analysis of videos that had features to engage with the learners. Also, based on the met analysis and moderator analysis, it concluded interactive features were more efficient compared to videos without any navigational features (Ploetzner, 2022).

B. Interactive Menus, Sliders and Buttons :

Learners are able to repeat the part of the lesson till they understand completely and explore the learning content with more flexibility with clickable menus. Visuals appear at the click of a word. A sliding action reveals English grammar rules. These are highly useful for learning vocabulary words, and pronunciation through repetition. Students are focused on learning at their own pace. There is more learner autonomy through the repetition of slides and buttons.

These features provide better control to the learner since they are able to move from one page to another by clicking the menu. The progress bar indicates the portions that learners accessed. On the whole, it improves learners' participation (Stansfield, 2004).

C. Interactive Quizzes :

Highly interactive quizzes are employed in the middle and at the end of the English language courses. In fact, it can be added at any stage of the online lesson. This is similar to formative assessments used in regular courses. Questions range from drag and drop, hotspot to find the correct vocabulary word, true or false, fill in the blank, arrange in order and many more possible. These varieties of question models enrich checking for understanding. The number of attempts is manipulated. The progress which can be comparable to stimulus can be controlled. Furthermore, innovative gamification is possible through interactive quizzes. Only after achieving the

learning objectives in a module, the next module is accessible. Once the learner does that, learners can be provided points or incentives to increase motivation.

A study conducted by Puba (2020) on the performance of Chemistry students studying teacher training courses in Indonesia came to the conclusion that the students' results improved because of interactive quizzes. There was a significant gain between pre-tests and post-tests.

Discussion :

As we discussed earlier the advantages of interactive online English courses are immense. It is highly productive since there is constructive feedback. The progression questions check the understanding of the learner. Repetition of content strengthens long-term memory. The gamified content motivates students.

However, there are some concerns that can't be ignored. Firstly, to prepare a digital course we need to follow certain professional and instructional design procedures. Also, we need committed faculty members to work on creating learning materials that follow learning theories like Behaviourism. Next, it is highly time-consuming, so proper planning needs to be done prior to the implementation of the online courses. Also, language teachers would consider this job as a burden since lesson preparation may not provide any benefits. Furthermore, English teachers would need more training to be involved in an online computer-aided course. Finally, these projects may be expensive to benefit, so they may not be welcome by the higher authorities and the management.

Conclusion :

This research article focused on bringing out all essential points about the learning theory called behaviourism. The views of the behaviourist theorists were briefly discussed. Then, the concepts of behaviourism that can be applied in a digital course were discussed. Also, a model learning lesson was provided. The article also pointed out that the tools in classrooms which use behaviourist theories were explained. The discussion was about the advantages of interactive courses over regular courses that don't have any interaction. Importantly, tools that can be used to implement online courses were briefly outlined along with their compatibility features to present behaviourist concepts in an online interactive course.

The most important thing for the success of these projects is the support from the management. They should try to provide support to those faculty members who are involved in innovative projects like this. Faculty development programs must be conducted often to support digital learning and teaching. Further research can focus on qualitative and quantitative analysis while presenting a fully online digital course can be studied.

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The Paralysis of the Pen - Unscrambling Writing Anxiety's Influence on Skill Development

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Abstract

Writing anxiety, an inescapable emotional state that often accompanies the act of writing, has a profound impact on individuals' ability to enhance their writing skills. This research paper explores into the intricate relationship between writing anxiety and the development of writing skills. With a growing recognition of the persistent presence of writing anxiety among individuals across various educational contexts, this study investigates its multifaceted impact on the acquisition and enhancement of writing skills. By analysing the origins, triggers, and cognitive mechanisms of writing anxiety, this research underscores its negative effects on the clarity of expression, idea organization, and critical thinking that are essential components of proficient writing. Through an exploration of blended learning, the paper sheds light on how anxiety can slow down effective information processing during the writing progression. In conclusion, this research paper underscores the critical need to address writing anxiety in order to inculcate a positive writing culture that encourages experimentation, self-expression, and skill development. By recognizing the shades of writing anxiety's influence in academic spheres, learners and instructors can collaboratively work towards a more effective and supportive approach to enhance writing skills.

Keywords

Writing anxiety, cognitive mechanisms, proficient writing, and blended learning.

Introduction :

The act of writing is a unique and multifaceted form of human expression. It serves as a bridge between our inner thoughts, emotions and the external world. Yet, for many individuals, the journey from the blank page to a well-crafted piece

of writing is nervous with a challenging contest – writing anxiety. This mysterious emotional state, often experienced as apprehension, self-doubt, and fear of failure, can cast a long shadow over the creative and academic pursuits of writers at all levels of proficiency.

This research paper delves into the heart of this complex issue, seeking to illuminate the profound relationship between writing anxiety and the development of writing skills. As the abstract suggests, writing anxiety is not an isolated or incidental concern; it is a persistent companion that accompanies writers through various educational contexts and stages of their writing journey. This research paper sets out to explore the intricate dynamics of writing anxiety and its impact on the acquisition and enhancement of writing skills. By dissecting the origins and triggers of this emotional state, we aim to unravel the cognitive mechanisms that underlie the negative effects of writing anxiety on the fundamental building blocks of proficient writing: clarity of expression, idea organization, and critical thinking.

The Writing Process and Anxiety Triggers :

In this section, the researcher explores how different stages of the writing process can induce anxiety and examine the underlying factors that contribute to this stress. These stages, which include brainstorming, drafting and revising, are integral to the writing process and offer various opportunities for anxiety triggers to manifest.

Brainstorming :

- 1) **Idea Generation :** The initial stage of writing often involves generating ideas and deciding on a topic. This can be anxiety-inducing for writers who fear they won't find a compelling or original idea.
- 2) **Overwhelming Choices :** The abundance of potential ideas can overwhelm writers, leading to decision paralysis and anxiety about choosing the "right" topic.

Drafting :

- 1) **Perfectionism :** Writers may experience anxiety during the drafting phase as they strive for perfection in their prose. The pressure to get everything right on the first attempt can be paralyzing.
- 2) **Self-Doubt :** As writers put their thoughts on paper, they may doubt their ability to convey their ideas effectively, leading to anxiety about their writing skills.
- 3) **Fear of Evaluation :** Writers may worry about how their work will be perceived by others, including teachers, peers, or future readers, which can create a sense of pressure and anxiety.

Revising :

- 1) **Critique and Feedback :** Receiving feedback, whether from peers, instructors, or editors, can trigger anxiety, especially if writers fear criticism or believe their work falls short of expectations.
- 2) **Revising for Clarity :** The process of revising for clarity and coherence can be challenging and anxiety-provoking, as it requires a critical assessment of one's own work.
- 3) **Time Constraints :** Anxiety may arise from the pressure of meeting deadlines during the revising phase, especially when there is limited time for thorough editing.

Factors contributing to writing-related stress include :

- **Self-Doubt :** Writers often grapple with self-doubt about their abilities, leading to anxiety about their capacity to produce high-quality work.

- **Perfectionism** : The desire for flawlessness in writing can lead to excessive self-criticism, creating anxiety when the writing falls short of imagined standards.
- **Fear of Evaluation** : Writers may be anxious about how their writing will be judged, whether in an academic setting or in the public domain.
- **Time Pressure** : Tight deadlines can intensify anxiety, leaving writers feeling rushed and unable to give their writing the attention it deserves.
- **Lack of Confidence** : A lack of confidence in one's writing skills can manifest as anxiety throughout the writing process.

Understanding these triggers and factors is crucial for both writers and educators. By recognizing the specific points in the writing process that are most anxiety-inducing and addressing the underlying causes, individuals can develop strategies to manage and mitigate writing-related stress, ultimately nurturing more effective and enjoyable writing experiences. Educators, too, can play a pivotal role in creating a supportive and anxiety-reducing writing environment by providing guidance, feedback and resources to help writers navigate these challenges successfully.

Educational Interventions and Support:

Educators, mentors and educational institutions play a critical role in addressing writing anxiety and creating supportive environments for skill development. Writing anxiety can be a significant barrier to effective learning and writing proficiency, but with targeted interventions and support, writers can overcome these challenges.

Writing Centres

- 1) **Individualized Assistance** : Writing centres provide a valuable resource where students can receive one-on-one guidance from experienced tutors. These tutors can help writers work through writing anxiety by offering personalized support, addressing specific concerns, and providing strategies to improve writing skills.
- 2) **Skill-building Workshops** : Writing centers often offer workshops on various aspects of writing, including brainstorming, drafting, revising, and editing. These workshops can demystify the writing process and equip writers with the tools they need to manage anxiety at different stages.
- 3) **Safe and Non-judgmental Environment** : Writing centers create a safe and non-judgmental space where writers can express their concerns and doubts without fear of criticism. This environment can significantly reduce anxiety levels and encourage writers to seek help when needed.

Peer Review Workshops :

- 1) **Collaborative Learning** : Peer review workshops promote collaborative learning, allowing writers to receive feedback from their peers. This can be less intimidating than receiving feedback from instructors and can help writers build confidence in their abilities.
- 2) **Diverse Perspectives** : Peer review exposes writers to diverse perspectives and writing styles, helping them understand that writing is a dynamic and evolving process. This can reduce

anxiety related to comparison and competition.

- 3) **Constructive Critique :** Educators can guide peer review sessions to ensure that feedback is constructive and focused on improvement. This helps writers see feedback as a tool for growth rather than a source of anxiety.

Personalized Feedback :

- 1) **Timely and Constructive Feedback:** Educators can provide timely and constructive feedback on writing assignments, emphasizing strengths and offering specific suggestions for improvement. This feedback should be supportive and aimed at skill development rather than punitive.
- 2) **Clear Expectations :** Setting clear expectations and rubrics for assignments can reduce anxiety by helping writers understand what is expected of them and how they will be evaluated.
- 3) **Encouraging Revision :** Educators can encourage a growth mindset by emphasizing the importance of revision. Knowing that they can improve their work through multiple drafts can reduce anxiety related to producing a perfect first draft.

By providing accessible resources such as writing centers, facilitating peer review workshops and offering personalized feedback, they create supportive spaces where writers can learn to manage their anxiety, gain confidence in their writing abilities and ultimately develop the skills necessary for effective and meaningful written communication. These interventions not only enhance writing proficiency but also contribute to a positive writing

culture that encourages experimentation, self-expression, and continuous improvement.

Cultivating a Positive Writing Culture:

Cultivating a positive writing culture is essential to encourage risk-taking, experimentation, and growth while qualifying the effects of writing anxiety. Here are some ways to foster such a culture, emphasizing the role of constructive feedback and self-compassion:

- 1) **Normalize Imperfection :** Encourage writers to understand that no one produces perfect writing on the first try. Share examples of successful writers who openly discuss their struggles with early drafts. Emphasize that writing is a process, and imperfections are part of that process.
- 2) **Celebrate Diverse Voices and Styles:** Showcase a wide range of writing styles and voices to highlight that there is no single “correct” way to write. Encourage writers to explore their unique perspectives and embrace their individuality in their work.
- 3) **Promote Risk-Taking :** Encourage writers to take risks in their writing, whether it’s experimenting with different genres, pushing boundaries, or challenging conventional wisdom. Make it clear that innovation often arises from stepping outside one’s comfort zone.
- 4) **Provide Constructive Feedback :** Train educators and peers to offer feedback that is specific, constructive, and growth-oriented. Focus on both strengths and areas for improvement, and suggest actionable steps for revision. Frame feedback as an opportunity for growth rather than as criticism.

- 5) **Peer Review and Collaboration :** Foster a culture of peer review and collaboration where writers can learn from one another. Create structured peer review processes that encourage thoughtful and constructive critique. Collaborative writing projects can also help writers build confidence and skills.
- 6) **Set Realistic Expectations :** Ensure that writers have clear, realistic expectations for their writing projects. Provide detailed guidelines and rubrics so that they understand the criteria for success. Setting achievable goals can reduce anxiety.
- 7) **Encourage Self-Compassion :** Teach writers the importance of self-compassion. Remind them that making mistakes and facing challenges are natural parts of the writing process. Encourage them to treat themselves with kindness and patience.
- 8) **Create Safe Spaces for Sharing :** Establish safe and inclusive spaces where writers feel comfortable sharing their work, thoughts, and concerns. Encourage open dialogue about writing anxiety and strategies for overcoming it.
- 9) **Celebrate Progress, Not Just Final Products :** Recognize and celebrate small victories along the writing journey. Acknowledge the effort writers put into their work, regardless of the final outcome. This helps build a sense of accomplishment and motivation.
- 10) **Provide Resources for Improvement:** Offer resources, workshops, and support services for writers who want to enhance their skills. Ensure that these resources are accessible and cater to various learning styles and needs.
- 11) **Lead by Example :** Educators and mentors should lead by example, demonstrating a positive attitude toward writing and a willingness to learn and improve. Share your own writing experiences and challenges to humanize the process.
- 12) **Promote Reflection :** Encourage writers to reflect on their writing journeys. Ask them to consider what they've learned, how they've grown, and what strategies have helped them overcome writing anxiety. Reflection promotes self-awareness and growth.

In conclusion, cultivating a positive writing culture is about creating an environment where writers feel empowered to take risks, embrace experimentation, and view writing as a journey of growth. Constructive feedback and self-compassion are pivotal components in overcoming writing anxiety and fostering an atmosphere of support and encouragement. By implementing these strategies, educators, mentors and institutions can play a transformative role in nurturing confident, creative, and skilled writers.

Summation :

In essence, addressing writing anxiety is not only about alleviating the emotional stress associated with writing but also about unlocking the full potential of writers and empowering them to develop their skills with confidence. By implementing these strategies and creating a supportive environment, individuals, educators and institutions can collectively contribute to a positive writing culture that encourages risk-taking, experimentation and continuous

growth in the realm of written communication. In essence, addressing writing anxiety is not only about alleviating the emotional stress associated with writing but also about unlocking the full potential of writers and empowering them to develop their skills with confidence. By implementing these strategies and creating a supportive environment, individuals, educators, and institutions can collectively contribute to a positive writing culture that encourages risk-taking, experimentation, and continuous growth in the realm of written communication.

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Teaching English as a Foreign Language : A Case Study of Students Learning English in Saudi Arabia University

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Abstract

*This study has been conducted on the aspect of the **learning and teaching methods of English as a foreign language in the universities of Saudi Arabia** while its approach towards foreign languages has been depicted here. In this study the primary aspects of modern day teaching and learning has been depicted as it helps to understand the procedure of the system of education in the regions of Saudi Arabia. The objectives along with the aim of the study have been identified here while a brief review of literature has been presented that has been developed based on the objectives of the research. The objectives of the study have been evaluated with the support of a **primary qualitative** method of data collection while **thematic analysis** has been conducted. As the manner of interview has been taken for evaluating the objectives of the study, the approach of a thorough analysis of the collected data has made this study further reliable with authentic resources. In the interview process, it has been understood that a better communication and regular practice is important to better the impact of foreign language among the students.*

Keywords

Modern teaching and learning, English as a foreign language, foreign and native students

Introduction :

Developing the knowledge of foreign languages is quite significant in the aspect of globalisation as it helps to increase the efficiency in communication while providing more resources of progress to the non-English regions of the world. This study is based on the aspects of learning and teaching procedures that have been adopted

in contemporary times while the approach of the system of education may differ at times from the other nations. As the development of a structural system of education is necessary for learning a foreign language with proper manners and knowledge, it requires the students along with the teachers to be engaged with the system.

In this study, the primary aspects of learning English as a foreign language has been depicted while apart from the global perspective, the approach of education in the university of Saudi Arabia has been evaluated in order to gain further knowledge regarding this aspect in this context. Through the evaluation of the procedure of teaching and learning, the approach towards foreign languages can be enhanced while the students need to recognise the significance of such methods in their system of education.

Aim : The aim of this study is to depict the importance of *English as a foreign language* in the education system of the University of Saudi Arabia in modern times.

Objectives :

- To define the significance of English as a global language
- To evaluate proper knowledge of effective teaching and learning English
- To identify the approach of education of English in the university of Saudi Arabia

Significance of English as a foreign language in modern times :

Learning new languages helps the aspect of gaining knowledge from the global resources as it enables the pupils to increase their academic approach towards learning while helping the techniques of education towards a foreign language. Through the development of knowledge regarding the language, the students get to increase the rate of efficiency in the universities while the process of teaching gains more sustainability in this manner. Making the process of teaching and learning

more effective for the students requires proper resources of knowledge, while the approach of education needs to be evaluated with the approach of learning of the pupils (Vattøy & Smith, 2019). As the approach of teaching and learning techniques requires proper infrastructure in the system of the universities, it helps the educational organisations to increase their rate of efficiency with students. Enhancing the level of sustainability of the teaching procedure requires the teachers to identify the aspects of the language that have a significant impact on the pupils while understanding the language and its origins with proper clarity.

Through the approach of constructive teaching and learning, the approach towards foreign languages becomes further reliable while the process of communication becomes more influential in this method. As the approach of English learning can be managed with the resources of proper understanding of its impact on the students, it makes the process of evaluation of the language as a subject more effective (Vattøy, 2020). Through the modern approach of teaching and learning of foreign languages, the approach of contemporary study becomes more reliable for the students while the importance of learning foreign languages becomes clearer. Approaching English as a foreign language helps the aspect of expanding knowledge regarding the contemporary world while it has been established as the most effective language in the international aspect. As the approach of teaching and learning requires to be authenticated with proper methods that are effective for the students, helping the pupils to identify the significance of the language is important in this regard (Sayakhan & Bradley, 2019).

Making the approach of teaching and learning more effective for English, gets to increase the level of efficiency of the pupils in the universities while it makes the process of education more authentic.

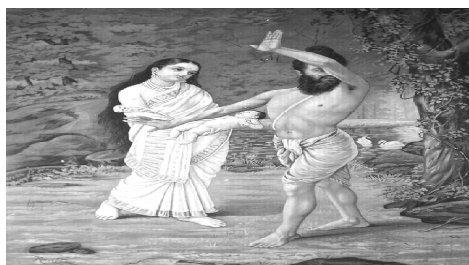


Figure 1 : Number of students learning the English language by country 2020

(Source: Statista Research Department, 2022)

As per the above figure (Statista Research Department, 2022), the approach of learning English as a global language keeps increasing in recent times, while most of the progressive educational institutions has accepted the contribution of this language in the perspective of globalisation. In modern times English has become a language that has gained international approach while enhancing the process of interaction in foreign regions of the world making it significantly easier.

The resources of foreign languages need to be evaluated with proper understanding as it helps the process of teaching and learning, making the students further approachable for the various aspects of the language (Tarnopolsky, 2018). Since English has been identified as one of the most reliable languages all over the world that has gained a stable global recognition, the approach of teaching and learning this language helps the perspective of the young generation to raise furthermore. Making the language further reliable for the students requires proper evaluation of its resources while the management

techniques of teaching and learning get to evaluate the aspects of understanding the language English with proper resources form the base of its origins (Klimova, 2018). Approaching the language with accurate understanding helps the significance and contemporary aspects of its effects in the system of worldwide education become more understandable.

Learning English in the Eastern countries:

The approach of teaching and learning English in non-English countries requires proper resources of understanding of the language while the aspect of interacting with the students becomes further sustainable. Developing the knowledge of the language helps the aspect of teaching and learning become further stable while making the procedure of education for the foreign students further reliable. Making the process of language development more authentic with global resources helps the aspect of education to be more efficient for the students while providing accurate knowledge of foreign languages makes this process further influential for the community of students (Tsiplakides, 2018). As the development of teaching procedures has become more reliable with the approach of the digital medium of education, it has enabled the students to collect information from worldwide resources while gaining accurate understanding of the language in the process. The reputed organisations have developed the approach of communication with the evaluation of English in the regions of Saudi Arabia, while the direct impact of the language becomes more reliable in modern times.

Developing the structure of the system of education helps the aspect of

identifying the impact of such foreign languages that have become a significant way of communication all over the globe. As the approach of education of the foreign languages needs to be evaluated with proper resources, the level of impact of the language needs to be evaluated alongside in order to provide accurate information to the community of pupils. Through the evaluation of the techniques of teaching and learning a language, the approach of its usage becomes further clearer, while the organisations in business, education and medical have been developing their procedures with time (Dagarin-Fojkar, Grahut & Skubic, 2022). Evaluating the techniques of management with the approach of foreign languages helps the aspect of international recognition to be understandable while it increases the resources of global communication furthermore. As the hospitals along with the reputed international organisations in Saudi Arabia have implemented the utility of the language English as a globally recognised language, it has made the aspect of teaching this language more significant in recent times.

Through the development of understanding of the language, the approach of teaching and learning it becomes further resourceful, while the process of evaluating the various resources of the language become more sustainable for the students in this manner. As the development of the teaching procedure makes the various aspects of the resources of the language become less complicated, it helps the approach of communication with the students become more reliable (Son, 2018). Through the implementation of the modern techniques of teaching and learning, the approach of English becomes

further resourceful while it helps the organisations to develop their approach of education with an international perspective. As the development of the language system in the universities have enhanced the rate of efficiency in the foreign students, it has made the approach of interactions become more resourceful and reliable altogether in this way.

Impact of teaching and learning English in non-English countries :

The factors of teaching and learning English need to be evaluated with the effectiveness of the procedures, while the level of its impact becomes further reliable for the students as it needs to be evaluated with proper resources of the modern times. Plenty of adversities of the process of teaching and learning English has been identified in the regions of Saudi Arabia as the approach of this language needs to be evaluated with suitable resources that helps the students to gain knowledge regarding this. Through the approach of proper communication along with efficient methods of instructions the language can be taught to the students while the other aspects of influence in the teaching methods needs to be evaluated (Baykalova et al. 2018). Factors such as the influence of the mother language along with less understanding of the western languages needs to be evaluated here, as less accommodation with the language English on a daily life basis makes it further difficult to approach for new learners.

The aspect of teaching of the universities of Saudi Arabia needs to be evaluated with proper resources of understanding the pupils while analysing the manners of interaction for gaining further understanding of the procedure. Through

the enhancement of understanding of the language, the aspect of teaching it becomes more reliable while the approach of interaction gains more sustainability for the learners (Ho, 2020). As English has spread its reach throughout the entire global system of communication, it has made the aspect of teaching and learning of the language gain more importance in contemporary times. Since the impact of this language is quite intense on the aspect of developing knowledge, it has become one of the most reliable modes of interaction throughout the globe that helps people to express and connect in foreign regions of the world. The *learning theory of Socio-constructivism* has made this aspect of teaching and learning further reliable as it has enabled the system of education developed with proper intricate details of the target community of pupils (Latifaj, 2020). Developing knowledge regarding the language is necessary in this kind of approach as it helps the students along with the teachers to evaluate the language further with the understanding of the foreign communities while identifying the significant aspects of the global community of English speakers.

Making the language further reliable for the countrymen in Arabia needs the system of its education to progress with the resources of English while the development of the system of communication makes the process of teaching and learning further reliable. Since the development of the system of education requires proper evaluation of the management of the English language, it increases the resources of learning for the students. As per the opinion of (Romaniuk et al. 2020), the approach of understanding such global languages helps the aspect of communi-

cation, while it makes the process of teaching and learning further reliable. As English has a significant take on the global aspect of business and development of the systems of transactions, it needs to be taught with proper resources to the younger generation in order to increase the level of productivity in the community of pupils while gaining authentic knowledge in the international perspective.

Materials and Methods :

Direct involvement of the student has been prioritised in this study while responses of two students have been collected in terms of gaining two different perspectives regarding the learning process in English by considering a foreign language. Student 1 has been selected from a Chemistry background and another one is from Physics background. Through the evaluation of these different perspectives, the approach of learning new languages gains further resources of understanding while helping the students with their queries. As the development of knowledge regarding the various perspectives of students in the universities of Saudi Arabia has helped to understand the significant aspects of teaching further, the approach of learning with the modern processes has become more reliable. This study has been developed with the resources of proper techniques of research while the approaches of *Primary qualitative design* have been taken for its objectives. As per the statement of DŸwigo³ & DŸwigo³-Barosz (2018), the development of strategic methods in the process of conducting a research helps it to increase the level of reliability of the collected data while making the objectives of the subject further understandable.

Through the approach of the collected data from the university students, the aspect of teaching and learning becomes more authentic while various approaches of the education system become clearer in this manner. For the manner of proper evaluation of the collected data, *positivism philosophy* has been taken, while *inductive approach* along with *descriptive design* has been taken as these aspects suit the objectives of the research quite sustainably. Making the process of data collection more reliable has been evaluated with the approach of interview while the students of the university have been questioned while they belonged from different backgrounds of study. Through the evaluation of the research procedures with proper resources of information, the objectives of the study becomes further reliable while the impact of such methods of data collection makes the process of research fundamentally enhanced (Pollock et al. 2021). As this study has been evaluated with proper development of research methodology that has made the aspects of education become further understandable for the researcher, the objectives of the research have gained further sustainability in the study.

Questions that have been evaluated for the *foreign* and *native* students of the University of Hafar Al Batin in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia have been developed with the resources of different perspectives of the community of pupils. As the approach of *primary qualitative data collection* has made the aspect of teaching and learning become further resourceful with developed understanding, it has made the various aspects of the students further identifiable. The approach of qualitative data helps the aspect of

objectives to become further resourceful while it makes the process of research management further reliable in this manner as *thematic analysis* makes the approach more reliable and authentic (Wouters et al. 2020). Since the development of the objectives for this study has been made with the resources of proper information that has been collected with the process of a qualitative interview, it has generated proper resources of data for the study. As the approach of systematic development of a research helps the aspect of managing the collected data with proper resources, it makes the procedure of analysing the data with proper methods that has been evaluated here.

In addition, as the approach of the collected information makes the objectives further reliable for the study, it helps the aspect of analysing the data with more resources of understanding. Through the evaluation of the research methods along with the analysing approaches, the various objectives of the study become further resourceful while the queries of the research becomes further identifiable (Gusenbauer & Haddaway, 2020). For enhancing the resources of the collected data, the aspects of research become more intricate, while the development of appropriate themes help in the aspect of understanding the resources of its knowledge.

As this study is related with the system of education in the regions of Saudi Arabia, it requires the approach of proper techniques in methodology that helps to improvise the level of understanding regarding its approach towards teaching foreign languages. Through the evaluation of strategic techniques of research

methodology, the research becomes more resourceful and authentic that provides more knowledge regarding the objectives of the study making it further reliable with its academic viability.

Results :

As the present research has been carried through an interviewing of the 1st year students of physics and chemistry in the University of Hafar Al Batin, some basic information has been generated from it. The students must be engaged in introductory English courses. The results that are found from the interviewees are as follows:

Theme 1 : Policies and challenges in English teaching in Saudi Arabia learner :

The teaching strategy and policies of Saudi have evolved at a considerable rate over the years. The foremost policy regarding EFL instructions in colleges have been created very earlier when the English language has been introduced in the overall kingdom. The significance of English teaching has been around since the year 2005 when the government policies tend to decree the dependence of the country on painstaking efforts or made sustained efforts for developing an innovative knowledge based economic structure in the status of developed countries. The entry of English literature in Saudi Arabia's public schools and colleges has been developed in such an exponential way that Saudi Arabia has been able to develop a related version of the language (meraldgrouppublishing.com, 2022). EFL teaching has come in ages and these efforts have been created to make further imposed instructions. For being successful, language curriculum is the most important thing that

should be generated with a transparent goal in mind. The "Saudi Higher Committee of Education" has tried to implement the EFL policies. Multiple groups tend to emphasize on the necessity to design the suitability of English curriculum along with proper objectives.

Along with globalization, English is being increasingly used for achieving economic, humanitarian and social goals. The main challenge behind it is understanding the reality of implementation of these goals. The gap among the objectives and the reality acts as an issue regarding the scenario. In the relation of pedagogical input, analysis of current situation and requirements base syllabi learning barriers and learners motivation can help in this case to determine the resource regarding poor proficiency in the EFL learner of Saudi Arabia. *Use of assessment more than examination* helps to progress the English language as the popularity of other languages or subjects among the learners of Saudi Arabia (Lee & Wallace, 2018). It has been found among the students that the real language proficiency is very necessary to assess in a naturalistic way through talking or assessing their speeches or understanding the various communication systems.

Avoidance of crowding in the classroom is another efficient policy to enhance better English learning proficiency among the students. Better language instruction tends to require concentration and time. In the class of a large unity of students, it is next to impossible to concentrate on every student's progress. Therefore, a classroom with minimum 20-25 students improves the efficiency of both teacher and students to concentrate on English learning. On the other hand, the access of

visual aids enhances the level of English learning among college students (Chien, Hwang & Jong, 2020). Language is a type of social act that engages people to exchange ideas or information that cannot be possible to adopt in a theoretical point of view like other subjects. Additionally, expansion of class timing is another efficient policy that is evaluated from the interviewers in the study. It helps to increase the level of proficiency among students. A limited and short time period is insufficient to teach English language skills or encourage a regular level of practice. Therefore, it can be evaluated from the interview process that increasing the devoted time limit can help to efficiently learn the English language among Saudi Arabia learners.

Theme 2 : Effect of foreign English learning in the Eastern culture :

Language and culture are intrinsically related to each other and it also creates impact on each other. The linguistic knowledge and cultural learning are two different essential elements to achieve success. From the interviewees, the information about linguistic knowledge and cultural learning in the classrooms has been found. The significance of instruction related to foreign culture has been stressed and helps to seek out the information about the eastern cultural influence and foreign English learning. It can also be postulated from the interview process that the EFL learners have faced difficulties to use foreign language in an appropriate way in multiple situations. It can be because of scarcity of realization regarding foreign culture. It can also be depicted from the interview process that there is a huge need among the students to learn about English culture. The students have shown an

impeccable interest to learn about English culture.

Three questions have been asked to the interviewees about the techniques of English learning in universities that have evolved over time, the proper management system of universities and the essential impact of global language learning in the contemporary period. The student from chemistry background helps to know about the modern technologies of the universities and their contribution to the learning process (Octaberlina & Muslimin, 2020). The development of the education system according to the needs of the students enhances the level of English learning proficiency among the students. It also reflects on the Eastern culture and its relationship with foreign English learning.

The innovative technologies of learning lead to explanations of the knowledge among the students. The student from physics background has generated a viewpoint regarding the changing advanced techniques of foreign language teaching that has become helpful for him in the contemporary times. There must be some innovative strategies or techniques that help the students to learn foreign English as a second language. The new criteria like explanation of class time or a less crowded environment in the classroom has helped the students in an effective level.

A sense of proper resource and productivity help the learners in creating further sustenance in the future. Promoted observations by adopting shows, news or broadcasts become useful to introduce foreign culture among the university students. For combining language learning and culture, use of learner centered and

skill oriented approaches help the teachers to conduct the whole learning process (Lin & Hwang, 2018). Role play or presentation activities have been also used in the teaching culture to stick in custom or tradition in the culture of second language learning. These unique strategies have helped the students and as well as the teachers to embrace foreign language culture in the university. In the case of learning vocabulary or grammar, these strategies create a change in the learning situation that also reflects the language used by the native speakers. The proper use of technology has an impact over the visible effect of social life changes (Klimova, 2018). It also offers the teachers an opportunity to generate more impactful learning and provide efficient teaching materials to create language culture. Authentic communication is also enhanced in the interactive environment that helps to facilitate the benefits of English teaching among the university learners of Saudi Arabia.

Theme 3 : Views of Non-English students of South Arabia in English learning :

In the context of EFL, it has been observed that there is a positive and effective correlation among the attitudes of students to learn foreign English and their performance. Educational setting is an important factor that helps to enhance students' proficiency. Appropriate sources or equipment are also necessary in this case to maximize its output. It has been observed from the interview process that multiple numbers of corrective actions like beginning of English language in the primary sections of school is essentially important to adopt Foreign language more effectually. It has a deep influence to

change student's attitude to learn foreign English as a second language that also leads to a better level of performance among the EFL learners. The negative attitudes like confidence, lack or fear of making mistakes affect the students in case of inefficient learning processes in the colleges (Dimaculangan, 2022). In this particular case, the role of teachers is the foremost important thing that must be accounted for the university sectors. Improving learners attitudes and encourage them to use foreign language along with mother tongue can create a better result. Utilization of efficient and contemporary methods of introducing blending courses as an essential part of curriculum enhances the level of learning outcomes among the students.

Academic achievement and attitudes of Non-English students are related to each other as it affects the language proficiency in individual learner. The efficiency in Foreign English speaking is a part of intensive Foreign English Programs that helps to create a positive behavior among the students.

Creating awareness about the significance of knowing foreign English is a responsibility of the university teachers that can elucidate the elevation of positive attitudes. After conducting the total interview process, it has been found that the level of sufficient studies with appropriate text books or embracing impactful instructional methods is helpful to touch upon the positive attitudes among Non-English students of Saudi Arabia. On the other hand, establishing a healthy relationship among students and teachers is also important to make better results among the students. It enhances the level of trans-

parent understanding about the foreign English that helps to make a feel free attitude when the students ask queries about the learning process. A number of variable evaluation studies must be adopted in the university rules and policies to make practice of foreign English.

Discussion :

The present study can be considered as an attempt to investigate the English teaching in the universities of Saudi Arabia as a foreign language. Through the whole interview process the two students from chemistry and physics background have been asked some questions about the impact of Foreign English language in them and how they practiced it in the university courses. It has been understood from the interview that some particular strategies and policies must be achieved by the university like advancement of technological aspects, enhancing the learning time and avoiding crowded environments in the classrooms.

The most challenging scenario in this case understands the difference between planning strategy and the actual implementation of the planning. Confidence lacking or fear of spoken foreign English can deteriorate the level of acceptance among the students. Therefore, enhancing the level of effective sources such as textbooks or regular practice can enhance the level of effective English learning. On the other hand, practicing role play or reading news in foreign languages also can enhance the effectiveness of foreign language in the students of Saudi Arabia. Creating better communication among the students and teachers can be a unique strategy to increase the understanding among them.

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Conclusion :

From the overall study it can be summarized that, the interest of the students in Saudi Arabia to learn foreign English is extremely huge and it proves that the positive attitude of them creates better results to adopt knowledge regarding English literature. The impact of teachers in universities is the foremost thing to encourage the students to learn Foreign English. A number of policies or strategies help to conduct the overall learning process like technological adoption, changing the learning system as per the student's perspective or including constructive strength of learning material that can enhance greater knowledge among the EFL students (Lestari & Wahyudin, 2020). As English is considered as "Lingua Franca" (a common language that can be used as a bridge among speakers of different languages), the effect of Foreign English is the most important thing in this case.

On the other hand, culture is another significant thing that must be affected by the appropriation of Foreign English. The effect of non-English students' attitudes is potentially important to affect their performance. Use of social media platforms, newspaper reading or role play can help to enhance the knowledge efficiency among the EFL students (Maican & Cocoradã, 2021). It can be supportive in case of creating better reach ability for students in different countries.

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Appendix: Interview script

<i>How has the process of teaching and learning of English in the universities evolved?</i>	
Student-1	The modern techniques of teaching and learning have helped me to identify the importance of learning new processes for a new language.
Student 2	Changing methods of learning has become quite reliable for me since the approach of teaching foreign languages has become more significant in contemporary times.
<i>How does the management of the education system in the universities of Saudi Arabia help the students to learn new languages?</i>	
Student 1	Developing the system of education with the requirements of the students has made the process of learning new languages fundamentally helpful.
Student 2	Making new criteria for teaching has helped the system of education quite a lot as it has made the approach of learning new languages properly sustainable.
<i>What are the valuable aspects of learning a global language in contemporary times?</i>	
Student 1	Learning a global language such as English has helped me expand my perspective while gaining more knowledge regarding the new inventions of the world.
Student 2	As the approach of learning a global language has made my approach towards study more intricately developed, it has provided me with proper resources of productivity for further sustenance.



The Possibilities and Limitations of Undergoing the Process of 'Awakening' in 'Solitude' in Kate Chopin's *The Awakening*

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Abstract

Edna Pontellier's quest in The Awakening is open to manifold interpretations. The work has been read as a woman's quest for sexual freedom and self; and one of rejection of patriarchal institutions. Edna, a controversial and rebellious character, fights against the societal codes of conducts of motherhood that compel her to mould into the role of a wife or a mother instead of being herself, a self-defined individual. But the freedom of denying the typical role of mother-woman comes at an expense of feeling a sense of abandonment and being considered an outcast within a society. Her attempt at abjection, an act of gaining subjectivity, becomes an act of defiance in the late nineteenth century Creole society. Thus, this paper attempts to bring forth how the female protagonist fights for her individuality and sense of self, and the reaction and objection of patriarchal society towards her search for independent subjectivity. Kate Chopin, here, presents Edna's transgression to the marital bond and portrays the awareness and struggle of the central character against the social forces repressing her. The author, also, unfolds the conflict between Edna's exterior world, the role of a trophy wife and a devoted mother imposed on her and her interior reality of suppressed emotions and unawakened sexuality.

Keywords

Individualism, patriarchy, mother-woman, abjection.

Introduction:

Kate Chopin's "The Awakening" is a landmark work of American literature that chronicles the awakening of its central character, Edna Pontellier. Edna's journey of self-discovery occurs within the context of solitude, both physical and emotional.

This paper explores the duality of solitude in Edna's life, analysing how it fosters her awakening while imposing certain limitations on her path of self-fulfilment.

"In short, Mrs Pontellier was beginning to realize her position in the universe as a human being, and to recognize her

relations as an individual to the world within and about her.” (Chopin 19). In Chapter VI, Edna Pontellier breaks off her slumber and looks herself as a human being because before that she was just a valuable possession of her husband, Mr Pontellier. This is the central paradox of the novel as she drowns herself in the end after being awakened. The definition of Awakening given by Oxford Dictionary is “an act of waking from sleep; an act or moment of becoming suddenly aware of something.” This is what happens with Mrs Pontellier in Chapter X, when at night after party she goes to beach and suddenly starts to swim. She abruptly becomes a confident swimmer which she was not before as “Edna had attempted all summer to learn to swim.” (Chopin 37) but couldn’t succeed, “but that night she was like the little tottering, stumbling, clutching child, who of a sudden realizes its powers, and walks for the first time alone, boldly and with over-confidence” (Chopin 37). This is the first moment of Edna Pontellier’s transgression. She has transgressed but she was not contended and satisfied with it as “She wanted to swim far out, where no woman had swum before.” (Chopin 37). After swimming she thought of getting applauded by the two men who matters to her. In this patriarchal world, men always want control over women and swimming of Edna so far threatens the manhood of both the men that is why instead of congratulating on her achievement Robert Lebrun just threw water on her excitement and Mr. Pontellier trivialized it.

For her husband, Edna is like a possession, an object. After seeing Edna swimming in the sea, Mr Pontellier voices his displeasure at her conduct and says that

she is ““burnt beyond recognition,” looking at his wife as one looks at a valuable piece of personal property which has suffered some damage” (Chopin 07). Apart from that, Mr Pontellier also unwaveringly expects Edna to be the flawless and a sensible housewife and a devoted mother. However, when Edna declines to look after Raoul who has fever symptoms, Mr Pontellier “reproaches” Edna for her :

...inattention, her habitual neglect of the children. If it was not a mother’s place to look after children, whose on earth was it? He himself had his hands full with his brokerage business. He could not be in two places at once; making a living for his family on the street, and staying at home to see that no harm befell them. (Chopin 10)

The night of the swimming was the night of awakening for Edna Pontellier because it was the point of transformation where she knows about her ability and gets an identity. Now, she is the person of her own life and does not feel obliged to do what her husband says. By this sudden change in Edna, Mr Pontellier gets annoyed and they had quarrel. After dinner, Edna starts to have an emotional breakdown. She throws away her ring and tries to crush it, but to no avail. And thus:

In a sweeping passion she seized a glass vase from the table and flung it upon the tiles of the hearth. She wanted to destroy something. The crash and clatter were what she wanted to hear. (Chopin 69)

After Mr. Pontellier left, she picks the glass vase and throws it on the ground and it breaks, two significant things happen here, first, it shows her anger which earlier

she just used to submit to her husband and used to feel guilty, second, glass vase was one of the possessions of Mr. Pontellier, so, she deliberately breaks it realizing that she too is an object for him and she no longer want to be his possession. Ali Khushnood provides even a profound significance to that occurrence and says, “Edna’s hand without her wedding ring not only strengthens her individual integrity but also symbolically dismantles the conventional belief that she belongs to Leonce’s possessions” (208). She has disconnected herself entirely from the supremacy of her husband by tossing away the wedding ring, a symbol of her marriage.

In the masculine society, use of space is assigned differently to man and woman which differ them from each other. While women are confined to their homes, men are free to move from places to places making the mobility of women contracts and that of men’s expands. Thus, Edna’s moving to a new residence of her own, dissolves the difference in the use of space by men and women. Martin spots the wretched condition of women, cramped up to the four walls of her husband’s home and writes in his edited book *New Essays on The Awakening*, “The home is the centre and the circumference, the start and the finish, of most of our lives” (14). Edna disengages herself from the stiff patriarchal value, and after she has recognised her power in the boundless sea, she starts hanging out and going out at night similar to what her husband does. When she gets questioned by her husband about the new unexpected change in her behaviour, she sturdily says, “Don’t wait for me” (Chopin

42). She also exhibits the supremacy of her mobility when she says, “I simply felt like going out, and I went out” (66), to which Mr Pontellier replies “I should think you’d understand by this time that people don’t do such things..., you should have left some suitable explanation for your absence.” (Chopin 67). Her behaviour seems odd to Mr Pontellier because a woman demanding to spend time alone and going out by herself was such a bizarre and a foreign concept.

The vast sea provides her freedom over an unrestricted and boundless space and also, serves as the apparatus of her mobility. Ann Heilmann in her essay “The Awakening and New Woman Fiction” evaluates Edna’s swim as an emancipator which transmutes her from an estranged wife to a self-governed individual exclusively in tune with her own dispositions:

Edna’s midnight swim is much more than a victory of physical coordination. It establishes her sense of self-ownership, physical, mental and spiritual, which in turn triggers two fundamental insights that determine her progression from disengaged wife to autonomous subject: in control of her body, she becomes aware of its potential for pleasure and learns to claim her right to self-determination (87).

Earlier, when Robert decides to leave for Mexico without telling Edna, the reason was that he had enough of her daring and could not take more of that. And after this ‘awakening’ of Edna when he comes back from Mexico and meets Edna, he sees that she is a different woman because now, she has her own voice and opinion. And at the end of the novel, he again while leaving scrawled on the piece

of paper “I love you. Good-by- because I love you.” (Chopin 144). It shows how incapable he was in facing society and had as conventional mind-set as any other man of that time.

At one point he says, “Because you were not free; you were Leone Pontellier’s wife” (Chopin 138), to which Edna replies, “I am no longer one of Mr. Pontellier’s possessions to dispose of or not” (Chopin 139). This statement is remarkable in itself as it states that she is under no one’s obligation to do anything as they say, she now is a free woman with open wings. Having this type of daring in patriarchal world is dangerous as society does not accept, consent and understands. No companionship can be found, not even in women. Same is the case in this novel, no woman character understands Edna as most of them are emblematic “motherly-women” and does as the society ask them to do. The defiance of Edna in perceiving motherhood as an institution rather than as a relationship is termed as abnormal and uncanny when she declares to Madame Ratignolle that she is ready to give up anything for her children, but she will not sacrifice her identity for their sake. “I would give up the unessential; I would give my money, I would give my life for my children; but I wouldn’t give myself” (Chopin 62). In the patriarchal Creole society, women were likely to be what Chopin termed “mother women”. “[The mother women] were women who idolized their children, worshiped their husbands and esteemed it a holy privilege to efface themselves as individuals and grow wings as ministering angels” (Chopin 13).

The patriarchal codes attached with sexuality get disrupted when Edna decides to follow her own sexual desires which are sternly forbidden for Creole women. Edna’s attraction first for Robert and then for Arobin Alcée breaks the patriarchal code according to which “good woman is expected to find sex frightening and disgusting” (Tyson 89). Edna senses that her solitary artistic life- style is lacking without sexuality. She does not commend Mademoiselle Reisz’s artistic life- style bereft of sex. Papke scrutinises in his book *Verging on the Abyss* that for Edna “to be a mother-woman is to abjure self for the sake of others, to be an artist woman is to live celibate, to give all one’s love to expression” (82). Thus, in hopes to find the individuality she aspires for, she yearns for more physical relationship. Daniel Yankelovich in his article “How American Individualism is Evolving” writes on treatment of sexuality in expressive individualism as, “We continue to regard sexuality as an inherent good to be expressed openly rather than an urge to be suppressed puritanically. People are becoming more prudent about sexuality, but the change in attitude is firmly entrenched” (5). On the contrary to this, Edna approaches and expresses sexuality openly as an innate virtue rather than an instinct which should be repressed covertly. Being channelled by her sexual desires, Edna resists and rejects all the accepted wisdom linked to mothering.

She could not find companionship in anyone as her friend Madame Ratignolle is ‘motherly-women’ figure, who is an idol wife and a mother. On the other hand, Mademoiselle Reisz is totally unlike other conventional “mother-women”. She does not want to be a “lady”, she wants to be

her own human being, independent to do as she likes. She thinks that Edna does not have the strength to leave her husband's house, which is why she said "Where are you going? To New York? To Iberville? To your father in Mississippi? Where?" (Chopin 102) when Edna told her about the moving away from her house.

There is deep irony in leaving her husband's house because she gives farewell party at her husband's expense. She can leave his life but cannot leave his lifestyle. She has all the comfort in that house and she enjoys the lavish lifestyle that she has and values it. She is a "lady"; she cannot think herself as an 'ordinary woman'. She likes to feel that she has descended in the social scale by moving out of the house but in actual she just moves to the same locality, just two lanes away.

Meanwhile, by moving out of her husband's house, Edna crushes this ideology of patriarchal society which makes the distinction between the roles of males and females to keep the loop of male dominance going and rebels against it by displaying some manly actions which are in contradiction to what she should do as a woman in the Creole society. She observes that the "men are allowed to live lives of sexual fulfilment, while not being expected to bear or care for their children, and develop a personality and individual self through participation in the business world" (Kapton 1). She experiences the masculine autonomy for the first time, when Leonce goes to New York for a business purpose and both of her sons to Iberville to spend time with their grandmother, "a radiant peace settled upon her when she at last found herself alone. Even the children were gone" (Chopin 109).

The period of 1890s during which the novel was published, the concept of "New Woman" was propagated as it marked as a watershed in the history of female writings. Sarah Grand, a British feminist, coined the term in an 1894 essay and according to her, the New Woman "proclaimed for herself what was wrong with Home-is-the-Woman's-Sphere, and proscribed the remedy" (142). Gail Finney offers a concise description of "New woman" as the one who "typically values self-fulfilment and independence rather than the stereotypically feminine ideal of self-sacrifice." New Woman is discontented with conventional life style of marriage and family in which she is to be the caretaker and a giver. This patriarchal mind-set becomes the hindrance for Edna who desires to assert her selfhood outside the institution of marriage and wife's and mother's domestic duties. Edna as a new woman enquires the prohibitive views on a woman and proclaims social, financial and sexual independence from her husband. Ali Khushnood relates Edna to the "new woman" in his article "To Conform or Not to Conform: Conflict of Motherhood in Kate Chopin's Selected Fiction":

Edna Pontellier is an embodiment of the 'New Woman' who shows that women's sexual desires are not confined to motherhood and procreation but rather she invalidates the Victorian social mores and supports the idea of joyful female sexuality even out of wedlock (208).

Her attempt at abjection, an act of gaining subjectivity, becomes an act of defiance in the late nineteenth century Creole society. Barabara Creed writes:

The place of the abject is where meaning collapses, the place where I

am not. The abject threatens life, it must be radically excluded from the place of the living subject, propelled away from the body and deposited on the other side of an imaginary border which separates the self from that which threatens the self. (Creed 65)

Kristeva's abjection focuses on the self-identity of the protagonist, Edna Pontellier. Julia Kristeva in *The Power of Horror: An Essay On Abjection* considers abjection as the state in which the subject castoffs the other from oneself to create an "I". She identifies that one experiences abjection for the first time at the point of separation with the mother. The baby considers his body and mother's as one but he starts to perceive the separateness from the mother when he sees his image in the mirror and identifies himself as a separate being. At the stage where the child starts cooing and babbling, he attempts to gain his sense of unity to unify the self and image present in the mirror to cultivate his identity. In the course of unifying, he attempts to separate himself from others to complete the process of unification and develop the rims of "I". "The abject has only one quality of the object and that is being opposed to I" (Kristeva 1). Through this process of abjection, the child dismisses, exorcises, and eliminates whatever is not part of him. Kristeva describes the abject as:

Something rejected from which one does not part, from which one does not protect oneself as from an object. Imaginary uncanniness and real threat, it beckons to us and ends up engulfing us. (Kristeva 4)

Consequently, the mother is rejected, as she is no longer a part of the precincts of the child. The mother's body is rejected as "the abject would thus be the 'object'

of primal repression" (Kristeva 12). The abject object is not repressed as it does not entirely vanish from consciousness. This abject object can be the denunciation of societal norms which confine a person such as marriage, family relationships or any other sense of responsibility towards others which prevents the subject from having his own authentic self. In fact, the abject object is a threat to the person's unified self. If the subject intends to gain his independent subjectivity, "he drives [all the abject things] out, dominated by the drive as he is, and constitutes his own territory, edged by the abject" (Kristeva 6). This concept of abjection is applied here in order to reflect on Edna Pontellier and the abject that she expels in order to shape her self-regulating subjectivity.

Here, Edna wishes to liberate herself of her conjugal life and all it brings. And to seek her individuality, she probes to have some alone time. "'Oh! I don't know. Let me alone; you bother me.' It sometimes entered Mr Pontellier's mind to wonder if his wife were not growing a little unbalanced mentally. He could see plainly that she was not herself." (77) Seeing change in Edna's behaviour after the swim, her husband goes to a doctor thinking she got some "disease". A woman wanting to do her own thing in the men's world is considered as "disease". All the people in her life and around her of her class fails to understand Edna and she cannot associate with people of other lower class because the women character in the novel of lower and working class are considered as "nameless and faceless". No light is put on them and on their struggle. They have to work and run

errands to earn their daily bread while Edna Pontellier lavishly enjoys her life being a privileged woman.

Therefore, in the end thinking how no one understands her and how everyone has let her down, she moves towards the sea despondent having the thought of her children in her mind that they will “drag her into the soul’s slavery for the rest of her days” (Chopin 147) and drowns herself after shedding off her clothes. Shedding off of all garments symbolizes the shedding of all social bounds and liberating oneself, “she felt like some new-born creature, opening its eyes in a familiar world that it had never known” (Chopin 147).

Through this text, it can be understood that Edna Pontellier comes to the realisation that her identity has been expunged by the patriarchal ideology and ‘the woman who “awakens” in the patriarchal world has to face “solitude”’. There is no other way to live after being ‘awakened’, but to be alone. She gains the knowledge of selfhood and the same knowledge leads her to her death.

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Black Feminism and the Black Feminist Movement

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Abstract

Black feminism is a social movement and academic discipline that centers on empowering Black women and their resistance to systems of oppression including but not limited to racism, sexism, classism, and white supremacy. The Black Feminist Movement was founded by women who saw the need to fight for equality for all women, including Black women. Both the Women's Movement and the Black Liberation Movement influenced and gave rise to the Black Feminist Movement. Black women were sexually oppressed by the Black Liberation Movement and racially oppressed by the Women's Movement, leading to the emergence of the Black Feminist Movement. It was common practice to correlate the term "black" with black men and "women" with white women. Because of this, black women often felt like nobody cared about them. They went unrecognized, as did their requirements. The goal of the black feminist movement was to find a solution that would meet the unique challenges black women face, considering their race, socioeconomic status, and gender. The abstract delves into the historical context of the Black feminist movement, tracing its origins in the 19th century to the present day. The thinkers and many others have laid the foundation for critical discussions on the interlocking systems of oppression that Black women navigate. the abstract examines the central tenets of Black feminism, emphasizing the importance of recognizing the interconnectedness of various identities and oppressions. Black feminists critique the limitations of white-centered feminism, advocating for a more inclusive movement that centers on the experiences of marginalized women.

Keywords

Black feminism, Racism, Sexism, Classism, White supremacy

Introduction :

Women have historically occupied a subordinate position across cultural boundaries. Men have often needed, loved, admired and written about women, but they

have typically done so within the context of their own lives. In this sense, women have perennially been relegated to the role of the 'second sex.' Prejudice and discrimination based on skin color have been

additional challenges that Black women have endured. Numerous authors, both Black and White, have addressed this issue in their works. It is somewhat paradoxical that, on one hand, we claim to have become more civilized, liberal, and flexible, but on the other hand, many of us remain bound by deep-rooted traditions that reduce individuals to racial categories, stripping them of their essential humanity.

Toni Morrison is among the Afro-American novelists who possess a profound understanding of the racial issues that have plagued Black communities since time immemorial. As an Afro-American woman, Toni Morrison fearlessly explores Afro-American feminism in her writings. She asserts that a feminist is someone who is attuned to a woman's life and the challenges she faces. Her novels shine a spotlight on Black women who are not only marginalized in terms of male standards and socio-economic status but also, perhaps more significantly, when compared to Euro-American women's standards.

In this analysis, we consider race, class, gender, and other social divisions as lived realities. The term "intersectionality," coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989 and further developed in 1991, revitalizes the discourse on the marginalization of Black women within mainstream theoretical frameworks. This discourse echoes the concerns voiced by African-American feminists like Angela Davis, Patricia Hill Collins, and Audre Lorde (Cho, Crenshaw, and McCall 2013).

Feminist literary criticism has its roots in the Women's movement of the 1960s. This movement, from its inception, recognized the significance of the portrayals of women in literature. It understood that

challenging these depictions and questioning their authority and coherence were essential components of the movement. Since the 1970s, feminist criticism has been characterized by its diversity of viewpoints, encompassing debates about the role of theory, the nature of language, and the value of psychoanalysis, among other topics. During the 1970s, feminist criticism primarily focused on revealing the mechanisms of patriarchy. This involved exploring the cultural mindset that perpetuated sexual inequality in both men and women. However, in the 1980s, there was a shift in the feminist discourse.

Unquestionably, feminism has been crucial in influencing social and political conversations about gender equality. But it's important to recognize that historically, white women's experiences and perspectives have been at the center of the feminist movement. Black feminism, which highlighted the interconnectedness of race and gender and acknowledged the particular difficulties encountered by black women, evolved in reaction to this marginalization in the 1960s and 1970s. An overview of black feminism, its tenets, and its consequences for modern feminism will be covered in this blog.

The Origins of Black Feminism :

In the United States during the 1960s and 1970s, black feminism emerged in the framework of the feminist and civil rights movements. Black women researchers and activists came to understand that race and class, in addition to gender, influenced their experiences of oppression. They noticed that the specific problems faced by women of color were frequently ignored or underappreciated by the mainstream feminist movement.

Black feminism was influenced by feminist theory and activity as well as the Black Power movement, which placed a strong emphasis on racial justice. But black feminists countered that feminism needed to take a more intersectional and inclusive stance, acknowledging the ways in which race and gender intertwined to produce specific forms of oppression for black women.

The Core Principles of Black Feminism :

Black feminism seeks to address the particular forms of oppression and marginalization that black women face by highlighting the ways in which race and gender intersect to shape black women's lives. In order to achieve true gender equality, it criticizes mainstream feminist theory for ignoring the experiences of women of color and promotes a more integrative strategy.

An additional fundamental tenet of black feminism is acknowledging the multiplicity of black women's viewpoints and experiences. Black feminists emphasize that black women's oppression is influenced by a variety of elements, including race, gender, class, sexual orientation and nationality. They reject the idea of a monolithic black female identity. There isn't a single, all-encompassing black feminist plan or approach. Another essential component of black feminism is coalition building and solidarity. Black feminists place a strong emphasis on working together with other oppressed groups in order to effect social and political change. They disagree that the fight for gender parity can be separated from other movements aimed at achieving justice and emancipation.

Implications of Black Feminism :

By questioning the prevailing narratives and presumptions of mainstream feminism, black feminism has had a significant impact on modern feminist thought and activity. It has opened up new directions for feminist research and application. Acknowledging the interconnectedness of gender and race is a noteworthy implication of black feminism. Intersectional feminism, which seeks to address the intersecting kinds of privilege and oppression that mold women's lives, has emerged as a result of this.

Furthermore, the significance of diversity and inclusivity in feminist thought and movement has been emphasized by black feminism. It inspires feminists to value and understand the opinions and experiences of women of color, women who identify as LGBTQ+, women who are disabled, and women from other marginalized groups. This acknowledgment encourages a more comprehensive and potent feminist movement that can more effectively tackle the intricate and varied problems associated with gender parity.

Intersectionality :

Intersectionality provides a holistic viewpoint by illuminating the lived realities of Black and ethnicized women who are located inside several systems of power and control at the same time. These social structures designate individuals as "others" in society and include sexualization, colonization, gender, race and class. A break from naive cataloguing of infinite hierarchies of social positions and identities, as well as from insufficient additive models that see oppression as double or triple jeopardy, is represented by intersectionality.

Black and ethnicized women live within the dominating frameworks of race, class, and gender, with differences in age, caregiving obligations, cultural backgrounds, religious views, national origins, citizenship status, and acknowledgment of human rights (Brah 1996; Brah and Phoenix 2004). A Black feminist epistemology considers context and contingency, analyzing the unique and changing logics that organize women's lives in various historical periods and geographical locales (Yuval-Davis 2006; McGinty 2006).

The idea behind “embodied intersectionality” is to clarify the narrative and symbolic challenges that Black women encounter when negotiating the defining materiality of their educational experiences. This lived experience is articulated by Black woman academic Felly Nweko Simmonds, who says, “As an academic, I live in a white environment, but I am a freshwater fish that swims in seawater. I can feel the water's weight against my body (1997, 227). The personal cost of marginalization for Black women is highlighted in this remark, as are the significant experiences they have as they move between different domains of difference in higher education. As Black feminists, we have an obligation to critically examine the forces forming these environments as well as our personal involvement in sexist and racist discourses, whether by choice, exclusion, inclusion, or participation. In the section that follows, I go into this historical analysis.

The position of Black feminism in the history of feminism :

The pivotal shift in black feminist criticism took place between 1979 and 1983, marked by the emergence of a

diverse array of literature, socio-political essays, and activist organizations. Among these figures, Michele Wallace was a particularly contentious writer. Wallace, who authored the widely-read manifesto “Black Macho and the Myth of the Superwoman” in 1980, condemned sexism within the black movement. Her central argument posited that political and economic power rested on gender divisions, which she believed hindered the true liberation of black men. Wallace asserted that black women were doubly exploited, facing discrimination both based on their race and gender. She criticized black nationalists for perpetuating this gender-based oppression even as they fought against racism. While some critics accused Wallace of oversimplifying complex issues, her manifesto succeeded in compelling the African American community to address issues of freedom, emancipation, and power for all Black people. Many other scholars have been motivated to investigate the complex relationships between race, class and gender by Wallace's work.

Bell Hooks, a well-known feminist academic, contended that victims of oppression—whether racial, gender, or class—unintentionally perpetuated a system of dominance. In order to bring about social change, Hooks emphasized that individuals and communities needed to be carefully and critically reevaluated. She also took issue with black activists who frequently sought empowerment at the expense of other oppressed groups. Notable women like Audre Lorde, Nell Irvin Painter and Angela Davis also made a significant impact on increasing awareness of the problems that black people and women share.

For many young black women, these well-known feminists' publications and public professions provided support and recognition. They talked about real-world concerns that other women faced as well. A group of black feminist writers, artists, and intellectuals established the Combahee River Collective in 1974 with the intention of establishing black feminist theory and practice. Black Women Organized for Action (BWOFA), Combahee and the National Black Feminist Organization (NBFO) are just a few of the groups that contributed to the creation of a cohesive agenda that addressed a variety of frequently contradictory demands and concerns. It was getting harder for male thinkers and leaders in the early 1980s to disregard the demands of women inside their own groups or to downplay the importance of gender inequality in the black community. Strong examples of black women who continuously took the lead in promoting political and social reforms destroyed the notion that only men should make policy decisions. In addition to advancing in their vocations, black female politicians, authors, attorneys, and social workers also pushed for a more expansive definition of black freedom.

The Defining Decades for Black Feminism :

Given that Black feminist movements emerged during the second wave of the American women's movement in the late 1960s, the 1970s were a pivotal decade for modern Black feminism. But it's crucial to remember that the Black feminist movement had origins in the 1830s, and we have to give credit to the women who helped to establish Black feminism before it had a formal name. Angela Davis, Patricia Hill Collins, Sojourner Truth, Anna Julia

Cooper, and Akasha The pioneers Gloria Hull, Bell Hooks, and Ida B. Wells are among them.

The increasing tension that existed between the Civil Rights Movement and the Women's Liberation Movement in the 1960s and 1970s had a profound impact on the movement. The particular needs and difficulties that Black queer women encounter were frequently disregarded by the second wave of feminism. As Audre Lorde so eloquently put it, white women's failure to embrace diversity and investigate the distortions that emerged from misnaming these distinctions were the reasons they failed as feminism. Black women decided to start their own movement as the differences between the two movements were increasingly apparent. They adopted Black feminism, which was based on the idea of intersectionality and broke away from the mostly whitedominated women's liberation movement.

Black feminist ideas and radical planning theory: Oppression and Activism :

In response to the oppression Black women face both domestically and internationally, Black feminist ideology arises as a counterforce. In the past, discussions of oppression frequently concentrated on specific aspects like gender, class, or race. However, Black feminism contends that this strategy erases Black women's experiences and struggles and fails to take into consideration the particular and complex that individuals experience oppression (Collins, 2009; Crenshaw, 1989, 1991). Crenshaw (1989) in her work on intersectionality examines three court instances involving Black women plaintiffs to highlight the importance of taking intersectionality into account. In one such instance, the plaintiffs claimed they had been the

victims of racial and gender discrimination at work, but the courts rejected their claims, citing concerns that granting their request would lead to more complications due to the creation of new protected minority categories. This viewpoint demonstrates the need of understanding oppression as a multifaceted system with interrelated components, encompassing racism, sexism and classism, among others.

Within the paradigm of Black feminist theory, Black women's activism and oppression are seen as being dialectically related. Black women's resistance to oppressive behaviors and the beliefs that support them is sparked by the reality of oppression (Collins, 2009: 25). Collins highlights that it is the duty of individuals who research and comprehend tyranny to act on their understanding. Black women's resistance to oppressive systems can take many different forms, such as advancing equality within the institutions that currently hold power, pushing for legislative changes, pursuing self-determination and independence and changing unsatisfactory connections with people, groups and systems. Planning is fundamentally an action-oriented social science, and its emphasis on activism is in line with that.

Radical planning embodies the activist and revolutionary characteristics of Black feminism. Planning's function in this tradition is to analyze and demolish the liberal democratic state's architecture as well as the underlying ideologies and forces that provide them (Grabow and Heskin, 1973; Miraftab, 2009; Beard, 2003). An illustration of the shift toward radical planning in an Indonesian community can be found in Beard (2003). The community first interacted with the condition of liberal democracy, receiving training from a medical facility run by the

state. But afterwards, they banded together to open their own senior health clinic, and the momentum this created within the community sparked clandestine planning initiatives meant to thwart the state's rejection of land tenure claims. These initiatives ultimately resulted in completely novel planning techniques, such as open demonstrations and the creation of a neighborhood library.

Social vulnerability and community knowledge :

Both Radical planning and Black feminist theory emphasize the importance of valuing community knowledge when examining disasters and inequities. This perspective challenges the conventional use of terms like "vulnerability" and highlights the need for community self-determination and involvement in the research process. It's problematic that the term "vulnerability" is often applied to communities without their input or consent. "Social vulnerability" is a term developed within academia and there is little evidence to suggest that communities have embraced or employed it. To truly value community knowledge, researchers ought to provide communities the freedom to identify and categorize their own problems. Acknowledging and honoring communal knowledge should start with this awareness of agency and self-definition.

While some efforts have recognized the importance of community knowledge, they have not consistently integrated it into research practices. For example, Wisner et al.'s (2004) work in "At Risk" acknowledges the value of community knowledge to some extent. However, the emphasis on community knowledge in social vulnerability research often does not carry through into practice, especially when creating

social vulnerability indices. Many mapping projects, after creating spatial vulnerability maps, conclude without further engagement with the affected communities. Social vulnerability research tends to neglect the incorporation of community knowledge into its comprehension of the ways in which demographics influence people's experiences in times of crisis. Frequently, researchers neglect to engage with communities in order to verify the outcomes of their mapping endeavors. Seldom has a community been involved in the development of a social vulnerability index or in the process of identifying pertinent vulnerability factors through community participation. This lack of engagement with the people who experience vulnerability undermines the research's integrity and disservices the communities themselves.

Bankoff (2001) raises a critical point regarding the limitations of vulnerability discourse, particularly its one-dimensional approach to understanding the processes that transform hazards into disasters. He highlights the Western construct of vulnerability and its practical limitations. This construct, coupled with the failure to value local environmental practices and community knowledge, hinders the capacity of vulnerability discourse to progress from issue identification to a deeper understanding and addressing of its root causes.

Thinkers who are Black feminists and radical planners advocate for the inclusion of community knowledge and perspectives in disaster and inequity research. They challenge the use of academic terminology without community involvement and emphasize the importance of engaging with communities to understand the complexities of vulnerability and oppression from

their point of view. This approach ultimately leads to more comprehensive and effective research and solutions.

Social vulnerability, oppression, and activism :

Gaining insight into how socially vulnerable communities—those found by mapping initiatives—are affected by natural catastrophes requires an understanding of systems of oppression. Unfortunately, current research on social vulnerability in the field of planning as well as other areas—often fails to identify discrimination, sexism, classism or other types of oppression as the primary causes of the unequal experiences that people have during catastrophes. Although catastrophes such as Hurricane Katrina elevated these concerns to the public's attention, vulnerability research often undervalues them.

These criticisms apply to the entire corpus of vulnerability literature rather than just that which is focused on social vulnerability. In development discourse and disability studies, the term “vulnerable” has a long history. However, it has been critiqued for portraying “vulnerable” persons as weak and passive and centering “normal” ones as non-vulnerable (Bankoff, 2001; Hutcheon & Lashewicz, 2014). According to this study, placing someone under a vulnerability label puts the onus on them rather than on how society views them. Because of this viewpoint, their needs, priorities and lack of empowerment are ignored and overshadowed, drawing attention away from the real underlying issues that make these teams “vulnerable” (Burghardt, 2013; Hutcheon and Lashewicz, 2014).

It is important to note that Blaikie and colleagues (2004) provide a critical

examination of vulnerability expressions, but they do not explore the underlying mechanisms linking particular traits to an increased susceptibility risk. The core reasons of vulnerability, according to their pressure and release model, are things like restricted access to resources, systems, social structures, and power. Additionally, they criticize the trend in research to ignore the structural causes of socially vulnerable groups' susceptibility and instead approach them like "special needs groups" or as charity cases (Blaikie et al., 2004, p. 13).

Conclusion :

In black feminist critique, the years 1979-83 marked a major turning point and a period of tremendous intellectual and social development. A wide range of literary works, sociopolitical writings and activist groups came into being during this time period, all of which had a significant impact on the conversation around black feminism.

During this time, Michele Wallace stands out as one of the most controversial figures. She wrote a widely read manifesto, "Black Macho and the Myth of the Superwoman," when she was younger than thirty years old. It was released in 1980. In this manifesto, Wallace argued that a gender divide was necessary for political and economic dominance, taking a firm stand against sexism within the black struggle. Her argument was that the deeply ingrained idea of "macho" would impede the actual liberation of Black males. Wallace also brought attention to the double standard of exploitation that black women experienced due to their gender and color, frequently at the hands of the same black nationalists who were fighting against racism. Although Wallace's manifesto was criticized for its propensity

to oversimplify difficult subjects, it forced the African American community to address important questions about power, liberation, and what it meant to be free for all Black people. Her writings sparked a surge of scholarly inquiry into the complex relationships between gender, class, and race.

A further development of the theory that oppression based on race, gender, and class created a system of dominance and that its victims occasionally unknowingly supported it was provided by bell hooks, another well-known feminist academic. Hooks underlined that a thorough and critical reevaluation of oneself and one's society is necessary for social change. She posed a challenge to black activists who frequently sought emancipation without taking into account the potential for that power to harm other oppressed groups. Other notable women who helped bring attention to the connections between issues affecting Black people and women included Audre Lorde, Nell Irvin Painter, and Angela Davis.

Most young black women found support and inspiration in the writings and public lives of these well-known feminists. These feminists brought up topics that were applicable to black women as well as women in general. In 1974, the Combahee River Collective was founded by a group of black feminist writers, painters, and thinkers. This group sought to define black feminist philosophy and practice. Combahee contributed to the development of an agenda that addressed a variety of frequently divergent needs and concerns, working with other black feminist organizations such as Black Women Organized for Action (BWOFA) and the National Black Feminist Organization

(NBFO).

It was getting harder for male academics and leaders in the early 1980s to ignore the demands of women in their own groups or to claim that gender inequality did not affect the black community. The myth that only men should decide on public policy was dispelled by the strong examples of black women who always took the lead in promoting social and political reforms. Black female advocates for a more comprehensive and expansive definition of black freedom persisted with the advancement of black female politicians, writers, attorneys and social workers. During this time, there was a major advancement in the understanding and recognition of the intricate difficulties that Black women encounter in the larger framework of the civil rights and social justice movements.

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Challenging Conventions and Rejecting Patriarchal Roles : The Feminist Approach in The Works of Shashi Deshpande

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Abstract

Breaking the patriarchal codes and routing oneself to a path to create one's own identity needs loads of courage and that has been well portrayed in the works of Shashi Deshpande who stands out amidst all modern female authors focusing on women's issues and the search for self-actualization. Shashi Deshpande has successfully depicted a troubled yet courageous female mentality in the context of the new ethos. Her stories are the true and heartbreaking accounts of middle class educated women who are used and suppressed by males in a traditional patriarchal culture. Therefore, the purpose of this article is to study, analyze and present the female characters in the novels of Shashi Deshpande who face challenges in their lives and exert to overcome, moreover how they overcome the tensions they go through due to being stuck between traditions and modernity. Shashi's feminist approach has given her protagonists enough courage to surpass and prove to be true survivors.

Keywords

Feminism, Protagonists, Tradition, Modernity, and Patriarchy.

Introduction :

Feminism is a growing philosophy dedicated to empowering women who have been held back by a historically male-dominated society. True feminism promotes the full acknowledgment of women's accomplishments and rights. An understanding of women's rights is nothing new, but feminism in English literature is. Feminist interpretation of literature is also relatively new, however it has been there

ever since human viewpoints were recorded via writing. In its widest sense, feminist criticism may be broken down into three subfields, each of which has its own followers. The first two are easy to describe and implement without provoking ideological outcry from most people. One is the study and analysis of female characters in isolation or in comparison to male characters, and the other is the celebration of female writers. In recent years, it has

been acceptable to rewrite these crucial norms in order to make room for feminist perspectives on human interactions. Third, there is the school of thought known as “prescriptive criticism,” which seeks to define what constitutes “good” literature from a feminist standpoint.

Author of many best-selling novels, Shashi Deshpande hails from India. She’s the younger daughter of Shriranga, a well-known Kannada playwright and novelist. She attended schools in Bombay and Bangalore after being born in Karnataka in 1938. *The Dark Holds No Terrors*, her debut book, was released in 1980. Her first collection of short tales was published in 1978. For her work *That Long Silence*, she was awarded the Sahitya Akademi Prize. She has written many novels for young readers as well. Many intricate connections populate the social worlds of Shashi Deshpande’s works. Her books include multigenerational communities of men and women of varying ages, social standings and sexes. When the old, tradition-bound society meets the new, contemporary influences cause friction and rifts in the family unit. When formerly accepted behaviors become unacceptable, women’s comprehension comes into doubt. These battles take on the form of quests for self-definition because it’s impossible to have meaningful relationships with other people without first having a firm grasp on one’s own identity and place in the world. Shashi Deshpande, a rising literary star, has gained acclaim for her keen understanding of the feminine mind. Her mission is to shed light on the cultural norm that instructs women to assume a subordinate position in the home by examining the institution of marriage. Her

books show how contemporary Indian women feel uncomfortable adhering to patriarchal customs that were created by men. This is the lens through which Shashi Deshpande examines the current social situation from the perspective of women. The relationship between men and women and among women themselves, is best shown by focusing on the lives of mothers, daughters and spouses. Her youthful heroines challenge convention by rejecting patriarchal norms and the status quo. Words like ‘self-denial’, ‘sacrifice’, ‘patience’, ‘dedication’ and ‘silent suffering’ come to mind whenever the notion of an ‘ideal woman’ is discussed. Just like Sarita’s existence in *The Dark Holds No Terrors*, where she is constantly overlooked and forgotten. In *Roots and Shadows*, author’s Indu, Mini, Akka, and Shashi Deshpande delve into each character’s psyche. The fact that Jaya is not a mute and helpless victim throughout *That Long Silence* demonstrates this:

Things can never be as they were. It’s astonishing how we comment on change, as if change is something remarkable. On the contrary, not to change is unnatural, against nature. (Deshpande)

Mira despises her mother in *The Binding Vin* because she gives up her independence in favor of her spouse. *A Matter of Time* delves into the lives of Kalyani, Sumi and Aru, the mother of Sumi’s two girls. Shashi Deshpande’s fiction provides an illustration of the manner in which a young girl’s identity is shaped by her circumstances, social realities, and psychological development. One of the most well known modern Indian writers writing in English is Shashi Deshpande. She mostly discusses women’s

struggles and the shifting economic and social climate of India. She discusses the tension that exists for middle-class women between tradition and progress. When you begin reading a Shashi Deshpande's book, you may as well settle down for an unending train ride through the dark streets of middle-class India. The presence of a total stranger so close to you is unsettling. Furthermore, he or she is the kind to claim their territory with neatly coiled bedding and to demand that you share a meal from their stainless steel tiffin container. Deshpande's artistry is such that by the conclusion of the voyage, you are thoroughly enmeshed in the lives of the individuals she pushes you to examine. The same ordinariness with which she first invests her characters ultimately benefits them.

Views of Shashi Deshpande on Feminism:

The study's focus is on the female protagonists, thus it's important to examine Shashi Deshpande's depiction of female characters from a feminist perspective. A writer of the 1970s and 1980s, she exemplifies the modern Indian educated middle class lady. Her books depict the predicament of the modern middle-class urban Indian lady and provide an analysis of how little has changed for her since the turn of the twentieth century. Despite her strenuous denial of being a feminist, Shashi Deshpande has made courageous steps to give a voice to women's disappointments and frustrations. You can see how she feels about strong female characters and how she thinks about women's issues by reading her works. In *Roots and Shadows*, Shashi Deshpande's first book, she exposes the effects of widespread prejudice against women in a mostly male culture. She

shows how the novel's heroine, Indu, suffers and feels stifled by the constraints of a male-dominated and tradition-bound society. She rejects the traditional position of wife as if it were a straitjacket. The work is a profound expression of her search for self-knowledge. Saru, the heroine of her second book, *The Dark Holds No Terrors*, goes through a horrible experience since her spouse refuses to take a supporting role. Saru suffers tremendous humbling and mistreatment as a kid and later as a wife. Deshpande talks about how some parents openly discriminate against their girls because they want to produce a son. Everything starts to fall apart after the wedding, as she achieves a higher social rank than her husband Manohar. Her spouse develops a sadistic streak as a consequence of his inferiority issue and the humiliation he experiences as a result of society's response to Saru's elevated status. Deshpande does a great job of depicting her husband Mann's sexual sadism against his wife, Saru. The remarks of Atrey and Kirpal are, "His purpose, though repressed in the subconscious, is to punish her taking on the 'male' role, and to assert his superiority and power through physical violence" (43).

In the third book, titled *That Long Silence*, Jaya, although having perfectly fulfilled the roles of wife and mother, finds herself lonely and distant. Because she doesn't want to upset her spouse, Jaya has been unfair to herself and her writing profession. Because of her anxiety, she has avoided even telling another guy about her acquaintance with him. As P.Rajyalaxmi says in her book review, "Jaya finds her normal routine so disrupted that she can look at her life for the first time and try to decide who she really is."

These three books are during her debut period and feature a subdued kind of feminism.

The heroine Urmi's personal sorrow in her fourth book, *The Binding Vine*, draws attention to the plight of other victims like Kalpana and Mira. Urmi tells the sad story of her mother-in-law Mira, who was raped by her husband. After her death, Urmi translated and published the poetry Mira had written in the loneliness of her terrible marriage. Urmi also tells the story of her friend Shakutai, who was abandoned by her husband after he had an affair. Kalpana, Shakutai's eldest daughter, is violently raped by Prabhakar, sister Sulu's husband. This is the most disturbing aspect of her story. Urmi picks up the sword for Kalpana and sees that justice is done.

And so you must pretend that you're not as smart as you really are, not as competent as you are, not as rational as you are, and not as strong either. You can nag, complain, henpeck, whine, moan, but you can never be strong. That's wrong which will never be forgiven. (Deshpande)

For the first time in her work, Shashi Deshpande explores philosophical metaphysics in her fifth book, *A Matter of Time*. The story focuses on three ladies from different generations of the same family and how they deal with tragedy. Sumi's husband Gopal leaves her, and she takes the humiliation in stride. She is trying to preserve her composure for the sake of her girls, but she is deeply affected by the loss of her husband. Kalyani, Sumi's mom, married Sumi's uncle Shripati. Shripati sends Kalyani and their two children back to her parents' home when their four-year-old boy wanders off at a

train station. When Shripati returns, as his mother-in-law Manorama had requested, he never speaks again. Manorama, Kalyani's mother, worries that her husband may marry again to ensure that he has a son to succeed him if she is unable to produce a male heir. Manorama marries Kalyani off to her brother Shripati to keep the estate in the family. As a result, Deshpande has exposed the anxieties, disappointments, and compulsions of three women over three generations of the same family to our scrutiny. Her most recent book, titled *Small Remedies*, is about an elderly Hindustani music legend named Savitribai Indorekar. She has lived a very nontraditional life, and the resistance she has faced from a society with two sets of rules (one for males and one for women) has caused her significant emotional suffering. She had to deal with extreme sexism even at a young age. In addition, Madhu, the biographer, tells the stories of her own life, that of her aunt Leela, and that of Munni, Savitribai's daughter. "Women without men, I realized then, are totally different creatures." (Deshpande)

Shashi Deshpande and her Women Protagonists :

Shashi Deshpande has showed the new and hopeless plight of Indian women, whose human rights are denied by traditional culture. Women are expected to play the role of a vassal in conventional culture. Their individuality and sense of self are continuously being diminished in this way. Legal and social equality for women are major themes in Shashi Deshpande's feminism. Until women are treated as equals in society, they will continue to suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder. The traditional and the

progressive can create a wedge between the lives of even financially independent women. Being Indian herself, Shashi Deshpande has meticulously and incisively exposed the norms and expectations placed on women in Indian society.

She has depicted professional, college-educated, upper-middle-class Indian women who are struggling to rediscover who they are and reconnect with their families. Her female heroines are always caught up in the tangled web of marriage and the relationships they desire. They have a strong need to make sense of the complexity of their existence. Shashi Deshpande has portrayed many different kinds of women. Her early works included characters like Saru from *The Dark Holds No Terror* and Sunitha, Cynthia, Shantha, and Meera from *If I Die Today* who were all submissive, distant, pleasant, and weak. In a discussion with Vanamala Viswanatha, Shashi Deshpande says, “*My characters have their own specific manners.*” There has been talk about the necessity for empowered female protagonists. Whatever the case may be, the ladies in my fiction are exactly what they seem to be. My experience with most women has been that they have little say in the matter and everything is decided for them. They are people who say one thing but do another because of their inflated sense of self-confidence. Shashi Deshpande emphasizes in her stories how modern women are becoming more confident and sure of themselves, yet nevertheless shackled by the expectations of each and every job they are given.

Although Deshpande does not identify as a feminist, her story has feminist overtones and is written from a female perspective.

This book is obviously written by and about a woman living in India. The novel is both a self-analysis and a flashback in an attempt to help the protagonist answer the question posed by the book. Several male authors, including Thomas Hardy, Mulk Raj Anand, and R.K. Narayan, and a plethora of female authors, including George Eliot, Sylvia Plath, Margaret Atwood, Doris Lessing, Anita Desai, Shashi Deshpande, Dalip Kaur Tiwana, Bharati Mukherjee, and Shobha De have written extensively about women’s minds, inner turmoil, lifestyles, and context.

The books of Shashi Deshpande center on the heroine, a woman, as she embarks on a quest to learn more about herself and the world. The protagonists in Shashi Deshpande’s books are women on a quest to discover who they are and how they fit into the grand scheme of things. *Roots and Shadows* (1983) was Shashi Deshpande’s debut book. Women of the working class and the educated may relate to Indus. The novel’s plot revolves on the protagonist’s trials and tribulations as he faces several challenges on his path to success. Despite living in a strictly male and custom-based culture, she makes an effort to examine her inner self in order to assert her individuality. Indus, the rebel, often thinks he could be both free and extravagant. She becomes a role model for older women in this context.

Authentic Female Characters :

At her core, Shashi Deshpande is a pragmatic realist. She has created women that seem real, both delicate human beings and robust people with impressive credentials. She presents a plausible plot with real people and no mysterious backstory. She is not afraid to portray reality instead of

how things “should be”. Many Indian books focus on the struggles of female protagonists. However, the books often praise the stereotypical Indian woman’s ethics of tolerance, devotion and submissive acceptance of whatever is handed to her, despite the fact that the treatment is sometimes unjust. Shashi Deshpande’s female protagonists are shocking because they blow apart the traditional narratives of male dominance and feminine virtue. Every book has a protagonist. Her works feature strong female protagonists. To fulfill her visions, she draws inspiration from everyday life and avoids the temptation to create static characters. When it comes to writing female protagonists, the author excels. However, she objects to the idea of a superwoman and any attempts to elevate their status. She elaborated to a reporter: “*My characters have their own distinct manners*”. I’ve heard that it’s important to have strong female protagonists. However, my stories center on ladies who are not what they appear to be. The women in Deshpande’s works have a unique characteristic, and they never give in to fear or give up hope while facing many obstacles and dangers.

Every strong woman in her book shuns the traditions that cling to the past. In their contempt, they get rid of useless rituals like walking around a tulsi plant seven times. Both Indus (*Roots and Shadows*) and Saru (*The Dark Holds No Terror*) are unwilling to participate in rites designed to increase their partners’ lifespans. The decision to terminate their employment reflects their maturity and independence.

She argues that these abilities do not fully define a woman. Based on her potential, she must determine whether or not to continue living with her male partner.

Conclusion :

In her writings, Shashi Deshpande strives to show intelligent, independent women. Women, like men, are entitled to the benefits and acknowledgment that come with total autonomy. They work to ensure that women’s rights are respected in all areas of society, including politics. They show how well women are regarded by the general people. Even a casual examination of Shashi Deshpande’s writings would show that she promotes the advancement of women. A feminist who thinks men and women should be treated equally. She believes that the best way for both sexes and the nation as a whole to thrive is in a peaceful culture where men and women can work together. There are several feminist themes in Deshpande’s works. Her true sympathies are made clear by the realism with which she portrays women in their roles as wives, mothers, and daughters, as well as in their quests for sexual and personal identity.

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From Pages to Pixels: Exploring Autofiction and OTT Representation in Vikram Chandra's "Scared Games"

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Autofiction, a captivating and ever-evolving genre in the literary landscape, blurs the lines between reality and imagination. It's a form of storytelling that weaves the personal experiences of authors into the tapestry of fiction, creating narratives that resonate deeply with readers. As the renowned author and critic Paul de Man aptly stated, "Autofiction is not about me. It's about language." In this unique genre, writers craft narrators who bear a striking resemblance to themselves, embarking on journeys that often echo their own life experiences. However, these narratives frequently traverse the border between fact and fiction, where the line between reality and imagination is delightfully hazy.

As one delves into the world of autofiction, they are met with the delightful challenge of unraveling the intricate threads of self and story, where the boundaries between author and character become tantalizingly blurred. This genre, celebrated for its authenticity and artistry, has found a compelling home in contemporary literature, offering readers a fresh and intimate perspective on the human

experience. Ben Lerner, American novelist "Autofiction is a way of writing about oneself without writing a memoir."

Web Series : A New Era of Storytelling in India :

In recent years, there has been a notable shift in the preferences of Indian audiences, who have become increasingly receptive to fresh, New Age original programming across various platforms. This openness has prompted content creators in India to explore innovative and cost-effective digital avenues to connect with their audience. Consequently, they are now crafting original programming tailored to the tastes of the emerging digital-savvy audience.

One of the most significant hallmarks of this transformation is the freedom granted to web series producers in India, allowing them to experiment with bold content and diverse subject themes. What sets these productions apart is their uncensored nature, offering a canvas for unfiltered storytelling. Today, original web series are being brought to life by independent

production companies, major broadcasting companies and even Bollywood production giants. This phenomenon has also witnessed the use of regional languages and culture, which resonates deeply with specific target audiences. This trend has been further amplified by the growing popularity of regional web series platforms such as ALT-Balaji and Y-Films. Academic research has delved into the multifaceted aspects of Indian web series development, focusing on their strategies and their connection to literary content. This exploration encompasses an array of elements, including meaning, sentence structure, symbolism, semantics, pragmatics and cultural nuances specific to particular regions.

The rise of Indian web series is a testament to the changing landscape of entertainment in India. With their bold content, diverse subject themes and uncensored nature, web series are offering audiences a refreshing alternative to traditional media. This phenomenon is also leading to the emergence of new voices and perspectives, enriching the Indian storytelling landscape. The allure of autofiction extends to the realm of Over-The-Top (OTT) platforms, where it has enjoyed a surge in popularity. Streaming giants like Netflix and Amazon Prime Video have proven to be fertile ground for autofictional storytelling. Notably, series like *Fleabag*, *Master of None* and *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel* have emerged as prime exemplars of this genre, captivating audiences with their distinctive blend of authenticity and artistry.

To illustrate these findings, popular web series like “Sacred Games,” produced by Netflix as an original, have been chosen as examples. The absence of censorship in this digital landscape has empowered

writers and directors to bring untold stories of society to the forefront. This newfound creative freedom has unlocked a treasure trove of narratives, fostering a dynamic era of storytelling in the world of Indian web series.

Vikram Chandra is part of a new generation of writers who split his time between Mumbai, India, and the American city. *Red Earth and Pouring Rain*, his first novel, won the Commonwealth Writers’ Prize for Best First Book and the David Hingham Prize in 1995. *Love and Longing in Bombay* (1997), his debut collection of short tales, won the Commonwealth Writers Prize for Best Book in the Eurasia Region and earned a nomination for the Guardian Fiction Prize. However, Chandra’s magnum opus is “*Sacred Games*” (2006), an extensive work spanning a formidable 900 pages. Drawing from his personal experiences, Chandra presents an authentic portrayal of the city’s underbelly. The skilled use of narrative techniques, which serve as a reflection of neoliberal surveillance tenets, characterizes “*Sacred Games*” as a postmodern novel of contemporary India. The tale builds a panopticon, a notion best understood via a Foucauldian lens.

Based on Vikram Chandra’s 2006 novel of the same name, *Sacred Games* is a 2018 Indian neo-noir criminal thriller streaming television series. It was the first Netflix original series made in India. On July 5, 2018, Netflix unveiled the first season of *Sacred Games*, which included eight episodes. Critics hailed the script and acting in especially for the series, which has subtitles in more than 20 languages, and gave it generally positive reviews. *Sacred Games’* season one is the first Indian television program to make The

New York Times' selection of "The 30 Best International TV Shows of the Decade." A mixed reception greeted the second season's August 15, 2019, launch. Because the show's climax left things open-ended, the producers decided against making a third season, and actor Nawazuddin Siddiqui has stated that there won't be one.

In "Sacred Games," this concept is vividly portrayed through the character of Sartaj Singh, a police officer in Mumbai. Sartaj's personal journey, filled with moral dilemmas and existential crises, mirrors the author's exploration of his own identity and the city of Mumbai. Sartaj's character undergoes a profound transformation throughout the series. His internal struggles and ethical dilemmas mirror Vikram Chandra's own introspective journey as he explores the themes of crime, politics and religion in Mumbai. Sartaj's experiences become a vehicle through which the author delves into the complexities of identity, both personal and cultural. One of the distinctive features of autofiction is its ability to blur the lines between reality and fiction. "Sacred Games" achieves this by seamlessly integrating real historical events and cultural references into the narrative. The series explores Mumbai's intricate underworld, political landscape, and religious tensions, all of which are grounded in real-world contexts. This blurring of reality and fiction adds depth and authenticity to the storytelling.

The novel is primarily narrated in the third person and centers on Sartaj's role in maintaining law and order in the city:

"Sartaj shrugged. The Gaitonde they had read about in police reports and in the newspapers dallied with bejeweled starlets, bankrolled politicians and

brought them and sold them... The early morning man with the tip-off had hang up abruptly and Sartaj had jumped out of bed and called the station while putting on his pants, and the police party had coming roaring to Kailshpad in a hasty caravan bristling with rifle (29)"

The novel primarily unfolds in Mumbai and centers around the life and self-destruction of Ganesh Gaitonde, a notorious gangster who leads a significant criminal organization. Gaitonde's criminal network is sometimes contracted by the politician Bipin Bhonsle to engage in acts of intimidation and violence, often targeted at Muslim families. This narrative structure is similar to Salman Rushdie's *The Moor's Last Sigh* (1995), which features a character named Mainduck who is both a Hindu nationalist leader and a figure in Mumbai's criminal underworld. In the earlier portions of "Sacred Games," Gaitonde shows no inclination to disrupt his lucrative illegal activities in pursuit of an agenda involving ethnic violence, even in the aftermath of the Babri Masjid's destruction. He is portrayed as more motivated by personal gain than religious or ideological considerations. His main rival, Suleiman Isa, another gangster, likewise places business interests above religious affiliations and employs individuals from various backgrounds.

Bhonsle approaches Gaitonde with an offer to eliminate vulnerable Muslim squatter communities in Mumbai, a move designed to enable profitable land development. Gaitonde sees this as a business opportunity rather than a religious mission. His actions, though motivated by profit, are interpreted by the public as a demonstration of his ethnic identity. As Gaitonde takes on the role of a Hindu gang leader,

it becomes increasingly central to his identity. He feels a sense of authenticity after embracing this Hindu identity, despite the fact that it was initially fostered by Bhonsle for political purposes. The novel shows how the rise of Ganesh Gaitonde in the criminal underworld goes hand-in-hand with the rise of Hindu nationalism in politics, suggesting that politicians who claim to be fighting corruption often use violence and illegal methods to achieve their goals.

This narrative thread serves as a commentary on the complex interplay between criminality and politics, highlighting the compromises made by individuals for personal gain and the blurring of lines between political and underworld activities. In the narrative, a looming threat emerges as the mafia kingpin, Ganesh Gaitonde, becomes aware of Guruji's plan to detonate a nuclear bomb. To shield himself from the potential nuclear catastrophe, Gaitonde constructs a protective shelter. Simultaneously, Sartaj Singh and Anjali Mathur, an intelligence officer from RAW, diligently pursue leads related to terrorist groups in an effort to thwart their scheme of detonating a bomb in Bombay. Their investigation unfolds with a sense of urgency, uncovering the grim specter of a virtual nuclear holocaust that poses a dire threat to humanity.

Within the novel's narrative, the existence of a militant and revolutionary group, Hizbuddeen, comes into focus. This group represents a militant force on the 25th day of the nuclear crisis. Conversations between Sartaj and Gaitonde revolve around the potential destruction of India, commencing from Bombay and extending across the nation. Additionally, the narrative introduces Kalki Sena, an

organization preparing for war and aiming to establish a nation in accordance with Hindu doctrines referred to as the Ram Rajya. The unfolding holocaust not only intensifies the partition issues originating in Bombay but also threatens to engulf the entire nation. Bombay is not exempt from the pervasive influence of organized crime. Both the novel and Netflix series reveals the intricate web of gangster operations involving G-company and S-company, both of which are driven by a desire to expand their dominion and influence within their respective territories. Their connections with political entities and law enforcement agencies provide them with a significant advantage, facilitating their activities.

The utilization of advanced technologies and weaponry streamlines their operations. Gangs have access to sophisticated arms, weapons and explosives, allowing them to exert control as they see fit and unleashing destructive power at their discretion.

The utilization of the indirect libre style to delve into the intricate realm of criminality becomes apparent when examining Sartaj's contemplations in passages such as these :

"The dead body had wanted more than marriage for his sisters, he had wanted a television set and gas range... no doubt he had dreamed of a brand new car... What he had dreamed was not impossible, there were men like Gaitonde (215)"

Vikram Chandra skilfully portrays the themes of bloodshed and violence in the fast-paced modern city of Bombay. He maintains a sense of suspense throughout the novel, keeping readers engaged until the very end. Although the heart of this

story is about crime, it is also a passionate celebration of modern-day India, with all its energy and roughness, leading the reader on a journey of the investigative storytelling. In “Sacred Games,” Chandra’s characters assume roles that are somewhat unconventional, such as a respected handyman in a pickle factory. This unique positioning further underscores Chandra’s exploration of the city as he weaves a plot teeming with intrigue, melodrama, sex, and violence, rivalling the depth of a late Victorian novel or a Bollywood film. Chandra’s storytelling places a significant emphasis on individuals navigating their roles and spaces within this occasionally unforgiving urban environment.

This exploration extends to various levels of Bombay society, from movie starlets and wealthy businessmen to airline stewardesses and corrupt politicians, gang leaders, spiritual gurus, hairdressers and police officers. As a Mumbai native, Chandra eloquently reflects the city’s contemporary concerns. The novel introduces a diverse cast of characters, each representing a different slice of urban life in Mumbai, from the bustling dance bars to the gritty slums to the halls of power where religious gurus and corrupt politicians hold sway. The language in which the novel is written is striking and unapologetic. It immerses readers in the language of the Bombay streets and the dialect of the underworld, liberally sprinkled with a variety of Hindi expressions and phrases, often left untranslated. Chandra’s storytelling masterfully provides the contextual cues necessary for understanding these linguistic nuances.

In essence, Chandra plunges the reader, encouraging a deeper engagement with the characters, the city and the rich tapestry of their language and idioms.

Chandra’s novel aligns with auto fiction by drawing on his experiences and observations of Mumbai to create a narrative that skilfully blurs the lines between fact and fiction, resulting in a compelling story that mirrors the complexity of contemporary urban life.

The success of “Sacred Games” on the OTT platform Netflix has demonstrated the potential of autofiction to resonate with a global audience. The series has been praised for its complex characters, its unflinching portrayal of Mumbai, and its uncompromising storytelling. Vikram Chandra’s “Sacred Games” serves as a prime example of how autofiction can be masterfully translated into the visual realm. The series seamlessly blurs the lines between fact and fiction, infusing real-world contexts into the narrative, adding depth and authenticity to the storytelling. The novel’s portrayal of Mumbai as a character itself is a testament to the city’s vibrant and tumultuous existence. Chandra’s storytelling delves into the various strata of society, from the glamorous world of movie starlets to the gritty underbelly of slums and gangsters. This narrative authenticity is further accentuated by the unapologetic use of language, immersing readers in the rich idioms and expressions of the city.

In conclusion, the symbiotic relationship between autofiction and the digital age, with “Sacred Games” as a shining example, underscores the power of storytelling to reflect the complexities of contemporary society, offering an uncensored, authentic and diverse narrative experience to a global audience. As Indian literature continues to evolve in the digital era, it is these stories that will continue to captivate and resonate with readers and viewers alike.

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Mother Tongue Interference in the English Language : Rereading Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* through this Interference

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Abstract

*India is a multilingual country. Her diverse culture and language have made her attain the status of cultural heritage of the world. The different languages of India on one hand and, the English language on the other have made a strong impact on the languages of India. Indians have always had the intense desire to speak in English as they consider English to be a language of power, a language of prestige, and moreover, a lingua-franca of the country. The lingua-franca status has given rise to a new form of English known as Indlish (Sanyal) through the process of interference. I have borrowed the term Indlish from Sanyal to explore the inter-ferece process in analysing communication aspect in *The God of Small Things*. Therefore, Indlish has given us through its interference other forms of "Englishes" known as Benglish (Bengali English), Hinglish (Hindi English), Tinglish (Tamil English) and so on. Through this process of interference, I shall make an attempt to re-read Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* and lay down how Roy's child characters as well as the adults use the English Language with their Malayalam accent to communicate with their elders and peers.*

*Roy implicitly highlights on the English Language Education in India and how the Mother Tongue Interference (MTI) has impacted on our second language for example, English. I shall focus on this type of interference with regards to accent, pronun-ciation, use of funny suffixes, separation of syllables in a word and deliberate change of spelling of the English words that some-times sound nonsensical and humorous. This appropriation of hybridity, mixture or interference, whether conscious or unconscious, has rendered the English language speaking in India a unique status. The question arises: "should we write as we speak, or speak as we write" (Sanyal 1) has numerous answers as I delve in to explore such nuances in Roy's *The God of Small Things*.*

Key Words

Multilingual, Lingua-Franca, Indlish, Weirdish, Mother Tongue, Interference

“Language is the dress of thought; every time you speak your mother tongue, you reveal a part of yourself.”

– Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.

India is a multilingual country. Her diverse culture and polylinguistic nature have made India achieve a global fame amidst the emergence of the English language. There is a strong visibility and importance of the English language in India. Many contemporary writers of India like Arundhati Roy, Amitava Ghosh, Siddhartha Sarma, Salman Rushdi, Jhumpa Lahiri and many others have used native words in their novels and have given it an “Indlish” touch (Sanyal 1) in their works. Such writers have made their stories global through their characterization and in the use of language that is powerfully native. Their characters are ordinary people with native qualities and down to earth personalities. This has made their stories attain a remarkable position where the mother tongue interference in the English language has given rise to a unique way of speaking and writing in English.

Arundhati Roy’s *The God of Small Things* is a work of art and of unique construction where the MTI with regards to pronunciation, use of funny suffixes, separation of syllables in a word and deliberate change of spelling in English has rendered the appropriation funny and worth noting.

The British left India in 1947 but left back its language in a country that is polyglottic. This polyglottic nature of the Indian languages and their mixing with the English language has left an indelible mark and, interestingly a permanently unique language emerged which most of

our people now speak in India. This unique way of speaking English has become a language itself. So Evelyn nien-ming Ch’ien calls such type of English “Weird English” and Jyoti Sanyal as “Indlish.”

Ch’ien opines “the weirding of English has been an ongoing phenomenon throughout history. English is, like other language, a hybrid and its original influences include Latin, French, and German” (Ch’ien 4), whereas, Sanyal views about Indlish: “the components of “Indlish, are *commercialise*, *officialise*, *legalese*, archaism and unidiomatic expressions. Anyone who wishes to write good, clear, English needs to avoid them. But surely, this demands that he must first be able to identify them” (Sanyal 95).

Taking these two writers as reference point, I shall analyse Roy’s *The God of Small Things* and show how the postcolonial sparks have been used to develop the novel. The mother tongue interference in the English language has led to the rise of variety of English where code-switching and code-mixing has led to linguistic gratification through the indulgence of switching and mixing up codes while speaking.

Roy’s use of Malayalam in *The God of Small Things* is to provide a local flavour at the global context and to showcase how native interference has transformed the English language to mark an Indian identity. This first novel has set the trend for spreading the traditional way of communicating and manipulating a language through her characters.

Apart from the mother tongue interference, Roy’s characters involve in constant code-switching and code-mixing in their conversation. An instance of this process is seen when

Adoor Basi, the most popular, best-loved comedian in Malayalam cinema, had just arrived.... he kept dropping his packages and saying, 'Ende Deivomay! Eee sadhanangal!'

Ammu look! Adoor Basi's dropping his things! Estha said.

He's doing it deliberately,' Baby Kochamma said in a strange new British accent. 'Just ignore him.'

'He's a filmactor,' she explained to Margaret Kochamma and Sophie Mol, making Adoor Basi sound like a Mactor who did occasionally Fil? (Roy 143)

Colonization has led to the hybridity and mixing of English with the vernacular that has gradually culminated in the production of a new form of utterance and expression. *The God of Small Things* being a postcolonial work has refashioned itself where Roy modifies the English language and explores its linguistic nuances through her child characters. The children speak and use English in their own child-like ways-breaking all norms, misusing the language to suit their purpose, which inadvertently has given rise to a new form of English because of the interference of the native tongue with the colonial language. This effect is observed throughout the novel with the children's childhood experience with English. The children speak and use English in their own understanding of the language by breaking all rules to suit their convenience, and thereby rendering a distinctly funny output. Let us look into an instance when the twins - Estha and Rahel speak to their English Cousin, Sophie Mol when she arrives to Cochin from London. Let us analyse the introduction scene.

"Hello all," she said, "I feel I've known you for years."

Hello wall.

'llo,' Sophie Mol said

'Ammu, my sister,' Chacko said.

Ammu said a grown-up's Hello to Margaret Kochamma and the children's *Hell-oh* to Sophie Mol (Roy 143, emphasis mine).

Sophie Mol's way of uttering "hello" as "llo" and the twins' "Hell-oh" and the narrator's as *Hello wall* are culturally and dialectically different. Their accent is their own and this cultural linguistic divide of the utterances of the same word "hello" is the process of interference of their native tongue. The children feel comfortable speaking with their indigenous tongues. Rahel and Estha do not speak English the way it should be spoken and converses with their elders, code switching between English and Malayalam. They encounter difficulties in speaking the English language with the pronounced accent tutored by Baby Kochamma but they are forced to speak. This, then results in strange grammatical and linguistic moments and, this makes Roy a unique writer. Their mother Ammu is divorced and lives in her parents' house with her children in Ayemenem, and so the children are looked upon with scorn and belittled all the time. Their appearance in their grandparent's home has become a burden to the adults in the family especially with their great grand aunt Baby Kochamma. Baby Kochamma always found fault with the all the activities of the children including with their speaking of the English language. To quote:

That whole week Baby Kochamma eavesdropped relentlessly on the twins' private conversation, and whenever she caught them speaking in Malayalam, she levied a small fine which was deducted at source. From their pocket money. She made them write lines - "imposition" she called

them—I will always speak in English,
I will always speak in English. (Roy
36, emphasis original)

This forceful domineering attitude of Baby Kochamma upon the children has made both Rahel and Estha speak in English. But their English is tinged with native accent, Malayalam interfering in their English conversations. When they are made to sing an English car song during their journey Baby Kochamma monitored their pronunciation. She made them form every word carefully and, minutely observed their pronunciation. Baby Kochamma would take care of their “Pre Nun Sea ashun” (Roy 36). Here, the sound of the word was far more important than the spelling. The car song goes like this:

Rej-Oice in the Lo-Ord Or-Orlways
And I say rej-Oice,
RejOice,
RejOice,
And again I say rej-Oice.

Here, the word “rejoice” /**rid3Tcis**/ as transcribed phonetically, is not pronoun-

ced the way it should be. The children try to anglicize the word to pronounce “rejoice” /**rid3Tcis**/ but they fail in their performance. In the word “rejoice” where /ri/ is uttered as “re” and “oice” (/cis/) as “Oice” (c:is) with an elongated /c:/ using a long vowel where the utterance calls for a short vowel /c/ instead of /c:/ . Furthermore, analysing the syllable break in the word “rejoice” -the children break it this way as “rej” and “Oice” where the break should normally be at “re” and “joice” (as phonetically transcribed /ri/ and /d3cis/. The Malayalee accent interferes in their utterance of the word “rejoice” as “rej-Oice” and the MTI is but a natural production of words in this way which is still prevalent in postcolonial India. There-fore, Sanyal’s “speak-as-you-write” and “write-as-you-speak” concept becomes acceptable here since Indians speak this way.

I shall quote some MTI utterances from the novel and shall analyse the ways how conversations and communication in the postcolonial Indian scenario has made communication “Indlish” and Weirdish.”

Some prominent words from the novel are taken and analysed here to reflect on the MTI interferences :

Point Number	Original words/phrases as spoken with neutral accent	Words/ phrases pronounced in the novel	Analysis
1.	Divorced	Die-vorced (Roy 130)	A two syllable word where the elders give more stress on the first syllable /daʔ/ and, the second syllable /vʔ:st/ remains unstressed. So /divʔ:st/ becomes /daʔvʔ:st/ *Detailed analysis provided below Table: 1

2.	Left, left, left, right left	Lef, lef, lefrightlef (Roy 141)	<p>The /t/ consonant is left unpronounced. A common “Indlish” way of pronouncing “left right left” as “lef right lef” by Indian Children.</p> <p><i>*Detailed analysis provided below Table:1</i></p>
3.	Stop it	Stoppit (Roy 141)	<p>The two separate words “stop” and “it” are uttered as one word.</p> <p><i>*Detailed analysis provided below Table:1</i></p>
4.	Oh, India is going to the dogs!	Oho! going to the dogs India is (Roy 140)	<p>An “Indlish” expression of “oh” as ohho! And the phrase “going to the dog India is” where we note that the phrase ends with a “be” verb.</p> <p><i>*Detailed analysis provided below Table:1</i></p>
5.	Film Actor	Filmactor, that sounds as Mactor (Roy 144)	<p>A very common utterance among native Indian speakers where the consonant ending in the first word gets combined with the vowel in the second word.</p> <p><i>*Detailed analysis provided below Table:1</i></p>
6.	When exactly	When eggzackly (Roy 324)	<p>Here I quote Sanyal’s observation of “speak-as-you-write” and “write-as-you-speak”. The phrase “when exactly” is uttered as “when eggzackly” and here it is more of “write-as-you speak.”</p> <p><i>*Detailed analysis provided below Table:1</i></p>

Table: 1

*** Detailed analysis of the six points:**

Point 1: Divorced (Roy 130) :

Here, the word “divorced” /**diva:st/** through the MTI process becomes “die-vorced” /**daIv:st/** where the monothong inadvertently becomes a diphthong. The interference is made with ease and least shocking to the Indians. Rahel is divorced from her husband and Comrade Pillai is curious to know about her conjugal life. Let us understand Rahel’s conversation with Comrade Pillai :

“‘We’re divorced.’ Rahel hoped to shock him into silence.

‘Die-vorced?’ His voice rose to such high register that it cracked on the question mark. He even pronounced the word as though it were a form of death.”

‘That is most unfortunate,’ he said, when he recovered. (Roy 130)

Roy comprehends this utterance as “For some reason resorting to uncharacteristic, bookish language. ‘Mo-stunfortunate. (Roy 130). The “most unfortunate” becomes “mo-stunfortunate.” The pronunciations, and syllable divisions are a unique formation of speaking that is transformed through the interference process.

Point 2: Left, left, left, right left (Roy 141) :

Left, left, left, right left pronounced as “Lef, lef, lef, right lef”

The omission of /t/ sound in the word “left” is a very common phenomena observed among school children in the Indian context. It is perhaps the unconscious process of neglecting the consonant /t/ and ending the pronunciation with the /f/ sound has become a common practice among Indian children. This is an oblivious utterance made by children and the adults accept it

the way children pronounce because they are children. Roy captures this moment where the twins watch their English cousin walking down the runway with “one hand in her mother’s. The other like a soldier’s (lef, lef, lefrightlef” (Roy 141).

Point 3: Stop it (Roy 141) :

The phrase “stop it” /**stap/ /it/** is pronounced as “stoppit” / **stappit/**

Rahel, Ammu’s daughter is a talkative girl. She observes how her English cousin Sophie Mol walks down the runway and instantly makes a sing song phrase:

There was

A girl

Tall and

Thin and

Fair

Her hair

Her hair

Was the delicate colour

Gin-nn-ger (Roy 141)

Listening to Rahel’s recitation, Margaret Kochamma annoyed with her, asks her to “Stoppit” (41) and “so she Stoppited” (141).

The consonant sound /p/ of the first word “stop” conveniently gets doubled and added to the beginning of the second word “it”, thus producing /pit/ and ultimately the two words “stop it” becomes reduced to one word “stoppit” (Roy 141). Further, the word “stop it” takes a funny past tense with a suffix “ed” added to “stoppited.” These forms of utterances are a common speaking style in postcolonial India and Roy deliberately makes use of this interference to form a different language and also deploys them as strategy

to resist the hegemony of the colonial language. She informs us that “I love English. But I want to write in my English” (169, qtd. in Ch’ien). “If we read the above sing song phrase: “Was the delicate colourov” - “colour of” becomes “colorov”, it can be observed that the preposition “of” is pronounced as “ov” without the botheration of confining to rules and regulations. The child Rahel speaks freely in her own way until her aunt Margaret Kochamma asks her to “stoppit” to which she “stoppitted.” In the words of Ch’ien:

Weird English possesses the extra dimension of a foreign language, it requires not only interpretation but also translation. Weird English revives the aesthetic experiential potential of English; we see through the eyes of foreign speakers and hear through their transcriptions of English in a different way of reproducing meaning. (6)

Rahel’s sing song phrase has a cultural stress on the visual component of her utterance which also strikes the acoustic component at the same time. The funny formations of past tense and suffixes have made “Indlish” sound weird, yet its aesthetic aspect of the language has rendered it a unique status within the linguistic gamut of human life.

Point 4 : Oho! Going to the dogs India is (Roy 140) :

This is the “Indlish” way of communication in day-to-day social life. The realistic and the down to earth description of the Cochin airport that looked like “a local bus depot” gives the place a local dimension (Roy 140). This makes the narrator understand that India is going to the dogs and is never going to improve if airports looked like a local bus depot. The

subject-verb position is altered and the “Indlish” way of communication renders the idiomatic phrase enjoyable and acceptable. The subject “India” and the verb “is” are placed side by side which illustrates the fact that communication is meant only for understanding and not to distort the communicator and the communicatee. Ch’ien observes that “English is not an institution. It is not a language and the meaning derived from it that create or install order in the world.... When English is used in an orthodox way...[it] is used evilly rather than with cultural difference (181). Estha and Rahel don’t understand the rules of speaking and if at all rules are taught to them, they vehemently break them and speak the way they want to. Since they are forced to speak in English by their great grand aunt, Baby Kochamma, they mix up English with Malayalam and with this interference; a new form is generated by them. We in India never frown or complain about such absurd construction but accept it as a part of our life.

Point 5 : Film actor (Roy 144) :

This utterance is a sort of running the nasal consonant sound /m/ of the first word on to the beginning of the second word “actor” that sounds as “mactor” when pronounced together. This gives an added flavour of indigeneity. The two words are pronounced as one thereby giving it an “Indlish” flair in a “weirdish” communication atmosphere.

Point 6 : When exactly (Roy 324) :

This calls for the “speak-as-you-write” and “write-as-you-speak.” The children hear the elders speak English and always try to imitate them. They observe their uncle Chacko’s Oxford Moods (Roy 54)

and his accent. He is an anglophile and is educated from Rhodes. Looking into Rahel's conversation with her mother when she boards the Madras Mail to Madras :

...look after my sweetheart for me.
Until I come and get him.'

'When, Ammu? When will you come for him?

'Soon.'

'But when? When eggzackly?'

'Soon, sweetheart. As soon as I can.'
(324)

Therefore, "exactly" /**egzækli** / is conveniently broken into "egg" and "zackly" by Rahel and this utterance from the child is as she hears them from her surroundings.

Other such utterances formed due to MTI are:

Thang God (Roy 320) for Thank God

Infinnate Joy (Roy 118, emphasis Original) for Infinite Joy

...*porketmunny* (Roy 107, emphasis original) for Pocket Money

To the children the status of English is not confined to one single rule. To them it is unstable. It is vulnerable and pliable and flexible. They mix up with their vernacular and with it they find ease in articulating it in their way.

Looking into the recitation of the *Lochinvar* poem by Comrade Pillai's niece, Latha, to the Anglophile Chacko, one would find the typical "Indlish" way of reciting the poem.

O, young Lochin vars scum out of the vest,

Through wall the vide Border his teed was the bes;

Tand savissgood broadsod heweapon sadnun,

Nhe rod all unarmed, and he rod all lalone. (Roy 27, emphasis original)

[O, young Lochinvar is come out of the west,
Through all the wide Border his steed was the best;

And save his good broadsword, he weapons had none,

He rode all unarm'd, and he rode all alone.] - Walter Scott

The narrator comments on the recitation as if "[t]he words ran into each other. The last syllable of one word attached itself to the first syllable of the next. It was rendered at remarkable speed" (Roy 271). The anglophile Chacko for a moment was confused as Latha's rendition was unintelligible to him. He thought that the child was narrating a Malayalam translation of "Lochinvar." Latha's recitation of the poem has the Malayalam interference that affects Latha's oral skills with a distinct accent. Children like Latha learn their native language/ dialect early in their life from their surroundings. They are confronted with the interference of the native accent on the target language. This makes it difficult for them to learn the Standard English articulation and pronunciation. Moreover, Latha 'performs' her English in 'postcolonial linguistic situation' (Ch'ien 86) before Chacko. Her performance is not done with understanding of the poem but uses the language for showcasing her talent of reciting in a language that is considered a language of power and prestige. Her aunt and uncle feel proud that their niece has acquired a foreign language but Chacko understands it to be a Malayalam translation. This is 'linguistic pollution' a term I quote from Ch'ien (186).

Thus, India's multilingual position with people speaking different languages

interfering while speaking in English has been reread in Roy's *The God of Small Things*. This interference has brought in new ways of utterances like "colourov", "porketmunny" etc., unique word formation like "stoppitted", funny linguistic rendition like "lef, lef, lefright lef" and imitation of the anglicized pronunciation of "re-jOice" that suggest that Roy is a very close observer of how native people use English and break its rules to suit their purpose. Ch'ien in her *Weird English* understands that "the vernacular of Roy is the vernacular of self-assertion" (200). I would conclude my paper from Ch'ien's observation of the mother tongue or the vernacular with reference to Roy:

The vernacular reflects the narrator's refusal to be educated in the ideal of the colonizing culture-his voice is unpolluted, unbrainwashed by the dominant culture. The vernacular affirms the passage's content of antiromanticism in an honest form of representation. (Ch'ien 13)

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A Feminist Outlook Towards Mahabharata

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Abstract

Mahabharata, the greatest epics of all time not only focuses on self-realization and eternal glory but also deals with class distinction, gender stereotypes and many more. Feminist approach implies one had better note how women fair in anarchy. Feminism is rather an emergent outlook whence gynocriticism has leaped forward. It laments that human civilization has been ever dominated by man. Throughout history, women have often been relegated to a secondary role in human civilization. And in order that the wrongs of history are corrected, a group of feminist philosophers have popped up in the West. Mary Wollstonecraft, the wife of the political thinker Godwin and the mother-in-law of P. B. Shelley, the rebel child of Romantic imagination was one of the protagonists of the emergent outlook of feminism.

Lisa S. Price defines Feminism as “a method of analysis, a standpoint, a way of looking at the world from the perspective of women. It questions government policies, popular culture, ways of doing and being, and asks how women’s lives are affected by these ideological and institutional practices.” Wollstonecraft’s ‘A Vindication of the Rights of Woman’ is a milestone in the history of the feminist thought. Not only in America but in France also feminists like Olympe de Gouges raised voice against the political and economic right conferred only to men and not to women. In India, Savitribai Phule is regarded as the ‘Pioneer of Women Education.’ Women have always been seen as a subject of exploitation but what happens when the oppressed, exploited women start to revolt? Is it a man’s world or a woman’s world?

The greatest of epics were written and promoted according to a patriarchal purview, I would like to question a few dichotomies in such literary representation through this paper, from a feminist perspective. Mahabharata centres around subjugation of women and how they victoriously fought against the tyranny of men and successfully established their own identities. While maintaining their household duties they also struggled to earn their dignity even outside their homes. They have shown their efficiency not only in the household chores but also in the battle field. Mahabharata shows the victory of good over the evil. But is it so? Do the female characters like Amba, Kunti, Draupadi get justice? When their identities were at stake where were the male members? This paper also deals with questions like was in vitro fertilization prevalent in erstwhile

era, Amba's transformation to Sikhandi and the influence of female powers i.e., Draupadi and Kunti behind the great Kurukshetra war.

Keywords

Self-realization, eternal glory, Feminism, gynocriticism, Romantic imagination, gender stereotypes.

Introduction :

It is said that the ancient Indian society was laden with caste system. There were four castes-Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Sudra. It is said that no other castes other than Brahmins had the right to peruse the Vedas. The greatest sage Krishna-Dwaipayana Vyasa is framed to have edited the four Vedas-Rig, Sam, Yajur and Atharva. Any creative artist should attain some kind of aesthetic pleasure once a piece of art is accomplished. But ironically enough Vyasa could not attain the peace of mind despite the fact that he had accomplished his task of editing the Vedas. This tells us of the aesthetics of Vedic period. Since, Vyasa did not find any peace he was asked to write something for the masses including women that might instruct and delight and therefore Vyasa took to writing the Mahabharata. Lord Ganesha readily accepted to take dictation from Vyasa. Thus, the longest epic poem was written.

Ancient India like modern science astronomy had immense faith on the motion of multiverse. The *Mahabharata* is composed of one lakh verses in the 4th century BCE or earlier is a grand narrative that surveys all the three-verse earth, hell and beyond. *Mahabharata* deals with a wide range of human culture and their conflict. In the title, 'Maha' focusses on the vast size of the text and its importance. 'Bharata' indicates the successors of King Kuru (Kauravas) and the successors of King Bharata (Pandavas).

The story and the anecdotes of the *Mahabharata* have simultaneously entertained and taught religious principles to the people of this country, and supplied materials for ballads and plays, for two-three millennia. Many *slokas* from the *Mahabharata* have been in wide public use as maxims. People have not cared about the inconsistencies or the flaws in the characters of the epic, but have considered themselves blessed to have the great ideas as ideals. The lifestyles of then and now are vastly different, but the paragons of virtue that have been given by Krishna, Bhishma, and the Rishis in the *Mahabharata*, are acceptable across time. In a world full of misery, happy endings are usually unpopular. Despite that, why did the oldest and most popular epics or classics of this country, namely the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*, turn out to be tragic? The objectives of these two epics are clear, entertaining and educating the mass about religion, but there is another goal as well. Man is not immortal, so, every real or imaginary tale of any life is bound to have a tragic conclusion. The *Ramayana* is the story of the lives of Rama, Ravana etc. while the *Mahabharata* tells the story of the Bharata clan. The authors of these two have described the ups and downs and other dilemmas of their lives as uninvolved witnesses. Their indirect purpose is to incite non-attachment in the mind of the reader. They did not preach the detachment of a crematorium, neither did they propagate renunciation of all enjoyments, they have

merely told to accept the inevitable rule of nature with a calm mind. All savings decay in the end, prosperity ends in a fall, after a union comes separation, and there is death at the end of life.

Due to the collection of many stories the *Mahabharata* is often considered an anthology and due to this similarity with the Fifth Vedas it is often termed as a religious text. The multiple small narratives prevalent from the early ages have all been collected to make what the present form of the *Mahabharata* exists in. The narrative of the *Bhagavad-Gita* is testimonial to philosophical study, while from the archaeological point of view the *Mahabharata* gives a source to understand the ancient life and works of that age. The geographical understanding of ancient India also can be located from the text. Despite being a true form of poetry, hence art, the *Mahabharata* is usually classified as a historical document, making Rabindranath comment that it is not the history of a particular man, but mirrors the life and times of an entire society. (Basu, pg. 3).

In Anushashon Parva Bhishma had initially mentioned that a man of 21 to 30 years should marry a bride of 7 to 10 years. Although he later mentions that one should marry an adult woman, throughout the *Mahabharata* we can see child marriages taking place. Apart from their main wife, every king had numerous numbers of other wives, who were known as secondary wives – but they were equally respected. Although there were fears of inter caste marriages, but Bhishma in the Anushashon Parva mentions multiple inter caste relations. Although a number of widows did burn themselves in the fire, but a number of widows like Kunti, Uttara, Satyabati and Subhadra did live with their sons and

daughters in laws. Although women were respected often, they were gifted to others or made leverage during gambling. Apart from land, jewellery, clothes and vehicles, women servants were also a part of the dowry. For the extravagance of festivals whores were also kept for pleasure purpose. Although the Brahmins were hugely respected, they were also made the butt of the common people's joke for their heavy intellectual debates in the court.

It has been said regarding the hundred offsprings of Dhritarashtra that Gandhari produced a blood clot and Sage Vyasa created 101 embryos from that and preserved those in a container. Henceforth, hundred sons and a daughter took birth. Therefore, two assumptions could be considered that the then sages were somehow capable of reproducing test tube babies. Had the births of these children not occurred together, then the age of the youngest brother of Duryodhana would have been nearly one year when he was 105 years old. It was not even possible for a year-old boy to confront a battle. Again, it can also be considered that Vyasa tried to depict the unanimous strength by using the metaphor of hundred sons. It can be assumed and even conjectured that what in the present era of birth is finds its expression through the process of invitro fertilization must have had its synonymous counterpart during the age of the *Mahabharata*.

Comparison and Contrast between the Iliad and Mahabharata :

Mythology is a genre where the struggles of Indian women against the patriarchal notions are vividly described and each of them bravely fought for their dignity and possess enough courage to raise voices against the injustices done to them. The quintessential heroes like the Pandavas,

the Kauravas, Achilles, Hector have fully enriched the classical literary genre. The immortal classics like the *Mahabharata* and the *Iliad* deal with the heroic deeds of their respective heroes. Amidst these glorified stories which elevate masculinity lie the women characters who are seen as the mastermind of the wars that take place there. These epics depict a deeply disrespectful attitude towards the women but without them would it be possible to rage such a war? These women are always seen as scapegoats in these males dominated narratives. But what happens when these women start to revolt?

The Iliad and the *Mahabharata* though written in different timelines and in two separate countries have some similarities and dissimilarities. Both the texts serve the typical characteristics of an epic. *The Iliad* was composed in ancient Greece around 6th and 8th century BC whereas the composition of the *Mahabharata* can be traced back to 6th century BC. In *The Iliad*, the Trojan War started because of the abduction of King Menelaus' wife, Helen by the Trojan prince Paris and Agamemnon's greed for wealth. On the other hand, a certain section of criticism about the *Mahabharata* claims that the origin of the Kurukshetra War was because of Draupadi's humiliation by Duryodhana and she compels her husbands to take revenge. This incident coincides with Duryodhana's immense jealousy of the Pandavas. Thus, in both the cases women play a vital role to initiate the war and how greed, selfishness and jealousy lead to the destruction of kingdoms.

One of the striking similarities in both the epics is that Sanjayan with his unique vision describes the war scenes to the blind

king Dhritarashtra whereas during the Trojan War the ministers of Priam, the Trojan king narrates the events of the war to him. The fire symbol is shown as a powerful weapon to destroy their enemies in both the epic poems. Ghatotkacha uses fire to destroy the Kauravas' army at night and Hector burns the sheep of the Greek army at night.

Women are objectified and seen as prizes in both the narratives. In the game of dice, Duryodhana claims Draupadi as a slave after winning her (Bhaduri, pg. 267, vol. 4). In *The Iliad*, the soldiers are rewarded for capturing women for their skills and heroism – "Human captives are especially prized. They are kept as slaves or sold for ransom. After one such raid, the young girl Chryseis is selected as an appropriate prize for Agamemnon." (Homer, pg. 3).

One of the significant factual differences between the two is the length of the texts. Homer limits its narration of *The Iliad* to 15000 lines whereas *Mahabharata* is a vast grandeur of 200000 verses. Homer being the third person omnipotent narrator has the rights to control the characters accordingly and it is written in a more organized way. Whereas *Mahabharata* is more complex because of the amalgamation of different plots, themes. Here, Vyasa not only writes it but also acts it.

Both Vyasa and Homer's tragic visions of man and nature are represented with the same compulsiveness, bringing them together into a single brotherhood. They work in a common pattern, bringing out the fundamental innocence of man and his maturity with all the force of their composition. The two grand epics, which

describe the state of men, serve as stepping corners between the West and the East, rising above their immediate context as towering icons of the human spirit.

Female Characters in Mahabharata :

The *Mahabharata* is comprised of eighteen parvas or books of varying lengths. Along with the main narrative that encompasses the lives of Pandavas, from their birth to adolescents, their marriage to Draupadi, the conflict between the Kauravas and the Pandavas which lead to one of the greatest wars, the Kurukshetra War where all of them are killed and the aftereffects of the war, there are several sub-stories or sub-plots called 'upakhyanas' which play a vital role in the narrative of the epic. Some describe the stories of Bharata progenitors, how the Pandavas learnt the warcrafts, the tales of gods, demons, various types of sacrifices performed by kings and the back-stories of characters which juxtaposes with the main narrative.

Though *Mahabharata* is a male dominated epic but the women characters in *Mahabharata* hold a special position and they are remarkable for their intelligence, wit, beauty and most importantly their courage to question the then patriarchal society. The women of *Mahabharata* epitomize the true strength and power of Indian women. They can be called as 'Mahabharatee'. 'Bharati' is derived from the Sanskrit word which depicts Indian women and Mahabharatee symbolizes the Indian women. This paper mainly deals with the three significant characters of *Mahabharata*.

"One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman.... It is civilization as a whole

that produces this creature ... which is described as feminine" – Simon de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex* (New York: Vintage Books, 1973), 301.

The term 'feminism' was first coined in 1871 as a medical term to identify the symptoms of 'feminisation' in the male patients' bodies. Alexandre Dumas in a pamphlet named *L'homme femme* used the term in 1872 to indicate women behaving in a more virile way. Feminism is composed of 'femme' which means 'woman' and '-esme' refers to a political concept or ideology or a social movement.

The 'first wave feminism' refers to the different feminist movements that took place in the late-nineteenth century and the early-twentieth century with an aim to achieve equal rights for women. The 'second wave feminism' took place in the 1960s and 70s which dealt with issues like the role of women in family, women's employment and giving political rights to them. Feminist activities are categorised under different theoretical frameworks, namely, Liberal feminism, Marxist or Socialist feminism, Radical feminism, Psychoanalytic feminism, postmodern feminism etc.

Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*, John Stuart Mill's *The Subjugation of Women*, Margaret Fuller's *Woman in the Nineteenth Century* deal with issues like recognizing the culture of women, society's denial of giving women access to politics, education, financial stability. Wollstonecraft questions the socialising process in the subordination of women. On the other hand, the French feminist activist raised her voice for the equal rights of men and women. Therefore, feminism goes back to a time when it concerned itself to resistance

against exploitation, although the radical aspect of feminism is a 20th century product. Virginia Wolf wrote several essays along with her notable fiction, *A Room of One's Own* portraying how in patriarchal society women are deprived of cultural, educational and economic rights.

Simon de Beauvoir wrote *The Second Sex* keeping in mind the inequality and oppression towards women. She challenges various patriarchal tendencies to value women's gender differences by glorifying women's fertility at the expense of women's intellectual autonomy. She asserts that only economic independence can emancipate women from certain fixed social norms such as they are only assigned the roles of mother and wife.

Though *Mahabharata* centralizes women subjugation, the female characters in the epic poem can be called as fearless feminists who have been successful in creating their own images and identities. They have suffered existential crisis and struggled a lot through various hardships ultimately achieving what they wanted. Their journeys represent the journey of all Indian women facing various problems in this patriarchal society. These exemplary women epitomize bravery, beauty, elegance, intelligence. They courageously voice their thoughts against patriarchy. Each of them is distinct from one another and they are indomitable. However, the focus is primarily on Kunti and Draupadi, while other important characters like Amba and Gandhari get very little space and characterization.

AMBA :

Bhishma abducts the daughters of Kashiraj, Amba, Ambika and Ambalika from their swayambar sabra. Amba falls

in love with king Salva and decides to put varmala in his neck. Bhishma abducts the sisters to Hastinapur to get married to his nephew, Vichitravirya. This instance of a princess falling in love with a king is very rare during that age keeping in mind the patriarchal society in the backdrop. Amba has enough spunk to express her love openly. But when Salvarraj encounters Bhishma's attack he immediately turns him. Amba's silence stuns the readers. She refrains herself from telling the truth to Bhishma that she is already betrothed to Vichitravirya. At this juncture, the looming question is whether Amba gets infatuated with Bhishma's strength and power.

When she finds out that the princess are supposed to get married to Vichitravirya, she confesses that she wishes to marry Salva. Bhishma returns her with full respect and dignity to Salva but Salva abnegates her on the ground that Bhishma touched her. Here, Amba is treated as a commodity. She becomes furious and rears up a deep grudge against Bhishma and vows to take revenge on him. She is a perfect example of what a wrathful woman is capable of. Her strong self-esteem restricts her from going back to Bhishma and ask him to marry her. Amba exclaims in despair that she has done a mistake by choosing Bhishma over Salva.

Amba gets angry with everyone but she is infuriated with Bhishma. She thinks Bhishma is responsible for her distress and she starts to plot his devastation—"but the real culprit for my misfortune is Bhishma. If I have to take revenge on someone, whether by strengthening myself by austerities or by fighting, if I have to take revenge on someone, I will take it on Bhishma. He is the root of all my sorrows" (Bhaduri, pg. 418, vol. 1). She requests

Srinjay Hotrobahan to fight against Bhishma. Hotrobahan appeals to Parushuram to teach Bhishma a lesson. But the mighty and powerful Bhishma triumphs over his guru, Parushuram. Thus, to avenge her revilement Amba is left only with the choice of 'Tapasya'. She then devotes her life in sadhana. Amba reborns again as Sikhandi and she is called to be the Brahmastra against Bhishma. Sikhandi, born as a woman exchanges her genitals with a 'Yaksa' to take revenge on Bhishma.

In the Kurukshetra war, Bhishma confronts Sikhandi in the battlefield and considering Sikhandi as a woman denounces his weapon like a true 'Kshatriya'. He accepts his 'Sarasajya' and his defeat to Amba turned into Sikhandi. Amba's struggle and loneliness play an important role in the epic. She is a woman of determination but she is destined to live an incomplete life in both her lives.

Gandhari :

Gandhari, the queen of Hastinapur, receives unfair treatment from the male characters. Gandhari's character can be analysed by applying the socialist feminist theory by determining the society as the principal means of oppression. From the starting Gandhari is confined within the concept of an "ideal woman" because she chooses to blindfold herself when she learns that her husband Dhritarashtra is blind. This can be portrayed as a means of sharing her husband's pain or her way of protesting because she was not informed earlier about Dhritarashtra's blindness. Gandhari is described as a beautiful and devoted daughter. King Subala first hesitated to give his beautiful daughter to Dhritarashtra but the fame and dignity of the Kurus' overwhelms his initial prevention

and suspicions about Dhritarashtra. She is treated as a property as no one considers her consent and feeling.

Her life centres around Dhritarashtra and her children. She is well aware of the fact that the Kauravas cannot win over the Pandavas and hence, she tries to refrain her son from going to the war but none of them pay any heed to her warning. This depicts how the patriarchal structure of society oppresses the position of women. She possesses a great wisdom and foresight. Everytime before going to the battlefield Duryodhana asks for her blessings, she blesses her but never prompts anything about winning this battle because she knows already who will be the ultimate winner. Although she is a virtuous and faithful wife but throughout her life she receives negligence. Her husband cheats her with another woman and the society remains a silent observer to this. This contradicts with the court room scene where Draupadi is deemed as a prostitute for having five husbands.

Every time Gandhari tries to express her sadness or disappointment towards Bhishma and Krishna for all the injustices, the society disregards and despises her. The male dominated society only gives importance to the feelings of the kings but not to their wives. In spite of the injustices she faced, she always upholds one principle- Victory goes only with Dharma.

Draupadi :

Being the daughter of King Drupad of Panchala, Draupadi, 'the Unexpected One' or 'Offspring of Vengeance' also faces tremendous oppression from her birth. She is born out of the sacrificial fire, a yajna performed by her father. Draupadi, beautiful and enigmatic, a dark-skinned

young woman emerges after her brother Dhristadyumna. As soon as she appears, a heavenly voice calls out a prophecy that “she will change the course of history” (Divakaruni, pg. 5).

Draupadi faces gender discrimination from a very young age. Dhristadyumna is called ‘Destroyer of Enemies’ and Draupadi, ‘Daughter of Drupad’ (Divakaruni, pg.5). Dhristadyumna is having an identity of his own whereas Draupadi is only remembered as Drupad’s daughter- “But Daughter of Drupad? Granted, he hadn’t been expecting me, but couldn’t my father have come up with something a little less egoistic? Something more suited to a girl who was supposed to change history?” (Divakaruni, pg. 5). She struggles for her identity as she renames herself as Krishnaa and Panchali. Drupad prefers Dhristadyumna more than Draupadi. He was not expecting a daughter at all – “He held out his arms-but for my brother alone. It was only my brother he meant to raise up to show his people. Only my brother that he wanted” (Divakaruni, pg. 6).

Draupadi, a firm woman with an unbending will is the proud angry heroine of the epic. She has been portrayed as a woman who fights for her pride and her gambled dignity. Draupadi’s aggressiveness and her immense courage to speak her mind in a men’s world makes her different from other Hindu mythological heroines. She is referred to be the first feminist. She is the only woman in *Mahabharata* who enlightened and emphasized the need to respect a woman by challenging a court filled with mythological heroes who assaulted her in the dice game. Yudhishtira places Draupadi as a collateral when he loses everything in the dice game. After winning the game, Duryodhana instructs Dushashan

to fetch Draupadi from the ‘Andar mahal’ stating that his enemies (the Pandavas) are under his control and they won’t be able to do anything if he brings her in the court – “স্বয়ং প্রগৃহ্যানয় যাজ্ঞসেনীং / কিং তে করিষ্যন্ত্যবশাঃ সপত্নাঃ” (Bhaduri, pg. 267, vol. 4).

Dushashan enters the ‘Andar mahal’ and states to Draupadi with laughter that they have won her in the game of dice and drags her to the royal court - He commands Draupadi to look at them with her lotus eyes and claims her to be their slave – “কুরান্ ভজস্বায়তপদ্বনেত্রে/দুর্যোধনং পশ্য বিমুক্তলজ্জা” (Bhaduri, pg. 267, vol. 4). Karna calls her a whore for marrying five men. No one protests against the injustice done to her. Her five husbands, Dhritarashtra and other senior members of the court remain silent and downcast as Draupadi is manhandled into the hall.

Draupadi fiercely bursts out to Dushashan when he is trying to disrobe her in front of everyone and tells him to stop humiliating her immediately – “নৃশংসকর্মন্ ত্বমনার্যবৃত্ত/মা মাং বিবস্ত্রাং কুরু মা বিকর্ষীঃ” (Bhaduri, pg. 271, vol. 4). Angrily pointing at the elders, she shouts whether there is no one in the royal court who can save her from disgrace. Her wrath is not easy to handle.

Krishna, the eighth incarnation of Lord Vishnu, comes forward to rescue his Sakhi, Draupadi’s respect and dignity in the royal dicing hall. When Dushashan undrapes her attire, Krishna makes it impossible with his powers by making the cloth infinite in length. This incident ignites the flames of vengeance in Draupadi which leads to the great Kurukshetra war. She curses the Kauravas that there would be no living male heir to continue the bloodline of the kuru dynasty.

Despite the embarrassment faced by Draupadi, she accompanies her husbands to exile. This depicts her as a dedicated, courageous and persistent woman.

Draupadi is infuriated when she gets to know that Duryodhana is still alive. She tells Krishna, "Friend, where is the possibility of my punishment if I do not see the green arm of the evil spirit severed, fallen to the ground and paralyzed (dusty-gray)? I have been waiting for that day for a long time, my friend" (Sarkar, pg. 413). Throughout her life she suffers fury, humiliation, intense pain but in the final act when she forgives Ashwatthama for killing her sons and brother her extraordinary strength is portrayed by showing what a powerful woman is capable of, rising above all odds and struggles for justice till her very last breath.

A soul born from the fire of sacrifice; her beauty changed the fate of Bharat Varsha. Innumerable controversies, uncountable opinions, infinite war of words has conjured one name, Draupadi. If Kauravas are to be blamed for their actions, then the question should also be raised as to why the Pandavas gamble their wife as a pawn? Did they consider her as an object or they really consider Draupadi as their wife? Opinions may alter but Draupadi will always be a symbol of respect, courage and love.

Both Gandhari and Draupadi are often shown as auditors who while accompanying their husband kings hear portions of the event, fulfilling the functions of queens. They listen to some of the important tales and teachings that are narrated in the text. They have major portions in the epic where they speak and contribute to many significant episodes. Though the *Maha-*

bharata is not a women centric text, the female characters play pivotal roles as audience within the structure of the epic. But the readers should keep in mind that both Draupadi and Gandhari do represent 'woman' as a whole because both of them belong to the higher status of the society. Their presence as prominent auditors do not symbolize each and every female audience but specifically the kshatriya women present on the court and most significantly the queen.

Conclusion :

Simon Brodbeck and Brian Black relate the episodes of *Mahabharata* with the theory of socialist feminism. The female characters in the epic already voice their opinions against the injustices. "Socialist feminists claim that the labor of women in the domestic realms serves not only the interests of specific families but also the interests of capitalism in that the family reproduces the attitudes and capabilities needed to enter into the wage labor force" (Tunna & Tong, pg. 262). It states that women cannot escape from certain societal norms and values which confine them. These views limit their freedom. Thus, "socialist feminism focuses upon power relationships, especially the intersection of capitalism, racism and patriarchy and the production of a politicized personal (subjective) life" (Madsen, pg. 184).

The women in *Mahabharata* are bold enough to protest against the male dominated society. They set examples for women in today's society and how to live with courage and bravery. These women characters are very modern in their thinking and respective actions.

There has been an upliftment in the status of women in modern day India. Several laws are enforced to protect women from sexual harassment, dowry, cruelty. In India, marital rape is not considered to be a punishable offense and this particular field need reformation. Motherhood occupies the central place in the structural composition of the family. Single mother concept is also seen during the age of *Mahabharata*, Hidimba upbringing Ghatotkach singlehandedly.

Thus, it can be said with a certain amount of trepidation that the feminine world of Mahabharata is not humongously different from the 21st century India. Although a particular section of privileged women do have some say inherit lives but their agency is not completely autonomous. Most of the feminine characters are either pawns in the hands of their significant male partners or in the hands of society at large.

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Critical Discourse Analysis with Reference to Indian English Short Films

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Abstract

'Discourse Analysis' was the term coined by Zelling Harris to refer to the method that would analyse any connected speech or linguistic expression that would run beyond the limit of a single sentence. Critical Discourse Analysis is an approach to the study of language that combines sociology with linguistics. Language is the most powerful and fruitful medium for the expression of human thought and interaction. The very tool that makes impact, in fact, has been impacting human social behavior over the past century is the cinema.

The present paper is an attempt to analyse the genre of short films using discourse analysis. However, the focus will be to scrutinize how the language of the conversation of various individuals in a story characterizes their social identity. We will investigate the contexts of their utterances; their relationships and how various speech acts are performed to establish the underlying norms of their conversation. We will also establish the characters' interpersonal relationships, conversational behavior, turn taking and how various issues crop up and gradually disappear and come up again to finally establish the coherence of the discourse. We will finally 'see' how various characters participate in a cinematic discourse and impact the thought and behaviour of the audience. However, I will focus on the linguistic analysis rather than having any specific agenda or intent as to apply a specific sociological angle to the study. The author is aware that it is difficult not to observe a short film beyond social and psychological dimensions, the conclusion offered would dominate the linguistic aspect.

Keywords

CDA, Cinematic Discourse, Speech Acts, Turn Taking, Sociological

I dare say, film industry owes the literary genre 'Drama' as its precursor. It was the drama enacted with the help of technology that the wonder that was 'Film' came to us. Drama seen from the angle of film-making, was-is a 'Live film'! Film

industry has never been just an entertainment for the people at large, but has played one of the most significant roles in the awakening of social sensibilities and bridging the widened valleys of differences between divergent forces. Though not so

related to our topic for today, we must admit that it is also one of the biggest industries that provides employment and revenue. Though we have a stupendous boom in the emergence of shorts, we have had them way back in the past. There is a general acceptance that COVID 19 has triggered the boom in the shorts industry, which is partially true, however, I personally believe that the pandemic has just quickened the process.... It has only brought early what would have happened in the due or natural passage of time.

History of Short Films :

The short film has a truly amazing history. The genre had been neglected for years. The birth of film was itself a 'short'. With Thomas Alva Edison's Kinetoscope, which displayed the moving pictures for the first time in 1894, we can mark the birth of the cinema. Only a single person could see through the 'eyehole' to witness a short moving picture of an event like a dual or any event creating the illusion of an action. This would long for few seconds and that too, without audio. Though it is not confirmed, it is informed that at the first screening of a film—a train coming into the station—the audience were so scared that they had run away screaming from the theatre. From a single shot action sequences to the addition of multiple cuts, this journey of the short films became much more interesting with the early 1910's. The average length of the film had risen to over three hours with D. W. Griffith's film 'The Birth of a Nation' (1915). 1910's is considered the Golden Era for the short films. Charlie Chaplin was probably the first international star and most famous man alive. However, the very advance in the technology, financial propositions and people's response at large, saw the decline

of the shorts and in the 1920's and early 1930's we have the emergence of, what we call today, the feature films.

Rebirth of Short Films :

The 1980's saw the emergence of music television and we have the short films back! Money starts pouring in. This fetched the glamour and artistry together for the short film industry. If we observe, the pace of human life has much to do with the length of the film. The speed of human life is inversely proportionate to the length of film. With the fast-moving world there is less time for people to give their artistic inclinations the same leisure and space as what the Elizabethans would do to watch drama. The rebirth of short films was inevitable given the less availability of time and facility to watch it as per individual convenience.

Today, in a lighter vein, every second person is a short film maker in its own capacity. With the advent of most advanced mobile phones, it has become all the easier to produce shorts. It would no be an exaggeration to say we are at the peak of short film making as there are shorts as short as 30 seconds and going down less than this is unthinkable!

Discourse & Discourse Analysis :

If we proffer a short definition limiting ourselves to the domain of linguistic study, discourse is that unit of linguistic analysis which goes beyond a sentence or the text. The interesting thing of this research is that we have a larger entity at hand that goes beyond language and presents itself as one of the most powerful media of social change—at least social awareness if not social awakening—short films! The real challenge is to analyse and focus on the aspects of discourse in the short film.

There is great connection between the discourse analysis and the social message that underlines the 'text', here, the dialogues of the film. In this particular context, it would be pertinent to discuss certain core concepts viz. discourse, language and text.

Discourse, Language and Text :

While studying cinematic discourse there are some questions that we need to focus on and answer, especially in the context of discourse, language and text.

How does the non-linguistic language contribute in discourse analysis of a short film?

Should linguistics dominate in a multimodal analysis?

What is cinematic discourse?

Can discourse go beyond language?

What is a text in cinematic discourse?

Can there be a text without language?

Are there non-linguistic methods for the analysis of the text, and should they be used for the analysis of cinematic discourse?

Non-linguistic Language :

Non-linguistic language, known as non-verbal communication in general along with other features such as proxemics, paralinguistic features, clothing and appearance, use of objects and props and other technical devices, plays a pivotal role in discourse analysis of a short film. These elements of the non-linguistic language contribute enormously in bringing about meaning without the use of verbal expressions. It would rather be appropriate to say these factors of the non-linguistic language help enrich not only the verbal part but also the overall impact of the short film.

Multi-modal Discourse Analysis :

Let's discuss what a multi-disciplinary approach is. In spite of the fact that the core purpose of the present research is to analyse how 'text' in a short film shapes the social sensibilities and arrives at a direct or indirect message, we will apply a multi-modal approach to our analysis. Rather it will help us more with the analysis of the short. Multimodal discourse analysis anticipates an approach to discourse which mainly focuses upon how meaning is derived at through the application of multiple modes of communication as against the use of language alone.

In short, the study will not merely be restricted to a linguistic analysis of the text.

What is Cinematic Discourse?

Cinematic discourse is the study of social and cultural communicative process characterised by the complex combination of lingual and non-lingual structure in the cinema. Cinematic discourse contains heterogeneous systems like verbal (dialogue), non-verbal (facial expressions, postures and gestures) and non-lingual cinematic presentations (music, cinematography etc). Cinematic Discourse is the culmination of an integrated design of these semiotic systems. Each element has its own inseparable place and unique contribution in interpreting the cinematic theme or meaning.

Can discourse go beyond language?

Discourse analysis, in a conventional sense, studies the 'text' of the discourse, however, as Allen and Barbara Pease in their book 'Body Language' claim that 53% of what we speak is perceived through the non-verbal clues rather than the verbal expressions. If this is to be considered true, we must say that to

critically analyse a short film we must go beyond the 'text' of the film. Hence, we must say that discourse goes beyond the language part and critically brings out the desired explanation.

Is linguistics important in cinematic stylistics?

Cinematic stylistics pertains to the analysis of language along with other constituent units in the film to create a unified impact, interpret emotions and convey the final message. Linguistic features like speech acts, register and style, socio-linguistic elements and non-verbal communication contribute immensely to provide a structured approach along with the verbal communication and help study the cinematic stylistics.

Discourse and Narrative :

Narrative is an important element in cinema. The question that comes up next is what is the definition of narrative. There are some important features of narrative. Among them is the division of narrative into story and discourse. There are important concepts in narrative analysis. On one hand the story denotes the content of the narrative, on the other discourse refers to how the narrative has been presented.

However, 'cinematic discourse' is not restricted to narrative alone. There is a distinction between cinematic discourse in general and narrative discourse in films in particular. This is a question that we need to think about in the study of cinematic discourse. Narrative discourse only refers to the parts of a film where narrative exists. However, discourse or cinematic discourse to be more precise refers to the whole film, including entire films that cannot be described as narrative, or having a narrative content.

Role of the Speech Acts in the Critical Discourse Analysis of a Short Film :

Let's consider the role of the speech acts in the critical discourse analysis of a short film.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is an interdisciplinary approach to the study of texts, which views "language as a form of social practice" (Fairclough 1989: 20). Speech acts and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) are both extremely significant devices in the analysis of communication. They can be usefully applied to different forms of discourse, including short films. Interestingly, films have held mirror upon the society and societal practices in all the ages that it existed. Short films is the 'new normal' in the world of film making. Following is the explanation of how speech acts and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) can be used together to analyse a short film.

Speech Acts :

Speech acts, as defined by the philosophers like J.L. Austin and John Searle, refer to the various actions performed through language. These speech acts are categorized into three main types:

Locutionary Act : Refers to the literal meaning of the utterance.

Illocutionary Act : According to Austin in Paltridge's book, The Illocutionary act is hidden meaning that is connected with the speaker's intention (2006:55). It is matched with another view of Austin in Searle's book that 'Illocutionary act is the utterance of words which has certain force' (2007:3). This act refers to the intended meaning or purpose behind the utterance (e.g., asserting, questioning, commanding).

Perlocutionary Act : This speech refers to the effect or response the utterance has on the listener.

In our day to day communication we refer to certain expressions where the intended meaning is altogether different from the literal meaning. In a short film the illocutionary force is more significant and dominant as having limited in length it tries to express more on shortest possible words. Figurative language and sarcastic expressions come handy and serve the purpose. They can also include non-verbal acts, gestures, and expressions.

Application of Speech Acts in Short Film Analysis :

Dialogue Analysis : The present paper analyses the dialogues in the short film. I have chosen 'Appraisal' – an Indian English short film to identify different types of speech acts involved in it. For example, whether the characters are asserting, questioning, promising, or making requests. We will separately analyse the film and for the various speech acts performed by the characters.

Non-Verbal Communication : As discussed previously, the Non-linguistic language has significant contribution in cinematic discourse. We need to pay attention to the semiotics i.e. the non-verbal cues like body language, facial expressions and gestures. These too constitute speech acts and by adding to the meaning, can convey intentions or emotions.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) :

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) focuses on the social contexts, power dynamics and ideologies, within which the discourse occurs. It aims to reveal the hidden meanings, power structures, and social norms encapsulated in the text. It

focuses more on the real emotions, feelings, intentions, meanings and whatever is in mind which can be known from the socio-linguistic perspective.

Theme of the Short Film 'Appraisal' :

The title of the short film is 'Appraisal'. It was released in 2019. It has only two characters. The physical setting of the film is the cabin of a corporate company. Their verbal interaction takes place in the cabin of the senior employee. The exact position of the boss is not known. The occasion is the typical situation of annual appraisal of the employees. The junior employee is a female and the boss is a male. Apart from being in professional relationship, they have personal relation as well. The female employee has been staying with the boss in his house for the last two months. They share sexual relationship. Though the relational is mutual, it seems they have their personal vested interests behind it. Over the period, as the appraisal interview progresses the audience start understanding the story. From one of her dialogues it seems he had promised her a good hike in salary. He also nods he had said that but seeing her poor performance he is helpless and denies her a good raise. The tension and conflict is built up slowly but gradually as there seems a deadlock to her desired promotion. A point comes in the story where she loses her control and starts shouting, getting up from her chair. She blames him for his hegemonistic attitude where he hides her from his friends and brother. She literally had to wait at the mall as long as his friends were there at his house. At the end, when she comes to know that the raise he has offered is not worth acceptable; rather all her expectations and motives have been shattered, she slaps him in the face and threatens to take it to the next level.

The story can be summarised as the tale of love, sex and promotion. This is a perfect short film presenting the struggle of a young corporate worker through the tales of APPRAISAL.

Though there is no definite conclusion offered at the end of the film, it offers us so many aspects to ponder over. The most dominant of them is the socio-economical of the relationship. The social norm, at least in India does not approve for a young girl and a man staying together without getting married. The Supreme Court held that a living relationship comes within the ambit of right to life under Article 21 of the Constitution of India. The Court further held that live-in relationships are permissible and the act of two major living together cannot be considered illegal or unlawful. However, socially we still have moral restrictions and such acts are looked down upon by most of the Indians. Another significant aspect is the choices, compromises and decisions that both the characters have to make. Irrespective of being mutual, the relationship has dark motives from both the ends. The power dynamics, man-woman relationship, cut throat competition and so on.

Application of Speech Acts in Short Film Analysis :

A) Dialogue Analysis : The dialogues of the film are so subtle and relevant that they create the desired over the audience. There is a lot of sarcasm in the 'text'. Interestingly, the dialogues, as per the demand of the situation follow all the perlocutionary effect. There is assertion, there is questioning and demanding, making requests and we have commanding as well.

For example, the very first dialogue when the female employee says '*I can come back later*', she actually means that he should not make her wait.

At another point she says, '*So, what do I do to exceed expectations*' there is deep and acute sarcasm as if she refers to their sexual relations and asks 'Is it not enough?'

As the very situation in the film is an appraisal interview, the most dominant part is the questioning. However, the questions go beyond being formal and take a turn towards rhetoric and helplessness. Following questions by her indicate the same: '*So, what do I do to exceed expectations?*', '*What else you want me to do?*'

The dialogues, '*Ok. Don't worry, I will change this to a rating five....*' And '*Don't worry about it. I set an action plan from next year. Everything will be alright. Don't worry*', by the boss are nothing but promises.

Apart from these, the very dual of expressions are full of requests and denials.

B) Non-Verbal Communication : The impact of semiotics is most important in communication and especially in a short film as it complements the verbal expressions. The characters in the movie display various gestures, postures and facial expressions along with certain actions that are extremely meaningful add to the overall effect. The knock on the door and sitting without the permission or even without asking the boss, her expression of carelessness and antagonism by putting her hand under the chin and looking elsewhere all set the tone of the further

action. Her tilting and sitting back on the chair, her putting both her hands on the table sign towards the quarrel to follow ant time next. His cool hand gestures and pointing time and again towards the paper in the hand mean he is a man of strict protocols and a man with controlled emotions. The over all set up of the office, her sipping water in between the conversation, when the camera frame is on her, everything behind him and on the table is neat and tidy but whenever it's her, there are few books and two empty water bottles behind her. It portrays the divergent natures they have. The facial expressions and the hand gestures of both the characters complement the action and justify them.

- C) Power Dynamics :** Critical Discourse Analysis unavoidably studies power dynamics. Power dynamics in its natural environment means attempt to take control over the other person's capacity to make choices. There are three components of power dynamics. First, there is a power holder and power receiver where both try to manipulate each other. Second, trying to attain selfish goals at the expense of others. Third, depletion of physical and mental health due to power dynamics.

If we analyse closely, the core theme of the short film 'Appraisal' moves around the concept of power dynamics. The boss in the story is the power holder and the female is receiver. While the boss tries to manipulate for sexual benefits, the employee tries the power for social security, professional development and financial gains. At the end when the boss doesn't help

her, she literally slaps him in the face. With both the characters, with their turn taking, try to establish and challenge the authority.

In this way, the power dynamics operates throughout the film and dominates.

- D) Social Context and Ideological Analysis :** Though 'Appraisal' is a short film dealing with a professional situation, it closely deals with the social and cultural ideology and succeeds in making us think deeply over social values and personal ethics. The illicit relationship, staying together without the socio-cultural acceptance and trying to attain personal selfish motives from both the end somehow breach of the ideological social setting where the story takes place. Let's not observe it from a moral point of view. It is because morality may change as per the social context. Every society develops its moral standards.

Research Methodology :

There are various primary data collection methods like interviews, observations, surveys and questionnaires. However, as for short films are concerned, the film itself is the source of the primary data. Researcher collected data from the film which has visuals, movement, colour combinations, characters that were alive, their body language and above all, the most authentic source, language.

The source of data in this research is script of the film 'Appraisal'. The researcher downloaded the short film from the U Tube and with great effort copied the script himself. It helped watching the movie multiple times and analysing it.

The data are utterances of dialogue that contain power relation discourse among the characters: the boss and the junior employee.

Data Collection :

- Watching the film “Appraisal” to identify various aspects CDA
- Reading the film script many times to identify implicit meaning.
- Selecting various aspects for the analysis.

Data Analysis :

- Dividing data into different aspects for analysis
- Making an interpretation or meaning of the data
- Collecting some data and supporting information to analyse the meaning of the data (such as books, internet, article and any other information that was relevant to the researcher’s study)
- Analysing the data using critical discourse analysis with the theory from Woffitt (2005) and Van Dijk (2009) focuses on power relation discourse
- Drawing conclusion based on the analysis of the data

Script of the select short film in short :

She : I can come back later.

He : No - no just give me one minute I need to send this mail (pause) done (pause) you ok?

She : Ya.

He : So, let’s have the annual review for 2018.

She : Ya.

He : I see that you have not mentioned one of the goals.

She : Ya.

He : Did you miss to do it or did you do it deliberately?

She : No - na - no I have an explanation for it.

He : Ok hold on let’s take a step back, let’s do this one by one.

She : Ok. As you wish.

He : Your first goal was very strait forward. I feel that I would rate it met expectations.

She : I would say exceeded expectations. What were you expecting?

He : Well whatever you demonstrated I feel that is a part of your responsibility.

She : So, what do I do to exceed expectations?

He : Something like increase productivity or train the interns for that matter.

She : Oh. I see.

He : Ok. Don’t worry, I will change this to a rating five, which means exceeds expectations. But you need to understand that if I give you this rating, I will be answerable to the management.

She : So then answer them. Otherwise leave it. I can also talk to the management.

He : Ok. Let’s move forward now. Goal two production support (she nods) I see that you have rated yourself five?

She : Yes. Why not?

He : But I think five is exceptional.

- She :** So... Whenever I was asked for support, I gave it. What else you want me to do?
- He :** Listen I will have to give justification. I will have to write to the management why I am giving you this rating. And How do you justify?
- She :** When the opportunity arose to give support, I have given it. If there was no opportunity, what am I supposed to do?
- He :** Look, Anita did more than she was require to do. She even got recognised by the business. Now that is justification.
- She :** So... Why don't you give me the appreciation?
- He :** I can't. I really want to but my hands are tied.
- She :** You take care of it.
- He :** Let's not argue on this. Let's finish off with this and get going.
- She :** No, no, what rating would you give me?
- He :** I would give you a three
- She :** No way... Come on! Make it four.
- He :** I can't. There is already a complaint from the team. Saying that you were not present most of the time for production support.
- She :** You know exactly why I was not present for the production support.
- He :** I know, the management is also aware of it.
- She :** Ok. Give me 3.5
- He :** Is it a joke. What are you saying... point...? It doesn't work. Point five, three point five... It's either three or four or five. It's just how it is.
- She :** Ok.
- He :** Now moving on goal three. This project has a lot of issues, a lot of flaws. You know it was not just a successful project.
- She :** Look. It was not just my fault. There were also other people in the team.
- He :** Yes, but I can't give you or other people on the team a three which is 'goal met'.
- She :** (murmurs something) I don't know if I can trust you. Looks like I will lose my job.
- He :** No.
- She :** Oh my god!
- He :** No. Don't worry about it. I set an action plan from next year. Everything will be alright. Don't worry
- She :** And that's it!
- He :** Ya, that's it.
- She :** What if the management says that I have not met one of my goals. One of them is three and the other one is two?
- He :** If they talk something like that, I will handle it don't worry. I am there no...
- She :** What about my increment?
- He :** Well I think three percent will be good
- She :** What? What the fuck!

- He :** Listen, listen. There are some certain guidelines I need to follow.
- She :** You told me that you have the authority to give raise.
- He :** I do have the authority but not for such rating.
- She :** I shouldn't have trusted you.
- He :** Calm down.
- She :** No, three percent is too less. First of all I started with less pay.
- He :** See I have always made sure that you have less work. I have taken care of that.
- She :** Yes, but what about salary?
- He :** Salary is something I really can't do anything about. My hands are tied.
- She :** I shouldn't have trusted you.
- He :** Come on, listen, if I give you more than the management will start doubting me, they will start questioning me.
- She :** You handle that. Three percent is too less. I cannot accept that.
- He :** Why aren't you understanding? They will start doubting me.
- She :** Let them doubt it. I am tired of this.
- He :** Ok. Relax. Calm down. See, let me try to tell something. The kind of work I give you is less, right? It's less?
- She :** Ya, I know I am not getting a lot of work but that is also because of your own benefit no?
- He :** Let's not talk about this here.
- She :** I am not accepting the three percent raise and that's that.
- He :** If the management questions me and if I am in trouble, I can't take care of you.
- She :** What are you taking care of me anyway my foot? You kept me in the dark. You never mentioned any of these things to me and you had your fun with me.
- He :** I just can't help this. And what expenses are you talking about like? Seriously from the time you moved in with me I am the one who is paying your rent. I am paying for your food, I even bring you to the office. So, what are you talking about?
- She :** Oh Hello.... I am not paying rent only for the last two months. And what do you think I am having an awesome time? Every time your friends come home I have to pack all my things and keep them aside. Your brother comes home I have to clean everything from every room so that there is no trace that I was ever there. (He tries to stop her but can't) No every time your friends come I have wait in the mall for hours and hours and you can't even introduce me to your brother or your friends and now I am not even getting my proper salary. Wow! Every in the team has got an eight percent of raise I am the only one who got fucked and got fucked up. And you, you called me anytime you were horny. You know (slaps him in the face) I am gonna take this to the next level.

About the Short Film :

Premiered on 14th June 2019

Reach Entertainment Presents – APPRAISAL

Corporate life is such a challenge. Especially in this fast-paced world. Catch the story of one such young girl trying to make it through with a drop of lemon named as APPRAISAL.

Love, Sex and Promotion

Now streaming this perfect short film presenting the struggle of a young IT worker through the tales of APPRAISAL.

#Love, Sex, Promotion # reach # appraisal

MOVIE CREDITS :

Cast: Lakshyraj Rathod, Amoolya Narayna

Written, Edited & Directed by - Arvind Sethuram

Producer- Sapna Sethuram

Music Director - Sidhant Patra

Cinematographer - Vikram Nippani

Production Manager - Dileep Kumar

Associate Director - Vikram Nippani

Lights, equipment & Camera - Reach Entertainments

Recording - Prayog Studios

Colouring DI - Avatar Medias

Production Assistant - Deepak

Poster Design - Vinayak Nippani

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Literature is a Reflection of the Culture of its Times

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Abstract

This paper attempts to study the impact of literature on society and how literature acts as a form of expression for each culture. As literature mirrors the society and culture of people with diverse backgrounds, literary works have artistic merit and lasting value. Literature helps to bridge the gap between cultures and enables students to cross-cultural borders. Works of literature written by various individuals are also influenced by that individual's society. Culture encompasses the beliefs, customs, values, and activities of a particular group of people at a particular time. Literature reflects cultural norms, values, beliefs, and attitudes. Literature is one of the most powerful tools to transform your knowledge and perspectives; it is a link between the human past and the present. Culture influences literature through religious ideas, language, and gender norms as literature and culture are inseparable and literature is a big part of all cultures. This paper will attempt to highlight that through literature, students can be offered the opportunity to explore different cultures and cultural values that can lead to awareness among students regarding the traits and concepts of the cultural aspects.

Keywords

Literature, society, cross-cultural borders, awareness, cultural aspects.

Literature is a body of written works. Deriving from the Latin *littera*, “a letter of the alphabet,” literature is first and foremost humankind’s entire body of writing; after that, it is the body of writings belonging to a given language or people; then it is individual pieces of writing.¹ Literature acts as a form of human expression. Literature is an art form comprising prose,

fiction, drama, and poetry including both print and digital writings. Literature is an imitation of the societal values of its time period. Literature reflects the time period in which it was composed. Furthermore, the literature mirrors the core values of the people in the society. As literature is said to be a mirror it is often said as a window. While we read, we learn more

about ourselves and our society, but we also explore faraway lands and new ideas. People who write are usually influenced by their immediate surroundings and their personal experiences. Literature is an important part of education as it gives a deep insight into the values and beliefs of a culture. Various pieces of literature work as microcosms of the Indian and many cultures and thus offer some logical limits to the understanding of the Indian culture and offer some insights into its formidable plurality. Each culture is in itself a complex web that offers links to neighbouring cultures in ways that are numerous and hugely difficult to know. Cultural autonomy emanates from the influence of the nearby close-knit culture and rests on its self-projected independent ideas and rituals. Owing to such complexity and immensity of the concept of Indian culture, it is reasonable to examine it in the light of certain notions from cultural studies.

As cultures, the analysis takes up the issues of cultural practices, rituals, and lifestyles: food, costume, cuisine, class, caste system, and gender perspective. As a nation, the analysis centers on the political system, its democracy and secularism, religion, communal differences, the influence of history on its present, Indian identity, patriotic feelings commonly shared by Indians, accountability of its people towards their nation, the concept of the nation as it exists in India. The issues that constitute India as a nation and its cultures, however, overlap with each other and reinforce mutual concerns. A probe into the cultural analysis of India reveals the societal inequalities caused by the longstanding presence of hierarchy at the levels of caste, class, and gender. The

pluralist democracy of India allows different groups of people to follow their beliefs, faiths and customs. It acknowledges them as the authentic members of the society. This aspect is termed as “recognition” or “acceptance.” It is the acceptance that allows people of different orientations to reside in India as their homeland.

Writing is a dynamic process through which the writer explores psychic reality, an effort to go deep into the complexities of existence and the things that determine its nature. Literature differentiates between truth and reality as work of literature perceives no discrepancy between the terms Tell and Art. Anita Desai answers “Art does not merely reflect Reality it enlarges it”ⁱⁱ

Literature reflects culture through the interrelation between literature and culture. Works of fiction and non-fiction reflect the observations and experiences of writers of their times. Literary works by analyzing their cultural significance help to create understanding and unity between different cultures.

If one looks at the history of society, we will see that society and its culture have gone through so much change from the Paleolithic period to the present age of information technology. The Society’s value system has never remained uniformly constant. Kalidas, a great poet, in his first play, *Malavikamitam*, was afraid of the uncertain feedback of the people. Therefore, at the beginning of the play, he pleads, *Puranamityek Nasadhy Sarvam, Nachapikavayamnavrinyavadyam*.

“Every old poem is not good as it is old; nor is every new poem to be blamed because it is new; sound critics, every critical examination, choose one or the other, the

blockade must have his judgement, guided by the knowledge of his neighbours.”ⁱⁱⁱ

With respect to literature also, we have seen remarkable changes in its forms, styles, and themes. The area of literature has been changing with the changing scenarios in life and society. The same has been the case with the language and culture. Different societies have their different value systems, languages, beliefs and cultures for the fulfillment and ‘society’ aspirations.

Literature has no failure or success but constantly deals with ambiguity, manifesting itself. In its manifestation, it experiences images of repression, fear, diversity, conflict, desire, and pleasure. The reader, receiving acceptable and bearable images, ideas, and themes moves forward to selftransformation.

“Literature becomes an enjoyable experience precisely because the otherwise unacceptable fantasies and desires become sublimated into acceptable and bearable literary images, ideas and themes: Literature transforms our primitive wishes and fears into significance and coherence, and this transformation gives us pleasure.”^{iv} (Holland 30)

Literature has had a major impact on the development of society. It has shaped civilizations, changed political systems, and exposed injustice. Literature gives us a detailed preview of human experiences, allowing us to connect on basic levels of desire and emotion. Cultural identity is a part of a person’s identity, or their self-conception and self-perception, and is related to nationality, ethnicity, religion, social class, generation, locality, or any kind of social group that has its own

distinct culture. Literature allows a person to step back in time and learn about life on Earth from the ones who walked before us. We can gather a better understanding of culture and have a greater appreciation of them. We learn through the ways history is recorded, in the forms of manuscripts and through speech itself.

“The nature of Indian identity is significant for those who live in India but it is also important for very large Indian diaspora across the world-estimated to be 20 million or more in number. They see, rightly, no contradiction between being loyal citizens of the country in which they are settled and where they are socially and politically integrated, and still retaining a sense of affiliation and companionship with India and Indians. As is frequently the case with immigrants in general, the Indian diaspora is also keen on taking pride-some self-respect and dignity- in the culture and tradition of the original homeland.”^v (Sen73)

Culture and literature are incredibly interconnected and the relationship between them cannot go unnoticed. Literature plays a crucial role in society’s development as literature influences people’s way of life. With technological advancement, people are more focused on the internet but still literature serves as the focal point of study of cultural phenomena across the globe. Various theories argue that cultures have a diverse impact and how they shape the literature and perceive the world. Over the past years, the impact and features of culture on literature have become an area of interest for many scholars and researchers. “if culture cannot be understood by means of any non-cultural categories, cultural

differences themselves can be accepted as the ultimate truth about man. When everything is cultural, even the notion of a noncultural category can seem to be a ludicrous contradiction.”^{vi} (Brown 93)

The word culture has diverse meanings depending on the views and context of varied people. Culture does not limit the society instead has cultural identity, values and beliefs passed down through inheritance. Literature and culture are two inseparable issues. One can use literature to reflect and understand their own culture and other cultures. Literature creates a sense of understanding and unity between different cultures.

Literature can be used to illuminate cultural issues in many ways. It can help readers understand the cultural context of a particular time and place, and how that context shapes the experiences of the characters in the story. Literature can also help readers develop empathy for people from different cultures, by allowing them to see the world through the eyes of someone else. By exploring themes such as identity, race, gender, and class, literature can help readers understand how these issues intersect with culture and shape our experiences. “Cultural practices sought to locate subjective attitudes and behavior within social contexts, Bourdieu proposed that all human beings occupy a *habitus*’, a practical sense and set of dispositions (modes of perceptions, thinking, behavior) that generate particular attitudes and behaviours. *Habitus* is the subjective component of a cultural practice. Further, every individual also occupies a *field*’, i.e., social conditions that embody specific social relations. *Fields*’ are the objective

components of cultural practices. Social formations are organized fields the family, religion, educational or economic domains. Each field is a structured space with its own laws and norms of functioning. Individuals compete for the control of resources within a field.”^{vii} (Nayar 147) Literature thus can be used to reflect on and critique culture. It can also be used to explore cultural differences and similarities and to challenge stereotypes and assumptions. Williams in *Keywords* says “culture is one of the two or three most complicated words in English language (87). First, culture can be referred to A general process of intellectual, spiritual and aesthetic development (90). Culture might be to suggest a particular way of life, whether of a people or a group, culture can be used to refer to the works and practices of intellectuals and especially artistic activity.”^{viii} (90). Literature manifesting human perception regarding cultures can help students develop global awareness by introducing them to current cultural issues. When students vicariously experience the feelings and emotions of others through literature, they are encouraged to look critically at the world and gain a greater understanding of the global community.

In addition, literature can be used to explore cultural issues in a historical context. Many writers use their art to directly address social, political, military, or economic debates in their cultures. These writers enter into the time of their social discourse and this discourse is formed by the cultural conditions that define the age. Overall, literature can be a powerful tool for illuminating cultural issues and helping

readers develop a deeper understanding of themselves and others. “the beliefs, social practices and conduct rooted in cultures other than one’s own are only understandable and analyzable by means of the concepts employed within these cultures and thus different conceptual schemes from our own are involved; standards of truth, rationality, right conduct and the expression ... inaccessible to members of our culture because they are always relative to particular systems of thought.”^{ix} (Brown 43)

The inheritance of Indian culture is found over the ages from the Vedas, Muslim rule, British colonization, Nationalism, and Globalization. The blending of these various aspects made India create a unique culture of its own. The diversity found in the living practices, languages, customs and traditions has vastly shaped the growth of the great Indian civilization. “India’s cultural life does indeed bear the mark of the past, but the mark is that of its interactive and multi-religious history”^x (Sen 57).

There are many examples of literature that deal with cultural issues. Here are some examples :

1. **Ramayana and Mahabharat** are more than mythological texts as they reflect the real essence of history and highlight the profound significance of India’s past. These epics trace us back to the time when records were passed through oral traditions. These epics strengthen the arguments of their historical basis with the mention of places like Ayodhya, Indraprastha, Hastinapur, etc. Various astronomers

and historians have studied the astronomical reference to understand that these epics took place thousands of years ago. These epics provide a deep insight into the social and cultural traditions prevalent during those times. The deep impact of Mahabharat and Ramayana on Indian society and culture is undeniable. The existence of similar stories found in other cultures suggests the possibility of ancient Indian history and cultural narratives.

2. **Midnight’s Children by Salman Rushdie** : This novel explores themes such as identity, history, and cultural differences. It tells the story of Saleem Sinai, who was born at the exact moment that India gained its independence from Britain. The novel won the Booker Prize in 1981 and was later adapted into a film directed by Deepa Mehta.
3. **The God of Small Things by Arundhati Roy** : This novel explores themes such as caste, class, and gender in contemporary India. It tells the story of two twins growing up in Kerala and their experiences with love, loss, and tragedy. The God of Small Things won the Booker Prize in 1997 and has been translated into more than 40 languages.
4. **A Fine Balance by Rohinton Mistry** : This novel explores themes such as poverty, corruption, and social injustice in India. It tells the story of four characters from different backgrounds who come together during a time of political turmoil in India. A Fine Balance was shortlisted for the Booker Prize in 1996.

5. **Things Fall Apart by Chinua Achebe :** This novel describes a tribal society falling apart as a result of the arrival of Christian missionaries.
 6. **The Jungle by Upton Sinclair :** This novel portrays the harsh working conditions, extreme poverty and exploitation faced by immigrant laborers in Chicago's meatpacking industry. Although the book was written to highlight the plight of the working poor and the deep-rooted corruption of people in power, it also sparked a public outcry over food hygiene
 7. **All Quiet on the Western Front** by Erich Maria Remarque: One of the best-known antiwar novels, this book depicts the horrors of the First World War trenches from the perspective of a young German soldier. Translated into more than 20 languages and adapted into a celebrated Hollywood film in 1930, the book spoke for a generation that had been, in Remarque's words, "destroyed by war, even though it might have escaped its shells."
2. **Translation :** The process of translation has been central to the construction of a pan-Indian canon, which has helped to promote Indian literature around the world.
 3. **Comparative analysis :** Indian pieces of literature are often compared with each other, as well as with other world literatures, as a way of understanding their cultural significance.
 4. **Global awareness :** Indian literature has helped to promote global awareness by introducing readers to different cultures and ways of life.
 5. **Cultural critique:** Indian literature has been used to reflect on and critique culture, explore cultural differences and similarities and challenge stereotypes and assumptions.
 6. **Historical context:** Indian literature can be used to explore cultural issues in a historical context, providing insights into the social, political, military, or economic debates in their cultures.

These works reflect on and critique culture, explore cultural differences and similarities, and challenge stereotypes and assumptions. They can help readers understand how cultural context shapes the experiences of characters in stories and develop empathy for people from different cultures. Literature has had a profound impact on the world. It is a vast and diverse field that reflects the country's rich cultural heritage. Indian literature has influenced the world in many ways, including :

1. **Multilingualism :** Indian literature is characterized by its multilingual

nature, which has allowed it to reach a global audience.

2. **Translation :** The process of translation has been central to the construction of a pan-Indian canon, which has helped to promote Indian literature around the world.
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- These works reflect on and critique culture, explore cultural differences and similarities, and challenge stereotypes and assumptions. They can help readers understand how cultural context shapes the experiences of characters in stories and develop empathy for people from different cultures. The writers of this period depict how the historical events have affected the lives of the individuals. They bring into light, the colonial oppression and the resultant that history of postcolonial territories. They believe that Postcolonial writings operated as a means of cultural

control. Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*, Shashi Tharoor's *The Great Indian Novel* and Amitav Ghosh's *The Calcutta Chromosomes* are examples in this context. "These postmodern and postcolonial writers seek to recast history as a redefinable present rather than an irrevocably interpreted past"^{xi} (Tiffin 170-176).

The writers of this period used Indian words, phrases, idioms, and proverbs and translated words from the regional languages into English. The strategy in experimenting with the language is to decolonize, dismantle the hegemonic structures, and convey the idea of cultural translation, cultural dislocation, cultural flimsiness, economic crisis, hybridity, identity crisis, and multiple identities. "The Indian tang^c is not a pure essence but the masala mix of culture that has always been able to appropriate influences from outside. Indian identity lies in the chutnification not in the distinct language"^{xii} (Mee 321)

Indian Literature has its roots in the ancient Indian culture. India has been a land of stories and fables. Ancient Indian literature comprises of epics, religious writings, poetry, etc., in Hindi, Bengali, Tamil, Telugu and other regional languages. Indian English literature came into existence with the arrival of the British to India. The sojourn of the British influenced Indians to breed their own English Literature, giving birth to Indian English Fiction, a real existence. Today, Indian English literature has grown to global acceptance and appreciation by critics and scholarly readers and thus entered the canon of discourse. Since the pre-independence period, Indian English writers have been

causative to Indian English literature. In recent years, they have shown a multifaceted thriving and created works of great magnitude and thus established a dignified place for Indian English Literature. Today, "a number of Indian writers in English have contributed substantially to modern English literature. Ram Mohan Roy who heralded the Indian Renaissance and Macaulay who recommended English language education in India were probably aware of what was in store for the Indians in terms of literary awareness. Today it has won for itself international acclaim and distinction."^{xiii} (Mongia 213)

"Indian novels are receiving great critical acclaim and have become international bestsellers. "one of the most notable gifts of English education to India is prose fiction for though India was probably a fountain head of story-telling, the novel as we know today was an importation from the West."^{xiv} (Naik 99)

Mahatma Gandhi "Father of the Nation" propagated and communicated his ideas and vision through his writings. "People all over the world immeasurably admired his teachings and philosophy. His writings attracted people towards compatible living and this was followed by many people. apart from its political repercussions, it was both moral and intellectual and at once inhibitive and liberating. Gandhi stripped urban life and elegance of their pretension and emphasized that religion without compassion and cultures, without conscience were worthless. He transfigured the image of India as she was poor, starving and helpless, but with an untapped potential of unlimited possibilities."^{xv} (Kripalani 79)

Society thus acts as a backup for the culture and traditions of the people. Literature when combined with culture and traditions not only represents impalpable subjects like transformation and assimilation but also portrays palpable issues like social, historical, and political. The impact and study of culture on literature are increasing as various people migrate across the globe and incorporate components of new cultures into their origin. "Cultures affect literature because some authors portray what is happening in the society through their writings and base their writings on their cultures."^{xvi} (Muir, 1958)

Conclusion :

The meaning of literature is the art of literature in different forms such as poetry, prose, fiction, plays, etc. Literature is text based on information as well as imagination. Society is observed as patterns of relationships between different cultures their values and beliefs. In contemporary society, literature plays an important role in reflecting cultures as people can know their past by relying on literature. Literature helps to analyze the cultural significance of its times. The impact of culture on literature is evident across the globe. Good literature is believed to expand the understanding of its reader to himself and to the whole world. Furthermore, literature can be lived through different media. It is an expression of culture because it conveys human knowledge, behaviours and beliefs. Surely, there are ways in which culture is portrayed in the literature of its times. Studying different cultures through literature helps to gain insight into how culture is a wellspring through which literature arises. The education sector has been the

major contributor to literature as people continue to interact across the globe, leading to the expansion of culture which is the core foundation on which literature is built.

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Myths Concerning Early (English) Language Acquisition : Advantages of Jolly Phonics – An Alternative Teaching Strategy

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(Cambridge Certified - UK)*

Abstract

In today's world alternative methods in EFL are being introduced for improvement of the intellectual behavior of students by using novel ideas rather than making them revise the syllabus to pass an examination. This constructivist approach allows learners to actively participate in the acquisition of the process of learning to strengthen their storehouse of knowledge and to sharpen their language skills at an early age.

The paper will discuss a new strategy for teaching sounds to early learners of English-Jolly Phonics. It will analyze the raison d'être of this innovative technique which has been formulated to overcome the lacunae of the earlier established rote learning process. The parameters on which this teaching skill is based will be explained and analyzed before assessing its significance as a teaching aid.

Education is indeed the need of the hour but it has gradually not been so modelled that it can motivate and simultaneously give pleasure to the learners. The Jolly Phonics paradigm is a renewed method of decoding English and instilling more enthusiasm for learning the language.

Keywords

Strategy, Synthetic Phonics, Rote-Learning, Intellectual Behavior, Lacunae, Paradigm

Introduction :

Myths concerning early language acquisition are debatable: It is generally believed that English as a Foreign Language is easy to process for early learners through rote- learning; learning A-Z (the letters of the alphabet), along with 42 sounds; other phonics approaches at pre-primary level can help children read and write effecti-

vely; teaching 42 sounds can make children proficient in reading and writing; all approaches and strategies can work for all the learners of any level; the early learners can acquire language explicitly on their own using few learned phonics skills. These and many such beliefs need to be explored and re-aligned.

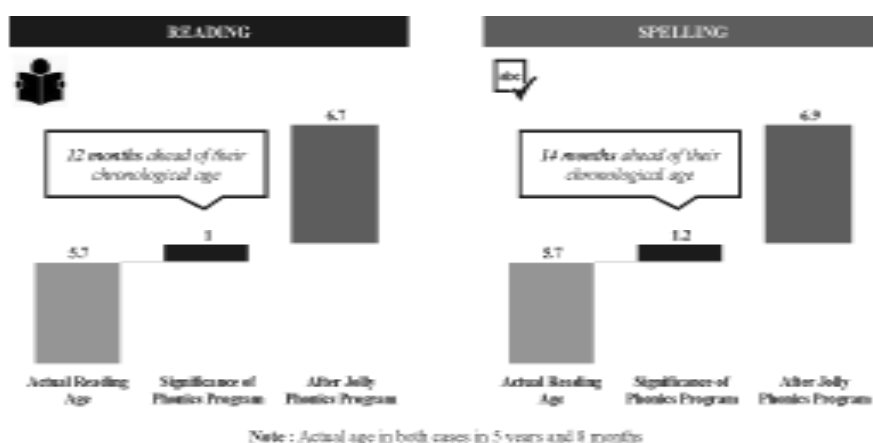
Aims and Objectives :

This paper seeks to present how early learners (3.5 years to 12 years) can acquire reading and writing skills. It tries to attest to the importance of a synthetic phonics program - The Jolly Phonics and discusses how the program enhances English language skills as compared to any other similar program. The paper also discusses how this alternative teaching strategy's lessons meet the needs of differentiated learners and how the program's syllabus builds knowledge explicitly and implicitly up to grade 6. The paper will analyze and interpret the approaches and strategies of the Jolly Phonics program and how the prescribed lesson supports learning actively.

The paper aims to show the learners' progress through the program and highlights misconceptions about the phonics program.

The Background :

Often researched approaches like Jolly Phonics stress the need to inculcate language awareness, adapt English in a stress-free environment, and stop methods that pressurize the brain unduly. The strategies Jolly Phonics has included are learner-friendly. Rhona Johnston and Joyce Watson in their Clackmannanshire Report share the effectiveness of teaching synthetic phonics (Rhona Johnston & Joyce Watson, 2005).



1.1 Clackmannanshire Report, Dr. Rhona Johnston and Joyce Watson(2005)

Their research found that early learners of Jolly Phonics were 14 months ahead in spelling *vis a vis* their chronological age and 12 months ahead in reading as compared to others. This system not only strengthens learners in their reading and spelling skills but also gives the needed support to underachievers. Jolly Phonics instills confidence and language appropriateness/fluency and develops accuracy gradually and in an unstressed way.

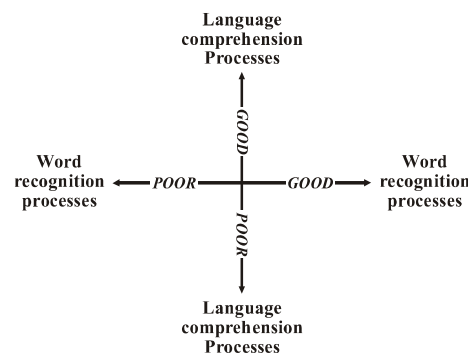
Learning acquisition age is not defined. Indeed human cognitive abilities enhance every day since the day one is born. Jean Piaget talks about these phenomenal early developmental stages through his sophisticated cognitive model and learning theory (Jean Piaget, 1936). He also asserts that a young infant can make subtle discrimination between phonemes like 'ma', 'pa', and 'ga'. This attests to the fact that language starts processing at an early

age and speech is adapted and acquired first. The other language skills- reading, writing and listening are acquired after speaking skills. To acquire language *in toto* all skills need to be taught both explicitly and implicitly. Observation reflects that early learners in the Indian education system limit their initial English language learning skills to A - Z and start putting too much pressure on writing to pass the school entrance test without even having developed their cognitive abilities. However, Jolly Phonics, an alternative teaching approach in the 21st century, for the Indian education system is the most effective program to develop reading and writing skills at an early age for different-ability learners.

Jerome Bruner says that learning is a socio-active process where a good teacher helps students turn their experiences into knowledge (Jerome Bruner, 1996). Jolly Phonics makes learners experience learning using their multiple senses (multisensory learning approach) and assures information transformation from working memory to long-term memory. It is the most comprehensive systematic synthetic phonics program as it tries to crack the English alphabetic code for early learners and spiral up the learning from simple to complex. The program stresses learning with pure sounds /s/ /v/ which helps learners to read accurately and with the correct accent. The deep learning with layers of complexity is organized during the learning through different modes of thinking as explained by Bruner's spiral curriculum theory.

Added to this, in their research of reading, *The Simple View of Reading*, Philip Gough and William Tunmer assert that word recognition (decoding) is one

of the important components of the science of reading to improve language skills (William E. Tunmer Philip B. Gough, 1986).



1.2 *Decoding, Reading and Reading Disability-*
Philip Gough and William Tunmer, Volume 7
Issue-1

(This research program also finds space in the Jolly Phonics program.)

Jolly Phonics :

Learners need to be taught all five skills explicitly and in a manner that Jolly prescribes. The spiral scientifically evolved syllabus connects learners to prior knowledge and pushes them to the next level whereas the order motivates and encourages learners to achieve results quickly.

Letter sound order :

- Group-1 s a t i p n
- Group-2 c k h r m d
- Group-3 g o u l f b
- Group-4 ai j oa ie ee or
- Group-5 z w ng v oo oo
- Group-6 y x ch sh th th
- Group-7 qu ou oi ue er ar
- Group-8 y/ee/ a-e e-e i-e o-e u-e

(native vowel sounds)

1.3 Courtesy : www.jollylearning.co.uk – Resources
(word-blending-boxes)

The image shows the sequence of the sound – the prescribed order by Jolly Phonics

Jolly Phonics' active learning strategies in EFL to develop reading skills work on letter-sound relationships and combinations but for meaning-making connections, the teachers' knowledge and approach also matter. Active learning focuses not just on what learners learn but also on how they learn, the right scaffolding for their literacy skills supports better learning in the classroom. The teacher encourages learners to become independent readers and writers by the age of six. Lev Vygotsky states that the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) insists that giving learners appropriate assistance for development is the most effective approach as the support meets learners' needs (Lev Vygotsky, 1978). Language learning strategies when combined using the left and right brain both result in more efficacy and Jolly Phonics emphasizes this. It is important to understand that crossing the midline is an essential skill for tracking words from left to right while reading and writing. Moreover, James J. Asher talks about 'language-body conversation' for teaching second language learners (James, 1969). His Total Physical Response (TPR) method simplifies learning by decoding patterns reproduced with repeated action. Coordinating such research into language activities by the left brain to physical activities by the right brain meets the needs of mixed-ability learners. This MI approach Jolly Phonics teaches through actions, stories and multi-sensory activities.

In this context, Howard Gardner advocates that multiple pursuits meet learners' multiple intelligences (Howard Gardner, 1983). Results might differ for differently-abled learners but if any of the intelligences supports their learning it should be taken care of by the teacher. This language exposure gets limited with rote

learning; it curtails growth, curbs thinking and restrains creativity too. Whereas, when language is explored creatively and dynamically through Jolly Phonics' essential skills : sounds, letter formation, blending and segmenting the outcomes are far better. The first six sounds allow learners to form approx. thirty decodable words proficiently and the first 18 sounds allow learners to form approximately eight hundred decodable words. These figures are remarkable for early learners at the initial stage.

Jolly Phonics Skills :

The program builds on knowledge and enhances the cognitive abilities of learners through five skills. Each skill has to be taught explicitly.

1. **Learning the Letter Sound :** The 42 sounds of the English alphabetic code need to be taught in a multisensory way and in a manner that lessons meet multiple intelligences of early learners. The letter-symbol relationship is taught from simple to complex level.

Activities : through stories and jingles

2. **Letter Formation :** Learning correct letter formation helps learners develop recognition skills and writing connects neural pathways for strong reading skills. Such approaches promote learners for quicker and better reading skills.

Activities: air writing, sensory tracing, pencil tracing ... to create visual images before pencil writing

3. **Blending (reading) :** A prerequisite skill for reading and writing. The merging of learned phonemes together to make words and the synthesizing of sounds together is blending. The natural order for language development is first speaking, then reading

and lastly writing skills. Perceiving the whole word as a unit happens and focusing on meaning can only come after fluent snapping of sounds (blending). A fluent reader can decode and comprehend together whereas it is very difficult for non-fluent learners to comprehend easily.

Techniques : aural blending, Jolly flashcards, arm blending, phoneme finger blending...etc.

4. **Segmenting (Identifying of Sounds):** Writing has to be taught explicitly just as reading. Identifying sounds eg. word - <tap>, /t/ /a/ /p/ helps learners write the letters representing each sound. Blending segmenting is a part of phonological awareness and should be taught explicitly as it helps in reading successfully.

Techniques : miming, Jolly visual cards with sound dots, arm blending, letter board...etc.

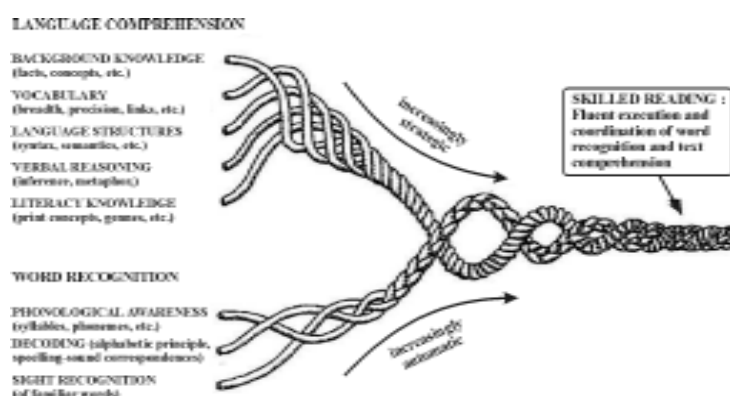
5. **Tricky Words** : Marilyn Jager Adams proposes teaching phonics with a whole-word approach which works better for integrated knowledge (Marilyn Jager Adams, 1994). Knowing tricky words helps in skillful reading, acqui-

ring language from surroundings and in language implications at an early age. She advocates it as the “right” way to help children to read.

Approaches : Look Copy Write Check, letter names.

The language graphemes start making sense for the learners and start bridging their knowledge gaps authentically. For language accuracy and fluency understanding of phonemes (sounds) and graphemes is essential. The ‘decoding’ and ‘encoding’ of words independently for reading and writing is exceedingly well coordinated through this program.

Hollis Scarborough illustrates the complexity involved in learning to read brilliantly (Hollis S. Scarborough, 2001). He explains the interdependence and interconnection of all the components to produce a skilled reader. This is also used by Usha Goswami in her grain size theory which deals with universals. The Grain Size Theory by Usha Goswami (Usha, 2010) also talks about universal problems with language-specific solutions – ‘a systematic framework for consideration how lexical, phonological and structural factors contribute’ in reading acquisition.



1.4 Scarborough, H. S. (2001). *Connecting early language and literacy to later reading (dis)abilities: Evidence, theory, and practice*. In S. Neuman & D. Dickinson (Eds.), *Handbook for research in early literacy*. New York: Guilford Press.

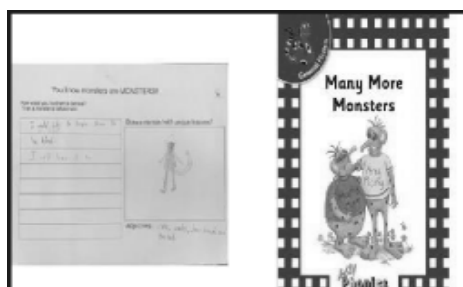
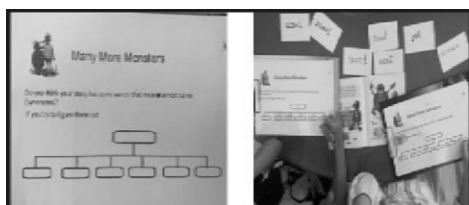
The Scarborough's lower strand ropes' images define word recognition, phonological awareness, decoding and sight words. He described components can be developed when Jolly Phonics lessons and program are executed in the prescribed manner, the positive results evident. The upper strand concurrently images language comprehension, the facilitator approaches and experiences also matter to meet the strand components along with the Jolly Phonics' lesson plan. The coupling of appropriate Jolly Phonics' Decodable Readers, images, active learning meets all challenges.



1.4 A video of 4.2 years by the end of 42 sounds.
Jolly Phonics Activities - My Word Bag - YouTube
Copyright: Inky Phonics



1.5b Courtesy: Jolly Phonics Pupil Book 1,
learner's completed work, 2019
Copyright Inky Phonics



1.5c Decodable Readers help learners grow in
their writing as well as reading skills. Age 7.5
years Copyright Inky Phonics



1.5 d Comprehending skills at 5 + years, learning
critically and creatively improves higher-order
thinking skills; Such activities help visual thinkers
and engage learners in an intelligent way.

Even after adopting the program few good schools and experienced teachers fail to show the desired growth and results. The concerning myth around phonics is that after teaching all the sounds a child can read well. The teacher's limited exposure to the program wastes the time and the opportunity the child has in the initial stages. Most of the schools teach around 42 sounds till upper kindergarten and drop the language

needed explicitly at various points of learning for fluency, reading comprehension, phonemic awareness, and vocabulary (Linnea C. Ehri, 2003). Phonological awareness development relates to overall language and speech development which does not happen overnight. However, the Jolly Program and the teacher's appropriate intervention and instructions support learners in building up awareness efficiently. The program also supports learners to become lifelong language learners- after understanding the complexity, learners adapt and relate the language to their environment very easily.



1.5 Inky Phonics' Preposition Farm, Active Learning Session2

Scene : Learners(7+ years) spiraled up their reading skills with Jolly Syllabus over the years and were fluent readers. The teacher did not teach them prepositions by then, when they entered the class they were so excited to see the 'Inky Preposition Farm' that they wanted to do anything on the farm. So I started instructing them and they enjoyed it because of their contextual knowledge over the years.

Inky's Preposition Farm - YouTube

Inky's Preposition Farm- Inky invited her Jolly friends to her farm - YouTube

English language writing system is variable and complex and its opaque alphabetic code makes it harder to learn and crack e.g.: /k/ <ch> chemistry (Greek), /sh/ <ch> champagne (French), and <ch> /ch/ church (English). English as a Foreign Language needs systematic mechanisms like Jolly Phonics to assist it well. Phonemic awareness is a fundamental and letter-sound relation that helps early learners understand the alphabetic principle. As suggested by Linnea C. Ehri phonics instructions for beginners are

Phonetics is the science of linguistics sounds using symbols. It is a bit complicated for early learners but phonics on the other hand is a more simplified method for reading.

[illegible]

1.7 Phonetics- 2015, copyright
International Phonetic Association

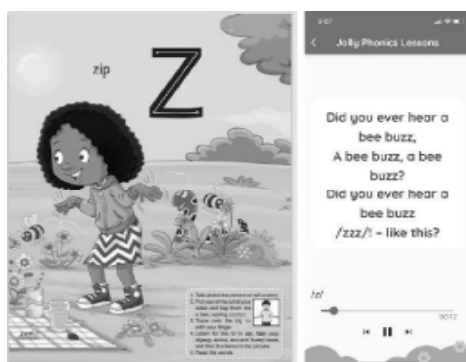
Letter sound order :

- Group-1 s a t i p n
- Group-2 c k h r m d
- Group-3 g o u l f b
- Group-4 ai j oa ie ee or
- Group-5 z w ng v oo oo
- Group-6 y x ch sh th **th**
- Group-7 qu ou oi ue er ar
- Group-8 y/ee/ a-e e-e i-e o-e u-e
(alternative vowel sounds)

1.3 Courtesy : www.jollylearning.co.uk –
Resources(word-blending-boxes)

The image shows the sequence of the sound-
The prescribed order by Jolly Phonics

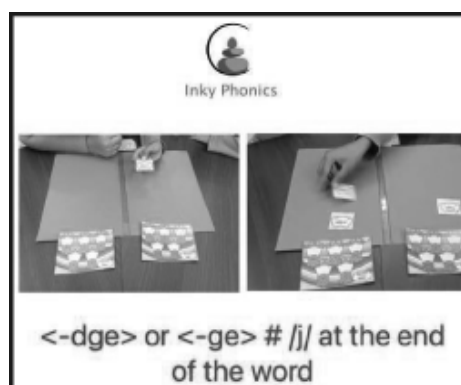
The Jolly Phonics methods and approaches make learning easier and more adaptable for the learners. To support learners effectively the teacher not only uses instructional teaching strategies but also other classroom strategies that enhance thinking or higher-order thinking skills. Jolly Worksheet supports to development of these skills through their worksheets but stimulation and frequent practices must be intentionally implemented by the teacher. Socratic questioning skills stimulate learners and enhance academic achievements. Unfortunately, the skill has to be taught it does not come on its own. Such creative and critical activities must be planned to make learners lifelong learners.



1.6 Courtesy Picture (story and action) Jolly Learning Finger Phonics Book-5
Courtesy: /z/ Song Jolly Phonics App- Play Store & Jolly Classroom

The child's response when asked to think is 'I am thinking' where thinking is a blank thought because facilitators fail to understand that thinking needs to be taught. So lesson plans should accommodate such effective skills. In the lessons where spelling rules are new and complicated for learners, the teacher should opt for strategies like word visuals and read aloud, spotting the difference, sorting, anchor charts. On the other hand, word families (-at, -ap) are excellent for teaching a large number of words but children are encouraged to zip the patterns by jumping back from the end to the beginning which is not an advisable mechanical approach for encouraging left to right eye movement, mixing up phonemes is appreciable than adapting simple repetition pattern.

However, self-learning and self-evaluating approaches also support learners' cognitive skills. Direct telling of the rules gives less experience than thinking approaches can give to be better learners. The teacher should always assist practices that give applied and contextual experience to learners.

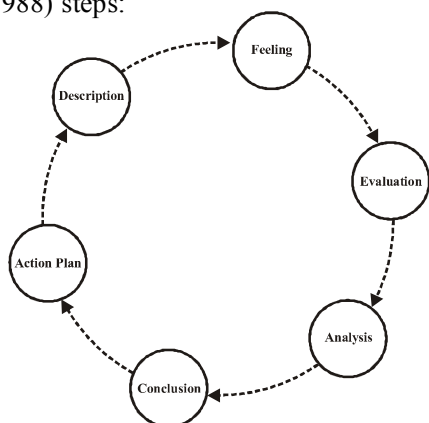


1.7 Learners are sorting <-ge>, <-dge> The activity helps them understand the spelling rule better and strengthen their memory skills. Sorting helps grow functional skills and they become automated later. Such activities are foundational for higher-order learning.

Copyright –Inky Phonics3 :

<https://youtu.be/dPhkzdbuWxY>

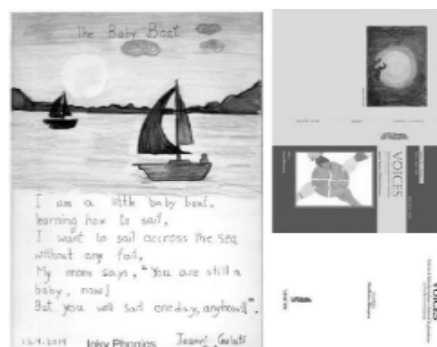
To bridge all the knowledge gaps the teacher must assess and observe their learners frequently. Paul Black and Dylan William advocate that formative assessment or AfL (assessment for learning) practices can help teacher modify their lessons based on feedback from frequent assessments (Paul Black and Dylan Wiliam, 2009). The teacher should always look forward to improving and meeting the differentiated needs of the early learners. They also assert that learning and results can be improved by reviewing approaches. I have myself experienced that reflective practices also benefit in engaging and understanding the concept. The teacher should involve reflective practices and a culture of reflection as it helps to grow personally and academically both. The sooner these practices are started they become more manageable and productive both for the teacher and the learner both. Gibb's reflective cycle (Graham Gibbs, 1988) steps:



1.8 Courtesy image from Gibbs' Reflective Cycle | The University of Edinburgh the page adapted from Gibbs G (1998) *Learning by Doing: A guide to teaching and learning methods. Further Education Unit. Oxford Polytechnic: Oxford*

The reflective cycle can guide the teacher to adapt such practices for professional

growth and improvement. "The school is not good." "Teacher is not good." "Child is not learning." – My experience says that if the methods are not good we need to change them and adopt more comprehensive programs and strategies that are learner-friendly and allow them to grow both academically and personally which Jolly Phonics aims at doing.



1.8 Scene – Jaanvi (6.2 years) was peeping out of the school window on a rainy day. She imagined having a baby boat. Indeed, her language has been developing with Jolly Phonics Lessons since 4 years. She became an independent writer and her poem was published in *Voices and Magic Pot*. Copyright Inky Phonics

Notes :

1. A video of 4.2 years by the end of 42 sounds.

Jolly Phonics Activities - My Word Bag - YouTube

A video of the same learner at 5.2 years showing progress Jolly Phonics: Yellow Readers – Hetty

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DNglBiMuUP0>

Copyright: Inky Phonics

2. Inky Phonics' Preposition Farm, Active Learning Session

Inky's Preposition Farm - YouTube

Inky's Preposition Farm- Inky invited

her Jolly friends to her farm - YouTube
Copyright: Inky Phonics

3. <https://youtu.be/dPhkzdbuWxY>

Learners are sorting <-ge >, <-dge> the activity helps them understand the spelling rule better and strengthens their memory skills. Sorting helps grow functional skills and they become automated later. Such activities are foundational for higher-order learning. Copyright –Inky Phonics3

4. Total Physical Response, Hindi medium (Government School), children from the slum. Situation: When they were sitting ideal they were playing with Jolly actions corresponding to the learnt sounds.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=shared&v=fMUJL22DXVk>

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Exploring Cultural Identity and Immigration Experience in the works of Adichie, Lahiri and Smith

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Introduction :

In an increasingly interconnected world, the dynamics of cultural identities, immigration experiences in contemporary literature. The narratives woven around these themes illuminate the profound impact of migration on individuals and communities, reflecting the intricate interplay between personal journeys and broader societal contexts. This research paper delves into the works of three distinguished authors - Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Jhumpa Lahiri and Zadie Smith - to explore the rich tapestry of cultural identities, the transformative nature of immigration and the intricate web of diasporic experiences. By analyzing their literary contributions, we uncover the intricate threads that bind individuals to their roots while navigating the complex landscapes of new environments.

The significance of this exploration lies in its resonance with the globalized reality of the 21st century. As borders blur

and cultures intersect, understanding the experiences of those who straddle multiple worlds becomes essential to forging a cohesive and inclusive society. Adichie, Lahiri and Smith, each hailing from unique backgrounds, collectively offer a panoramic view of the human experience in the face of migration. Their narratives challenge traditional notions of identity, inviting readers to engage with the complexities of cultural blending and the negotiation of belonging.

By examining the literary works of these authors, this paper seeks to unravel the layers of meaning embedded in their explorations. The narratives serve as both reflections of the authors' personal experiences and as mirrors that magnify the broader struggles and triumphs of individuals grappling with cultural shifts. Through their prose, we witness the tension between preserving cultural heritage and embracing new identities, shedding light on the intricate emotional landscapes that migration often entails.

As societies become increasingly diverse and multicultural, the stories of Adichie, Lahiri and Smith transcend mere literature; they become indispensable tools for fostering empathy, understanding and cross-cultural dialogue. Their tales amplify voices that are too often marginalized, inviting readers to journey alongside characters whose stories parallel those of countless real individuals. This exploration, therefore, is not confined to the realm of literary analysis; it has the potential to contribute to a more inclusive and compassionate global society.

In the ensuing sections, we will delve into the works of Adichie, Lahiri and Smith, examining their narratives through theoretical frameworks and close textual analysis. Through this exploration, we aim to deepen our appreciation for the profound impact of migration on cultural identities and diasporic experiences while underscoring the enduring relevance of their stories in today's interconnected world.

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie :

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, a Nigerian-born author, has emerged as a powerful voice in contemporary literature. With a distinctive style characterized by lyrical prose and astute social commentary, Adichie's work delves into the intricacies of cultural identities, gender roles and postcolonial realities. Born in Nigeria in 1977, Adichie's upbringing in the midst of political turmoil and her subsequent education abroad provided her with a unique perspective that permeates her narratives. Her critically acclaimed novels, including *Purple Hibiscus* (2003), *Half of a Yellow Sun* (2006) and *Americanah* (2013), explore the intersections of personal and collective histories, often through the

lens of Nigerian experiences. Adichie's literature amplifies the stories of her homeland while offering universal insights into the complexities of identity and displacement.

Jhumpa Lahiri :

Jhumpa Lahiri, born in London to Bengali parents and raised in the United States, is renowned for her poignant explorations of the immigrant experience. Her writing is characterized by its meticulous attention to detail and its ability to capture the emotional nuances of characters grappling with cultural shifts. Lahiri's Pulitzer Prize-winning collection of short stories, *Interpreter of Maladies* (1999) and her novels such as *The Namesake* (2003) and *The Lowland* (2013) delve into the challenges of assimilation, the tension between heritage & modernity and the enduring connections to one's homeland. Drawing inspiration from her own experiences as a second-generation immigrant, Lahiri's literature resonates with a global audience seeking to understand the complexities of cultural adaptation and identity negotiation.

Zadie Smith :

Zadie Smith, a British author of Jamaican and English heritage, has garnered acclaim for her insightful depictions of multiculturalism and urban life. Her debut novel, *White Teeth* (2000), introduced readers to her distinct narrative voice that seamlessly blends humour and social critique. Smith's subsequent works, such as *On Beauty* (2005), *NW* (2012) and *Swing Time* (2016), continue to explore themes of race, class and the search for identity in the midst of rapidly changing societies. Growing up in the diverse neighbourhoods of northwest London,

Smith's writing draws from her own multi-cultural background and her observations of the vibrant tapestry of London's multi-cultural landscape. Her contributions to literature reflect the complexities of living in a multicultural world and challenge conventional notions of belonging.

Contextual Significance :

Against the backdrop of globalization, these authors have taken on the role of cultural ambassadors, transcending geographical boundaries to offer narratives that resonate with readers across the world. Their works provide insights into the personal and collective challenges posed by migration, while also celebrating the resilience of individuals navigating new environments. As globalization brings cultures into closer contact, the voices of Adichie, Lahiri and Smith offer invaluable perspectives on the shared experiences of those who grapple with questions of identity, heritage and belonging in a world that continues to evolve.

Literary survey :

In exploring the cultural identity and immigration experiences in the works of Adichie, Lahiri and Smith, it is evident that these authors delve into themes of displacement, belonging and the challenges faced by migrants in their efforts to assimilate into a new society. Just like Adichie, Lahiri and Smith, in their respective works, address the complex issues of cultural identity and immigration experiences. Adichie's novel *Americanah*, Lahiri's works including *The Namesake* and *Interpreter of Maladies* and Smith's novels *White Teeth* and *Swing Time* all offer unique perspectives on the struggles and triumphs of individuals navigating unfamiliar territories. These authors explore

the concept of cultural identity and the impact of migration on individuals through various narrative techniques and thematic elements. Adichie's *Americanah* specifically focuses on the experiences of Nigerian immigrants in America, shedding light on the challenges they face in both their personal and professional lives as they grapple with issues of race, nationality and cultural assimilation (Okolie & Abonyi, 2022)¹. Similarly, Lahiri's works delve into the experiences of Indian immigrants in foreign lands, examining themes of identity crisis, reinvention and the complexities faced by individuals living in diaspora. Smith, on the other hand, explores cultural identity and immigration experiences through her depiction of characters from diverse backgrounds and their interactions within a multicultural society. With this in mind, even the commendation of Lahiri for her precise, evocative and convincing depiction of Indian immigrants by some critics, ironically works against her by inciting other critics to express doubt and suspicion over her credibility as a voice for the Asian or Indian diaspora. This criticism suggests that Lahiri's portrayal of Indian immigrants may not fully capture the complexities and nuances of their experiences and some scholars argue that her writings provide alternatives to the traditional narratives of Asian American gender roles. (Asl & Abdullah, 2017)².

While Lahiri's depiction of Indian immigrants has garnered both praise and criticism, it is important to consider the multidimensional portrayal of cultural differences in her works. Lahiri's stories explore the impact of cultural differences on the lives of diasporic individuals and communities, highlighting the positive aspects of these differences. For example,

Lahiri's characters often navigate multiple cultural identities and negotiate between their Indian heritage and the American society they find themselves in. They navigate the complexities of balancing traditions and expectations from their homeland with the pressures to conform and assimilate into a new culture. This struggle for identity and belonging is not unique to Lahiri's works. Adichie's *Americanah*, too, delves into the complexities of identity and belonging for Nigerian immigrants in America (Okolie & Abonyi, 2022). These writers challenge traditional narratives of cultural assimilation and provide alternative perspectives on the immigrant experience, shedding light on the unique challenges faced by individuals living in a foreign land. Through the lens of cultural identity and immigration experiences, the works of Adichie, Lahiri and Smith offer a literary survey that explores the complexities of cultural identity and the immigration experience. These authors shed light on the challenges faced by individuals in a multicultural society, examining themes such as national security, identity crisis, immigration, tolerance, politics, courage and transformation. They also delve into issues of sexism, stereotyping, emancipation, sacrifice, adaptation and resilience. Through their works, the authors demonstrate how cultural identity is shaped by immigration experiences and how it influences individuals' sense of self and belonging in a foreign land. Furthermore, the works of Adichie, Lahiri and Smith also highlight the importance of communication and dialogue in navigating cultural differences.

These authors emphasize the need for understanding and empathy when engaging with individuals from different cultures,

as well as the power of language and storytelling in bridging gaps of understanding. In Lahiri's works, there is a focus on the diasporic identity and the various aspects of it such as ethnic, gendered, racial and cultural dimensions. (Harehdasht et al., 2018)³. Furthermore, they explore the experiences of Indian immigrants living in foreign countries and the complexities they face in terms of their identity, communication and reinvention. In Lahiri's novels such as *The Namesake*, *Unaccustomed Earth*, *The Lowland* and *Interpreter of Maladies*, the characters grapple with the challenges of living in a foreign land, where they are often treated as outsiders. These characters struggle with feelings of loneliness, displacement and a sense of alienation from their own culture. They navigate between their national and diasporic cultures, attempting to create a meaningful space for themselves and overcome feelings of alienation and in-betweenness. Adichie, on the other hand, delves into themes of identity and belonging in her works, particularly in *Americanah* (Okolie & Abonyi, 2022). In *Americanah*, Adichie explores the experiences of migrants who grapple with shattered identities due to their interactions and engagements in a new society.

Zadie Smith's works also contribute to the exploration of cultural identity and immigration experiences. Smith's novels, such as *White Teeth*, *NW* and *Swing Time*, delve into themes of cultural hybridity, postcolonial experience, identity and the complexities of belonging in a multicultural society.

One key aspect of Smith's works is her portrayal of cultural hybridity and the blending of different cultural influences. Her characters often navigate between

different cultural backgrounds, grappling with questions of identity and belonging. In *White Teeth*, for example, Smith explores the lives of characters from diverse cultural backgrounds, including Jamaican, Bengali and British. These characters navigate their culture and confront the challenges of assimilation, intercultural relationships and the formation of a sense of self in a multicultural society. Smith's novels also highlight the postcolonial experience and its impact on cultural identity.

In *White Teeth*, Smith portrays characters who are products of the postcolonial past of London, highlighting the multiculturalism that exists within them. The characters in her novel, such as Archie and Samad, represent different cultural backgrounds, suggesting the complex nature of cultural identity in a postcolonial context. Smith challenges the idea of pure ethnic origins, suggesting that hybridity is inevitable and artificial barriers to it hinder true understanding and acceptance. Smith's novels also explore the themes of displacement and alienation, navigating between different cultural spaces and attempting to find a sense of belonging. Smith's works, like Adichie and Lahiri's, also delve into the complexities of immigration experiences.

Theoretical Framework and Research Design :

Cultural identity and immigration are two complex and intertwined concepts that have been explored in various literary works. The works of Chimamanda Adichie, Jhumpa Lahiri and Zadie Smith provide insightful perspectives on the experiences of immigrants and the formation of cultural identity.

Here we aim to present a theoretical framework and research design for exploring cultural identity and immigration experience in the works of Adichie, Lahiri and Smith. The theoretical framework for this study will be grounded in the fields of cultural studies and immigration studies. Cultural studies are a multidisciplinary field that examines how culture shapes and is shaped by society.

It explores the meanings, practices and discourses that individuals and societies attach to cultural identity. In the context of this study, cultural identity refers to how individuals understand and express their sense of self about their cultural background and the influences of immigration experiences on their cultural identity formation. Immigration studies, on the other hand, focus specifically on the experiences of immigrants and the social, cultural and political processes that shape their integration into their host country. The research design for this study will be qualitative, utilizing a comparative analysis approach.

The comparative analysis approach will allow for a nuanced understanding of the similarities and differences in the experiences of cultural identity and immigration across the works of Adichie, Lahiri and Smith. The primary data source for this study will be the literary works of Adichie, Lahiri and Smith. These works will be analysed using thematic analysis to identify recurring themes related to cultural identity and the immigration experience.

The themes that emerge from the analysis will be further examined and interpreted within the theoretical framework of cultural studies and immigration

studies. The analysis will consider how the characters in the works of Adichie, Lahiri and Smith negotiate their cultural identity in the context of immigration. These characters may grapple with questions of belonging, assimilation and the preservation of their cultural heritage. Additionally, the analysis will explore the experiences of these characters about their interactions with the host culture and how this shapes their sense of self.

The study will also consider the power dynamics and social structures that influence the formation and expression of cultural identity among immigrants. The theoretical framework for this study draws upon cultural studies, which allows researchers to analyse how specific media producers and texts generate meaning. This framework emphasizes the importance of understanding cultural identity as a social construction that is shaped by various factors, including historical context, power dynamics and individual agency. Additionally, the theoretical framework will incorporate elements of immigration studies, which examine the social, cultural and political processes that influence the integration of individuals into a new society.

The research design for this study will involve a thorough analysis of the selected literary works of Adichie, Lahiri and Smith. The selected works will be read and annotated to identify passages, themes and characters that relate to cultural identity and the immigration experience. Thematic analysis will be used to identify recurring themes and patterns in the texts. These themes will be analysed and interpreted within the theoretical framework of cultural studies and immigration studies. The goal of this research design is to provide a comprehensive understanding of how

cultural identity and the immigration experience are portrayed in the works of Adichie, Lahiri and Smith.

Discussion :

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie :

Cultural Hybridity and Identity :

Adichie's novels, such as *Half of a Yellow Sun* and *Americanah*, explore the concept of cultural hybridity through characters who straddle multiple cultural contexts. Adichie's characters often navigate the tension between their Nigerian roots and the foreign cultures they encounter, showcasing the complexities of identity negotiation.

Colonial Legacy and Postcolonial Identity :

Adichie's works delve into the lingering impact of colonialism on cultural identity. She highlights how historical narratives shape characters' perceptions of self and their place in the world. *Half of a Yellow Sun*, for instance, depicts the Biafran War as a backdrop to characters' struggles with identity and nationhood.

Jhumpa Lahiri :

Generational Differences and Assimilation :

Lahiri's stories, including *The Namesake* and *Interpreter of Maladies*, delve into generational gaps between immigrant parents and their American-born children. The tension between traditional cultural values and the values of the host society shapes characters' identity formation and sense of belonging.

Language and Cultural Connection:

Lahiri's works often center on language as a bridge between cultures and generations. Characters' struggles with language barriers and the process of learning English highlight the challenges of preserving cultural connections and communication within families.

Zadie Smith :

Multiculturalism and Urban Life :

Smith's novels like *White Teeth* and *On Beauty* explore multicultural urban environments and their impact on characters' cultural identities. She navigates the complexities of multiculturalism, highlighting how different cultures intersect, clash and influence characters' sense of self.

Race and Identity : Smith's works delve into issues of race, particularly in the context of mixed-race characters. She explores the challenges of navigating racial identities in societies that often categorize individuals based on their appearances, contributing to discussions about racial fluidity and the complexities of identity.

Moving ahead, we will see some of the similarities in writers' works and analyse them -

Richness of Cultural Identity : The literary works of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Jhumpa Lahiri and Zadie Smith provide readers with a window into the intricate tapestries of cultural identity. Adichie's portrayal of Nigerian heritage, Lahiri's exploration of Indian diaspora and Smith's depiction of multicultural London collectively showcase the diversity and richness of human experiences. These authors adeptly navigate the complexities of cultural identity, highlighting how it is not just an individual attribute but a multifaceted intersection of history, tradition and societal dynamics.

Impact of Immigration : Immigration, a recurring theme in the works of these authors, is portrayed as a transformative experience. The characters' migration across geographical and cultural boundaries creates a narrative space to examine the profound impact of displacement on their

sense of self. This allows the authors to delve into questions of belonging, integration and the tension between preserving one's roots and adapting to new environments. The stories become microcosms of larger global trends of migration and the subsequent cultural exchanges.

Nuanced Character Portrayals :

Adichie, Lahiri and Smith are masters of character development. Through their protagonists, they paint nuanced portraits of individuals grappling with cultural identity amidst the challenges of migration. These characters are neither monolithic representatives of their cultures nor mere vessels for the authors' messages. They are complex, evolving entities shaped by personal experiences and the interplay between their heritage and the societies they encounter. This complexity makes their struggles and triumphs relatable and humanizes the broader themes of cultural identity and immigration.

Interplay of Individual and Society:

The authors skilfully navigate the tension between the individual's agency in shaping their identity and the external pressures exerted by society. Adichie's characters, for instance, navigate post-colonial legacies while forging new identities. Lahiri's protagonists grapple with generational shifts within immigrant families, reflecting the clash between tradition and assimilation. Smith's characters navigate the multicultural metropolis, where identity is shaped by interactions with diverse communities. This interplay highlights the dynamic nature of cultural identity negotiation.

Literature as a Reflection of Society:

The works of Adichie, Lahiri and Smith also serve as mirrors reflecting the evolving nature of contemporary societies. Their stories capture the intricacies of a world

marked by increased mobility and inter-connectedness. They shed light on the challenges and opportunities presented by cultural diversity and the ongoing

The Role of Literature and Art :

These authors demonstrate the power of literature to foster empathy and understanding. By inviting readers into the minds of characters with diverse backgrounds, they encourage a deeper appreciation for the complexities of cultural identity and the immigrant experience. The narratives serve as bridges, connecting readers with experiences beyond their own and encouraging cross-cultural dialogue.

Comparative Analysis : While these authors have distinct styles and narratives, their works collectively address the nuances of cultural identity and the immigrant experience. Adichie's exploration of cultural hybridity resonates with Lahiri's examination of generational conflicts, both of which align with Smith's focus on multicultural urban life. The works of all three authors shed light on the complexities of identity negotiation in a globalized world. Furthermore, these authors engage with common threads such as the impact of displacement, the search for belonging and the role of language in shaping identity. They provide a spectrum of experiences, from Adichie's portrayal of postcolonial Nigeria to Lahiri's depiction of the Indian-American diaspora and Smith's exploration of multicultural Britain.

Conclusion :

In conclusion, the works of Adichie, Lahiri and Smith provide powerful insights into the complex issues surrounding cultural identity and the immigration experience. These authors examine the challenges faced by immigrants as they

navigate new countries, cultures and identities. They shed light on the struggles of individuals who are caught between their original culture and the pressures of assimilation. Through their narratives, these authors emphasize the profound impact that prejudice and stereotyping can have on the survival and well-being of immigrants in new environments. Through their storytelling, Adichie, Lahiri and Smith uncover the nuances of cultural identity, highlighting how it is shaped by factors such as nationality, ethnicity, language and more. Additionally, they explore the ways in which these factors intersect and interact with factors like gender, race and socioeconomic status. Moreover, the works of Adichie, Lahiri and Smith challenge singular narratives and celebrate the diverse experiences and perspectives of immigrants.

They remind us of the dangers of reducing individuals to simplistic notions or stereotypes and instead encourage a more nuanced and empathetic understanding of the immigrant experience. Furthermore, the authors illustrate the profound impact that cultural identity and immigration can have on individuals' mental health and sense of self-worth. Such acerbic calls for the cultural integration of immigrants often conceal a racial lexicography of xenophobia. (Migration and new racism beyond colour and the "West": co-ethnicity ...,)⁴ These authors demonstrate that when immigrants feel isolated and unaccepted, it can lead to a sense of rejection and low self-esteem. This research paper has shown that Adichie, Lahiri and Smith's works provide unique insights into the complex and multifaceted nature of cultural identity and the immigration experience. Their writings delve into the exploration of themes such as national

security, identity crisis, tolerance, politics and courage, these authors offer a deep understanding of the challenges faced by immigrants as they navigate new societies. They highlight the importance of resisting single narratives and embracing the richness and diversity of immigrant experiences. In conclusion, the works of Adichie, Lahiri and Smith contribute to a deeper understanding of cultural identity and the immigrant experience.

This research paper has explored the works of Adichie, Lahiri and Smith, focusing on their exploration of cultural identity and the immigration experience. These authors have shed light on the complexities and challenges faced by immigrants as they navigate new environments. Through their novels and short stories, Adichie, Lahiri and Smith have provided a deep understanding of the nuances of cultural identity.

They have shown how factors such as gender, race and socioeconomic status intersect with the immigrant experience, challenging simplistic narratives and celebrating diversity. Ultimately, their works serve as a stark reminder of the dangers of reducing individuals to stereotypes and the importance of embracing the complexity and richness of immigrant experiences. Their works serve as a reminder of the dangers of reducing individuals to stereotypes and the importance of embracing different perspectives. In a globalized world where migration is increasingly prevalent, it is crucial to acknowledge and appreciate the significance of cultural identity and the immigration experience.

In conclusion, the works of Adichie, Lahiri and Smith not only provide valuable insights into the challenges faced by immigrants, but also encourage readers to recognize and celebrate the diversity of cultural identities. In today's rapidly changing world, the significance of accurate weather forecasts cannot be overstated. Therefore, further research and exploration of cultural identity and the immigration experience is necessary to continue shedding light on this important topic and fostering a more inclusive and empathetic society.

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Effect of Stories with Picture Clues on the Development of Second Language Reading Competence

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to find out the Effect of stories with picture clues on the development of second language reading competence. Researchers have found that teaching reading through stories with picture clues is a key element in developing comprehension and building up the conceptualization in the students' mind. However, many teachers lack a solid foundation for teaching reading and how to conceptualize the meaning in their reading. This paper contents that English as a second language teaching and learning process in the classroom at all levels of education in Sri Lanka is not very much adapted using English in day to day life. Mastering reading ability is important for all people, especially in Sri Lankan school students. Therefore, this study aims to study the effectiveness of stories with picture clues to develop reading ability in language classes. This study is applied to 100 students in grade six class and five teachers. The main question of this study is "Can stories with picture clues develop the reading ability of the students?" The results of the study indicate that the students had an improvement to a great extent with the help stories with picture clues.

Keywords

Reading, Stories, Picture clues, effectiveness, second language.

Introduction :

Background of the Study :

Language is the milestone of a nation's development. Reading and understanding is a complex process among the students who study English as a second language in Sri Lanka. Students find difficulty in understanding/getting the meaning of a text than reading it. Students should

develop the ability to read as it is a lifelong skill which is to be used both in academic and throughout life. Most of the school students in Sri Lanka struggle to decode the meaning in their evaluation process. Mastery of the language is evaluated in public examinations with special reference to reading and writing skill. In General

Certificate of Examination – Ordinary Level (GCE O/L) reading questions consume more marks. (Question numbers 2, 5, 7 in the first paper and 11, 12 and 15 in the second paper) Those questions gain 35 marks out of 100. So if the students are good at reading they can get 35 marks and simply get through the exam. But most researches have found out by evaluating those exams, there is a recession in those questions. The students don't score proper marks or some even don't attempt these question. That shows us indirectly that most of the students are poor or not interested in reading. When the final product shows a weak result that we can understand there is a lack of intervention. That may occur when they have not got proper treatment for the grassroots of reading, because reading is a lifelong skill to be used both at school and throughout life. According to Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, & Wilkinson, reading is a basic life skill. It is a cornerstone for a child's success in school and, indeed, throughout life. Without the ability to read well, opportunities for personal fulfillment and job success inevitably will be lost. Despite its importance, reading is one of the most challenging areas in the education system. For reading another strategy that the good readers employ when comprehending a text is visualization (Adler, 2001). Visualization requires that the reader to construct an image of what is read. This image is stored in the reader's memory as a representation of the reader's interpretation of the text (National Reading Panel, 2000). Teachers can motivate students to visualize settings, characters and actions in a story and ask them to make drawings or write about the image that come to their minds after visualizing the text. Reading and understanding

ability should be developed at an early stage with novel and effective strategies. As the students are bored with reading, it shows that there is a recession when they come to the secondary level (grade six) too. So we should bend down upon to the grassroots level as the Sri Lankan students start learning English as a second language when they are in age 8 (grade 3) except Activity Base Oral English. Then they will have to achieve the 19 'Can do statement' and 'Performance statement' through isolated vocabulary which is in the immediate environment, even though that there are 19 can do statement suggested for this grade students only five are related to reading. Continuously it goes to grade 4 and the syllabus of grade 4, which was implemented in 2019, has 35 competency levels to be achieved by the students. From that recommended 35 competency levels only five is allocated for reading. Even though Grade 6-course materials consist of a pupil's Textbook, workbook and a Teachers' Guide which will be useful for the students to achieve the expected learning outcome the panel of experts who have design the book has advised and recommended some further activities. So to fill the gap the researcher thought to introduce some stories which are familiar in their mother tongue with picture clues. In the secondary level the competency five 'extract necessary information from various types of texts' is a key competency in reading. Under this competency, there are six competency levels to be covered up. The researchers have found most of the students have difficulties in achieving those competency levels. To grasp these competencies there should be a way to proceed.

Grade 3	Grade 4	Secondary (Grade 6)
R. Can identify printed/ written words related to the immediate environment.	3. Reads and understands familiar names, words, numbers and simple sentences in various texts found in the immediate environment when they are associated with picture clues.	5. Extracts necessary information from various types of texts.
R. Can understand information related to the immediate environment and familiar topics in simple reading texts with simple sentences not exceeding five words.	3.1 Reads aloud words with short vowel sounds and long vowel sounds correctly.	5.1 Uses visual clues to derive the meaning of the text.
R. Can identify very basic language expressions used in simple written texts including conversation.	3.2 Reads aloud the words, phrases and sentences related to the immediate environment confidently.	5.2 Extracts specific information from various types of simple texts.
R. Can identify very basic information related to numeracy and mathematics in a variety of simple reading texts.	3.3 Reads and understands sentences with 5- 8 words in a simple text of 5-6 sentences on familiar topics when supported with picture clues.	5.3 Transfers information into other forms.
R. Can understand very basic information related to Science and Technology in simple authentic texts.	3.4 Reads and extracts specific information like names of familiar people, things, places and numbers from the simple text with 5-8 sentences.	5.4 Reads and responds to simple poems.
	3.5 Understands the most frequent vocabulary and simple instructions related to science and technology in simple authentic texts correctly.	5.5 Reads and understands simple folk stories.
		5.6 Extract the general idea of a text.

The intervention of this research is mainly focused on the effect of stories with picture clues on the development of second language reading competence at their early stage.

Purpose of the Study :

The purpose of the study would be to investigate the effect of stories with picture clues on the development of second language reading competence. Specifically, the study would aim to examine whether the use of picture clues in second language reading materials can enhance reading comprehension, vocabulary acquisition and overall reading ability in learners of a second language.

The results of this study could have implications for language teaching and learning, particularly in the area of second language reading instruction. If the use of picture clues is found to enhance second language reading competence, it could suggest that educators should incorporate visual aids and other types of multimedia into their instruction to improve their students' language acquisition and overall language proficiency.

The purpose of this research is to develop the second language reading competence among primary students.

Objective of the Study :

The research's main objective is to identify the effect of stories with picture clues on the development of second language reading competence. Though the introduced competencies help the students to achieve the ultimate target the students find difficulties to understand a reading text. That means they have a problem with conceptualization. As the primary level students are very interested in reading storybooks the researcher thought of

finding solutions to this matter applying new reading strategies.

So this research seeks to find out whether inclination towards reading stories with picture clues help in the development of the second language learning in children.

Research Questions and Hypothesis :

The area of focus of this research is to find out the effect of stories with picture clues on the development of second language reading competence. The teacher researcher believes that without a solid foundation of reading strategies the students will struggle throughout their academic and adult life. The researcher hopes to provide reading awareness to her students by using picture clues and by this way the students will develop a more meaningful reading experience. The purpose of this study was to analyze the improvement of the students reading skills after they reading stories with picture clues.

“Can stories with picture clues develop the reading ability of the students?”

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework:

Studies concerning the effects of pictures on reading comprehension have also been investigated. A significant body of research (e.g., Alesandrini & Rigney, 1981; Daley, 2003; Eisner, 2002; Evans, 2003; Gambrell & Jawitz, 1993; Reid & Beveridge, 1990; Waddill & McDaniel, 1992) has been found. A general consensus is that pictures play a positive role in helping readers to comprehend a text. Some researchers (Bernhardt, 1991; Gyselinck & Tardieu, 1999; Hibbing & Rankin-Erickson, 2003) believed that pictures provided readers with a new source of information in addition to what they could get from reading the text itself and that the two sources of information

facilitated reading comprehension. However, according to Hadley (1993) “a picture is not always worth ten thousand words.....it is certainly possible to construct differentially effective pictures for the same learning task” (p. 274). Therefore, the question concerning how to choose a supplemental picture that can effectively facilitate reading comprehension has come into many people’s eyes.

Literature Review :

Reading ability :

Reading is a complex and individual thing that one should develop. According to Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, & Wilkinson, reading is a basic life skill. It is a cornerstone for a child’s success in school and indeed throughout life. Without the ability to read well, opportunities for personal fulfillment and job success inevitably will be lost (1985). Rather than its importance, reading is the most challenging area in the education system. So the readers must be motivated and they should be provided with interesting materials because student’s attitudes regarding the purposes for reading also influence their ability to read. At the same time what they read should be understood. Teele asserts that the goal of all readers should be to understand what they read (2004, p. 92). Hence the current researcher intended to use stories with picture clues which make the interest and understanding, to improve the reading ability of grade four students.

Improving Reading ability (comprehension) in grade :

When considering the importance of improving reading comprehension, strong reading comprehension skills are central not only to academic and professional success, but also to a productive social and

civic life, as mentioned by Snow (2002). Furthermore, these skills build the capacity to learn independently, to absorb information on a variety of topics, to enjoy reading and to experience literature more deeply.

Furthermore, reading comprehension emphasizes both what the author has written and reader’s ability to use their background knowledge and thinking ability to make sense of what they read. It is very clearly shown in reading comprehension from Snow (2002, p., 11)

“The process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language”

Extracting meaning is to understand what an author has stated, explicitly or implicitly. Constructing meaning is to interpret what an author has said by bringing one’s capacities, abilities, knowledge and experiences to bear on what he or she is reading. These personal characteristics also may affect the comprehension process.

Language ability is identified by some as a set of language skills. A great deal of teaching and testing materials are organized around one such proposal, that of the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing and the four skills model still remains pedagogically useful today, though it lacks support of empirical findings. Reading is considered by many teachers, textbook writers and language test constructors to be made up of different skills and components. It is often claimed that sets of reading components provide useful frameworks on which to base course design, teaching and test development. A reading skill can be described as “a cognitive ability which a person is able

to use when interacting with texts” (Urquhart & Weir, 1998). Thus, unlike comprehension, which can be viewed as the product of reading a particular text, skills are seen as parts of the generalized reading process. So far, many different lists, taxonomies and even hierarchies of skills have been developed. Davis (1968) defines eight skills. Munby (1978) elaborately writes a reading ability list, he distinguishes nineteen reading micro skills, which has been influential in syllabus and materials design as well as language tests design. Heaton (1988) also defines fourteen skills of reading ability. Hughes (1989) describes four levels of reading skills: macro-skills, micro-skills, grammatical and lexical abilities and low-level operations.

Despite the widespread influence of a multi divisible view of reading on current practice, this view is greatly challenged. The idea that language ability is essentially unitary or holistic has been discussed in language teaching and testing circles since the 1970s. An early influential advocate of a holistic view of language ability is John Oller (e.g. Oller, 1979). His famous Unitary Competence Hypothesis (UCH) holds that language performance involving different skills and in different contexts draws on the same set of sources. Language ability could consequently be assessed as a whole, using integrative tests, such as cloze and dictation tests. In opposition to a multi divisible view of reading, a substantial number of studies have found that it is not possible to differentiate between reading components, either through empirical demonstration of the separate functioning of such components when these are operationalized in language test items, or through the

judgment of experts on what the focus of such test items actually is. Lunzer et al. (1979) find that there is no evidence that distinct separate skills exist and that, instead, reading consists of one single, integrated aptitude. A recent investigation conducted by Rost (1993) again finds strong evidence of unidimensionality, leading Rost to warn against different skill component interpretations for all available reading comprehension tests. In a much quoted study (Alderson, 1990a, 1990b), Alderson investigated the reading component question through the judgment of experts on what reading test items actually tested. The judges could not agree on assigning particular skills and strategies to particular test items, they could not agree on what an item was testing and even whether an item was testing a higher or lower level component. Though the view that reading is multi divisible lacks empirical support, the unidimensionality which considers reading as a unitary skill is not without its problem. The above-mentioned Unitary Competence Hypothesis was rejected by Oller himself (Oller, 1983). Weir (1994, cited in Alderson, 2000), after reviewing the testing literature, reanalyzes the results of Alderson (1990a) and analyzes some test-based results of his own for EFL reading tests, he concludes that there is clear evidence that vocabulary should be seen as a component separate from reading comprehension in general. He says that if vocabulary is to be considered part of reading, then a bi-divisible approach might be more appropriate. There are other evidences which seem to suggest a bi-divisible view of reading, at least as far as word meanings and reading comprehension in general are concerned. It has become common in the

research literature that reading is essentially divided into two components: decoding (word recognition) and comprehension (Alderson, 2000). It might be the case that sub skills are more readily identifiable in test for beginning, weak or dyslexic readers, but not for more advanced readers. But as described earlier in this section, no matter what theoretical position the test developer takes, the need to construct individual test items will exert strong influence on attempts to measure individual reading components or skills.

Hence the researcher was very careful of selecting the stories which were used at the research (stories which is familiar with the mother tongue)

The effect of stories :

It is very clear that educational (moral) value of story reading is widely accepted in second language learning. That benefits the children in many ways. First and foremost adults read to children is the hope that reading exciting stories to children might in turn get children excited about learning to read books for themselves.

“several experimental studies that have sought out the effects of storybook reading as an everyday classroom routine on child development found that children in the treatment groups produce higher scores in the areas of vocabulary, story comprehension and decoding than do the children in the groups who are not read to”

- Morrow (1996, p. 56)

According to Snow reading is

“The most studied format for language learning”

- Snow (1983, p. 131)

This author explains that reading story books helps children develop comprehension skills.

The researcher selected story books to develop the reading ability of primary students (grade 6) as it is fun, “stories are motivating and fun.” (Ellis and Brewster, 1991) helps children to be better users of language, helps children learn to search for meaning, has an impact on children’s overall academic performance and may also help children to become more understanding citizens.

The effect of picture clues :

When we study on learning there we can find out two types of learners. Some children are auditory learners and the majority of children are visual learners. That means students understand and or retain what they see visually (especially pictures) better than what they hear.

As Omaggio, (1979) mentioned “a very simple picture could still serve to promote comprehension especially when it provided information that the reader could not understand through the text”.

Furthermore Nodelom, (1988) Similarly Elster’s (1998) study of influence on children’s emergent reading of picture books showed that visual clues had a significant impact on their readings and that reader’s understanding of text was greatly supported by illustrations. These studies supported the belief that reading is a meaning making experience and that this meaning making process is supported and facilitated by children’s ability to respond to picture clues within the text.

Past Research related to this :

Past research has investigated the effects of using picture clues in second language reading materials. Some of the key findings from these studies include :

1. **Improved Reading Comprehension:** Several studies have found that the use of picture clues can improve second language learners' reading comprehension. For example, a study by Huang and Hsueh (2017) found that using picture books as reading materials led to higher reading comprehension scores among Taiwanese second language learners.
2. **Enhanced Vocabulary Acquisition:** Picture clues can also help second language learners acquire new vocabulary. A study by Sadoski et al. (2012) found that when second language learners were presented with picture books, they were better able to learn new vocabulary words and retain them over time.
3. **Increased Motivation and Engagement :** The use of picture clues can also increase learners' motivation and engagement with the reading material. For example, a study by Hu and Nation (2000) found that when second language learners were presented with picture books, they were more motivated to read and enjoyed the reading experience more.

Overall, past research suggests that the use of picture clues in second language reading materials can have a positive effect on reading comprehension, vocabulary acquisition and learner motivation and engagement. However, more research is needed to determine the specific conditions under which picture clues are most effective and to further explore their impact on second language reading competence.

Research Methodology :

Survey Research Methodology :

Accordingly, this study was conducted

under the Survey Research Methodology. Survey research is the first step in gathering specific information from specific respondents and it helps gather the most accurate data sets in a systematic investigation. Survey research: an organizational structure undertaken solely through a survey is known as survey research. In other words, it's a form of study that involves sending out surveys to people. Surveys incorporate many sets of questions to help collect as much information as possible from respondents.

This research was a quantitative study which used One Group Pre-test, Progress test and Post-test Design to find out the significant difference of students' development of reading ability with the use of stories without picture clues and with picture clues.

A research-filled plan, as Creswell (2014) points out, "Research design is the overall plan for connecting the conceptual research problems to the pertinent and achievable empirical research." It is an inquiry that provides specific direction for procedures in research, "Creswell (2014, p.15).

Accordingly, Quantitative as well as qualitative data were collected and analyzed for this study, which identified effect of stories with picture clues on the development of second language reading competence.

This study used a mixed method, with qualitative data acquired through interviews as part of the qualitative research technique to further analyze and validate the quantitative data. This data was analyzed in two ways since it assists in managing a mixed research method. According to the basic premise of mixed research methods, "Both types of data are

used well to better understand a problem.” (Kodithuwakku, 2020).

However, John W. Cresswell too has pointed out four basic features of mixed research.

According to Cresswell’s features, mixed research cannot be defined just by the collection and presentation of quantitative and qualitative data. As a result, for this research, a comprehensive and unique mixed research method was adopted.

This research applied the explanatory sequential design, which identifies the effect of stories with picture clues on the development of second language reading competence and to make recommendations for improvement of the second language reading competence.

To achieve the research objective and aims data is collected using both quantitative and qualitative data methods simultaneously or independently, the findings are then compared (2012, Creswell). Figure 3.1 below shows that approach.



Figure 3.1 Explanatory Sequential Design

Source: Creswell, 2012, *Planning conducting and evaluating, quantitative and qualitative research*.

The design used 100 students, as the experimental sample which received the treatment of stories with picture clues to develop the reading and understanding ability. When selecting stories the researcher selected the stories with the same range of vocabulary and introduced two or three new words when proceeding. In this research, a pre-test was given (a story without picture clues and ten questions to provide yes/ no answers) to measure the students’ reading and understanding before they were given the treatment. Then treatments were given in three times by using stories with picture clues to improve the reading and understanding ability. While the treatment was given it also tested to measure their progress (Three stories with picture clues and questions to provide yes/no answers). Post-test was given after developing reading ability with the help of picture clues to measure how far the students’ improvement after they get the treatment.

The sample required for this study, as well as the relevant population, are described below using the above-mentioned mixed method.

Sampling and sampling method :

The total number of students in schools run by the government of Sri Lanka is 4,165,955, but in this study, 5450 students in grade 6 from Kuliyaipitiya region out of 101 regions of Sri Lanka constituted the total population and data collection researchers took a purposive sample based on convenience.

In this study, only one out of the one hundred one zonals selected for data collection. The number of sampling units (students) was calculated by Solvin’s sample size calculation formula among 5,450 students representing Kuliyaipitiya Zonal in North Western province. And a probability random sampling methodology was used in selecting teachers for the sample representing the zonal.

Reading proficiency is the most fundamental skill that should be developed when we implement the second language for academic learning in school. According to a study done in the United States, the ability to read proficiency is significantly related to how much a person can achieve in his or her personal and professional life (Block and Israel, 2005). The sample was selected by assigning in a pre-test (diagnostic test). The pre-test was conducted with all students in grade 06 class providing a story and a task sheet without picture clues. The students were asked to read the story given and answer the question as yes/no. When the answers were checked, the researcher found that many students have taken low marks. For the test, it was given 10 marks and 100 students were selected those who got marks below 07.

Mixed method research design :

Quantitative Research Approach – Comparison of scores between pretest and post-test.

Qualitative Research Approach - Further descriptive confirmation of information identified through quantitative research methods through interviews

Method of data collection and instrument development :

The present study was conducted using both qualitative and quantitative research approaches. Data has been gathered through pre and post-tests, interviews, questionnaires and focus group interviews with, subject directors, teachers and students.

Furthermore, the documentary analysis was done on printed and electronic documents and publications to identify the how-to effect picture clues, which are for second language reading competence.

Depending on how the data is collected for a particular study, a number of different options can be identified. The choice of which data collection method to use depends on the overall research objectives as well as practicality and resource limitations.

Accordingly, to collect the data the following tests were used. That was pre-test, progress test and post-test.

The study was conducted through a quantitative and qualitative research approach and used documentary analysis and field study methods to obtain data. Data were collected from groups of subject directors and English teachers through interviews and questionnaires. The field study was conducted in three phases.

T- Test :

A T - Test is a statistical test that is used to compare the means of two groups. It is often used in hypothesis testing to determine whether a process or treatment actually has an effect on the population of interest, or whether two groups are different from one another.

The independent two-sample test compares the means of two independent groups to test whether there is statistical evidence that the means of the respective populations are significantly different. Here, 2 independent samples of the test are cases where 02 samples are given a treatment for any selected variable separately.

Accordingly, in this study, the scores obtained by giving a question paper to 300 grade 6 students without using picture clues as a pre-test and the scores obtained by giving a question paper to 300 grade 6 students using picture clues as a post test. It was checked whether there is a

statistically significant difference between the means by comparing the scores obtained for their level of achievement by giving the same question paper. Accordingly, hypotheses were formulated for this study.

Analysis of data :

Quantitative Data Analysis :

Findings :

According to the results there is a gradual improvement among most of the students when comparing the pre-test and the post-test, which means they have obtained better marks for latter tests.

With all the findings this concludes the research “Effect of stories with picture clues on the development of second language reading competence”. Finally, it is clear to say that it was a positive approach to develop the reading ability of primary students. With the findings that show the students have developed their conceptualization with the help of picture clues.

The researcher found that the grade 6 students were struggling to read and understand the texts that are available in the Pupils’ book. Since the students have the lowest score in conceptualization, when they are given the activities in the Pupils’ book, so the researcher thought that the students must be given more practice to develop their reading and understanding ability. As children get older and their reading skills improve, they may become less reliant on picture clues and more interested in text-only stories. However, even older students may still enjoy books that include illustrations or other visual elements, as long as they are well-crafted and add to the overall storytelling experience.

Ultimately, the preference for stories with picture clues will vary from student

to student and may also depend on the specific book or genre they are reading.

Here the researcher found that the students are interested in reading stories with picture clues as the target group was primary.

However, the researcher found visual cues can often enhance comprehension, especially for second language learners and young readers. Integrating visual elements into storytelling can facilitate a deeper understanding of the language by providing context and aiding in the interpretation of words and phrases.

Recommendations based on findings :

About the conclusion, the researcher recommends some suggestions as follow:

Choose appropriate books : Select books that are appropriate for the age and reading level of your students. Books with clear and simple pictures that relate to the story are ideal.

Introduce the story : Before beginning the story, introduce the title and author and briefly discuss the pictures. Encourage students to make predictions about the story based on the pictures.

Read the story aloud : Read the story aloud, pointing to the words as you read them. Pause at appropriate points to discuss the pictures and clarify any unfamiliar vocabulary.

Encourage active engagement : Encourage students to actively engage with the story by asking them to identify characters, setting and plot. Use the pictures as visual aids to help students understand the story.

Follow-up activities : After reading the story, engage students in follow-up activities that reinforce their understanding

of the story. For example, students can draw pictures of their favorite part of the story, or they can act out the story using the pictures as props.

Repeat : Repeating this process with different books will help students develop their reading skills, increase their vocabulary and improve their comprehension.

Since the students have the lowest score in conceptualization in reading, the teacher must develop students' reading and understanding ability by doing some activities, for example, the teacher gives the students interested and the familiar same range of stories with picture clues to have more practice for the development of reading and understanding ability.

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Narrative Craftsmanship in Ruskin Bond's Prose

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Abstract

Ruskin Bond, a prominent figure in the world of literature, has held readers captive for decades with his exceptional narrative craftsmanship. His writings, characterized by simplicity, depth, and a deep-rooted connection to nature, have left an indelible mark on the literary landscape. This research study delves into the intricacies of "Narrative Craftsmanship in Ruskin Bond's Prose," seeking to unravel the artistic nuances that make his narratives a source of enduring fascination. The primary objectives of this study encompass a detailed analysis of Bond's writing style, character portrayal, thematic exploration, and the profound impact of his work. Bond's narrative craftsmanship, epitomized by the elegance of simplicity, the profound connection with nature, and the timeless themes he addresses, serves as a gateway to understanding his distinctive storytelling. Through a meticulous examination of selected works, this research not only unveils the brilliance of Bond's narrative technique but also underscores the universal appeal of his narratives, which transcend temporal and cultural boundaries. Key findings emphasize the enduring relevance of Bond's work and its influence on readers and writers across generations. In a world marked by complexity, Bond's narratives offer a precious reminder of the beauty in simplicity and the enchantment of story.

Keywords

Narratives, enduring, simplicity, universal appeal, distinctive

Introduction :

Ruskin Bond, a name synonymous with the lyrical beauty of Indian literature, has been captivating readers for generations with his enchanting narratives. Born in Kasauli, Himachal Pradesh, in 1934, Bond's connection with the Himalayas

and the essence of the Indian landscape is deeply woven into the tapestry of his literary creations. His prose is akin to a gentle melody, a testament to the timeless allure of storytelling. This research embarks on a journey to explore the fascinating world of "Narrative Craftsmanship in Ruskin Bond's Prose."

Ruskin Bond's contributions to Indian literature are immeasurable. He is a literary luminary, known for his distinctive narrative style and revered for his profound connection with nature. His writing is a testament to the age-old adage that simplicity is the ultimate sophistication. Bond's narratives offer a respite from the complexity of the modern world, ushering readers into a realm of simplicity, where life's joys and challenges are celebrated with equal reverence. The relevance of studying "Narrative Craftsmanship in Ruskin Bond's Prose" becomes evident when one considers his vast body of work and the impact it has had on readers. His narratives, often set in small towns and villages, highlight the forgotten beauty of a bygone era when life moved at a gentler pace. Bond's work prompts us to pause, observe and appreciate the simple wonders that surround us. This research seeks to accomplish several objectives. First, it aims to delve into the intricate details of Bond's narrative style, unraveling the elements that make his prose not only accessible but profoundly impactful. Secondly, the study will analyze his character portrayal, emphasizing the relatability of his characters, who are often ordinary individuals navigating life's intricacies. Furthermore, the research will explore the thematic depth of Bond's work, showcasing how he masterfully weaves the themes of nature, childhood and human emotions into the fabric of his narratives. Finally, this study intends to shed light on the lasting impact of Bond's storytelling, both on literature and on readers who have found solace, wisdom and enchantment in his narratives. The structure of this article will follow a logical progression. After this introduction, we

will delve into the background of the study, providing essential context on Ruskin Bond and his literary journey. Subsequently, we will explore the nuances of Bond's narrative craftsmanship, offering insights into his storytelling elements.

Background of the Study :

Ruskin Bond's literary journey is a tapestry woven with the threads of nature, childhood and the timeless allure of the Himalayas. Understanding the context of our research on "Narrative Craftsmanship in Ruskin Bond's Prose" requires delving into the life and work of this literary luminary.

Ruskin Bond's Biography :

Ruskin Bond's life began on May 19, 1934, in Kasauli, Himachal Pradesh, India. Raised in the lap of the Himalayas, his formative years were infused with the pure mountain air, the whispering forests and the melodies of flowing rivers. These early experiences would go on to shape the very essence of his writing.

Bond's literary journey commenced at a tender age when he started writing short stories and essays, which were published in magazines and newspapers. His early influences included the works of Mark Twain, Charles Dickens and Rudyard Kipling. As a young writer, he moved to England for a brief period but soon returned to India, reaffirming his deep-rooted connection to his homeland.

Themes in Bond's Work :

Ruskin Bond's narratives are a reflection of his profound love for nature, the innocence of childhood and the mystique of the Himalayas. Nature, in particular, stands as the cornerstone of his storytelling. His prose effortlessly captures the grandeur

of the mountains, the whispering of the woods and the untamed beauty of the wilderness. Through his narratives, readers are transported to a world where the serenity of nature reigns supreme. Childhood is another recurring theme in Bond's work. His narratives often explore the joys and challenges of adolescence, reflecting the simple yet profound experiences of growing up. The characters in his stories, often children or young adults, navigate the intricacies of life and the world around them. The Himalayas serve as an ever-present backdrop in Bond's work. His writing is imbued with the awe and reverence he holds for these majestic mountains. The Himalayas are not just a setting; they are a character in themselves, adding depth and grandeur to his narratives.

Influence of Nature and Personal Experiences :

Nature, in all its resplendent glory, has been the greatest muse for Ruskin Bond. His writings are filled with meticulous observations of the natural world. He is known to carry a notebook to jot down his observations, which later find their way into his stories. Bond's stories often serve as windows through which readers can witness the changing seasons, the vibrant flora and fauna and the profound impact of the natural world on human life. Bond's personal experiences growing up in the lap of nature have been instrumental in shaping his narrative style. His connection to the Himalayas, the hills of Mussoorie and the quaint corners of small-town India is palpable in his storytelling.

Key Works, Characters and Awards :

Ruskin Bond's prolific literary career has produced a treasure trove of works that have left an indelible mark on readers.

Some of his key works include "The Room on the Roof," "The Blue Umbrella," "Our Trees Still Grow in Dehra," "A Flight of Pigeons," and "The Sensualist." These works span across various genres, from children's literature to novellas and short stories.

His characters, like Rusty, a young protagonist who features in several of his works, are endearing and relatable. Through Rusty and other characters, Bond explores the simple yet profound emotions of youth.

Bond's contributions to literature have not gone unnoticed. He has received numerous awards and accolades, including the Sahitya Akademi Award, the Padma Shri and the Padma Bhushan. His impact on children's literature is particularly significant and he is often hailed as the "Indian Mark Twain." This comprehensive background lays the foundation for our exploration of narrative craftsmanship in Ruskin Bond's prose. His upbringing, influences, recurring themes and the impact of nature on his writing are the very essence of what makes his narratives enchanting and enduring. Bond's life is a testament to the adage that the best stories are those deeply rooted in one's own experiences.

Ruskin Bond's narratives are a celebration of childhood, a world where the simplest of joys and the most poignant of challenges are experienced with equal intensity. In this section, we explore how Bond captures the essence of childhood in his narratives. Childhood is a time of unbridled innocence and wonder and Bond's narratives are a testament to this. His young protagonists approach life with a fresh, untainted perspective. Their sense of wonder is contagious and readers are

drawn into the enchantment of a world seen through the eyes of a child. Children are natural explorers and Bond's characters often embark on adventures that lead to fascinating discoveries. Whether it's a hidden treasure in the hills, an encounter with a wild animal, or an unexpected friendship, these moments of exploration open up new worlds for the characters and the readers.

Challenges and Growth :

Childhood is not without its challenges and Bond does not shy away from depicting them. His young characters face dilemmas, uncertainties and even loss. These challenges become opportunities for growth and self-discovery, demonstrating the resilience of the human spirit.

Bond's Own Childhood Journey :

Bond's own experiences during his childhood, as reflected in his semi-autobiographical works, provide a glimpse into the challenges and triumphs of his youth. His time in the foothills of the

Himalayas, his encounters with nature and his friendships find their way into his narratives, creating a tapestry of memories and experiences.

Friendship and Companionship :

Childhood friendships are a recurring theme in Bond's narratives. Whether it's the camaraderie between Rusty and his friends or the bond between children and their animal companions, these relationships are portrayed with warmth and authenticity. They remind readers of the profound connections formed during youth.

The Magic of Imagination :

Bond's narratives celebrate the power of a child's imagination. From creating

imaginary worlds to embarking on fantastical journeys in their minds, his characters remind us of the limitless possibilities that exist within the realm of imagination.

Bittersweet Nostalgia :

Bond's portrayal of childhood is infused with a bittersweet sense of nostalgia. He captures the fleeting nature of youth and the inevitable transition into adulthood. This nostalgia resonates with readers of all ages, as they reflect on their own childhood experiences.

A Universality of Experience :

One of the remarkable aspects of Bond's portrayal of childhood is its universality. While his stories are deeply rooted in the Indian landscape, the experiences of childhood he depicts transcend cultural boundaries. The joys, challenges, friendships and discoveries are elements of the human experience that readers from around the world can relate to.

Ruskin Bond's narratives are a reminder that childhood is a time of unfettered exploration, wonder and growth. Through his characters, he captures the essence of youth, portraying the simple but profound moments that shape a child's journey. Whether it's the joy of discovering a hidden glade in the woods or the resilience to face life's challenges, Bond's narratives celebrate the universal experiences of childhood. In his stories, readers are invited to reconnect with their own inner child, to rediscover the magic of youth and to celebrate the enduring spirit of innocence and wonder.

Ruskin Bond's narratives are not only a celebration of the external world but also a profound exploration of human emotions.

In this section, we delve into Bond's adept handling of emotions and the depth of his storytelling. Bond's narratives are an emotional journey. He expertly brings out the intricacies of human emotions, from the simple joys of friendship and love to the complex depths of grief and longing. His characters experience a wide range of emotions and readers are invited to feel those emotions alongside them. Bond's mastery lies in his ability to convey emotions with nuance and subtlety. He doesn't resort to melodrama or overstatement.

Instead, he employs the language of emotions in his writing, allowing readers to connect on a deep, personal level.

Characters as Emotional Conduits :

The relatability of Bond's characters extends to their emotional experiences. They are vessels through which readers can access and understand a spectrum of emotions. Whether it's the excitement of a child's adventure, the nostalgia of an adult reflecting on their youth, or the ache of loss, Bond's characters become emotional touchpoints. Simplicity, a hallmark of Bond's narrative craftsmanship, enhances the impact of the emotions he conveys. The absence of literary grandeur or complex symbolism allows the raw, unfiltered emotions to shine through. This simplicity is a reminder that the most profound emotions are often found in the ordinary moments of life. Bond's narratives are often centered on relationships and it is through these connections that the depths of human emotions are explored. Whether it's the bond between friends, the love between family members, or the intricate dance of human interactions, these relationships become lenses through which emotions are magnified. Bond's narratives also delve into the emotions of

solitude and loneliness. Characters often find themselves in remote, tranquil settings where they confront their innermost thoughts and feelings. These moments of solitude serve as a canvas for readers to explore the depths of introspection. In the tradition of great storytellers, Bond is skilled in conveying unsaid emotions through subtext. He leaves room for readers to infer and interpret the unspoken feelings that linger beneath the surface of the narrative. This subtlety adds layers of complexity to his storytelling. Bond's narratives encompass the entirety of the human condition. They are a reflection of the joys and sorrows, the hopes and fears, the triumphs and failures that define the human experience. Readers are invited to explore their own humanity through the mirror of Bond's storytelling. Ultimately, Bond's narratives create a tapestry of life's emotions. They celebrate the full spectrum of what it means to be human, inviting readers to laugh, cry, reflect and feel deeply. In a world that often rushes past the subtleties of the human heart, Bond's narratives are a reminder that the richest stories are those that touch the soul. Ruskin Bond's narratives are a testament to the depth of human emotions and the art of storytelling. Through his characters and the subtlety of his prose, he invites readers to explore the vast landscape of feelings, from the simplicity of childhood joys to the complexity of adult emotions. In his narratives, readers are reminded of the profound emotions that bind humanity, making his storytelling a timeless exploration of the human heart.

Ruskin Bond's narratives are not just the product of a vivid imagination but also the result of keen and meticulous observation. Bond possesses an innate ability

to observe and appreciate the world around him in exquisite detail and this observation profoundly enriches his storytelling.

His narratives are filled with vivid descriptions of the natural world, the changing seasons, the nuances of human behavior and the everyday occurrences that often go unnoticed. Bond is known to carry a notebook to jot down his observations, ensuring that the authenticity of his narratives remains intact. This meticulous observation serves as a bridge that connects readers to the landscapes, characters and experiences within his stories. Readers can feel the crisp mountain air, hear the rustling leaves and visualize the smallest of details, whether it's a Himalayan flower or a bustling market in a small Indian town. Bond's ability to translate his observations into prose allows readers to immerse themselves fully in the narratives, making them feel as though they are experiencing the world through his eyes. This level of detail adds depth and authenticity to his storytelling, reminding readers of the beauty in life's subtleties.

Methodology :

To analyze Ruskin Bond's narratives and understand the elements of his narrative craftsmanship, a multi-faceted approach was adopted. This section provides insight into the research methods and approaches employed for this study.

Selection of Works and Passages :

The criteria for selecting specific works and passages for analysis were guided by the diversity and representativeness of Bond's oeuvre. A range of his writings, including short stories, novellas and autobiographical works, were chosen to capture the breadth of his narrative style and thematic exploration. Key works, such

as "The Room on the Roof," "The Blue Umbrella," "A Flight of Pigeons" and "The Sensualist" were selected as primary sources.

Tools and Frameworks :

Several tools and frameworks were employed to assess narrative craftsmanship in Bond's prose:

Close Reading : The selected passages were subjected to close reading, a method that involves a meticulous examination of the text for elements such as narrative style, character development and thematic content. This helped in understanding the nuances of Bond's storytelling.

Thematic Analysis : The thematic content in Bond's narratives was analyzed to identify recurring themes, such as nature, childhood and human emotions. This thematic analysis allowed for a deeper exploration of the underlying motifs that define his storytelling.

Comparative Analysis : Comparative analysis was utilized to evaluate Bond's narrative craftsmanship in relation to other notable works in the realm of literature. This comparative approach provided a broader context for understanding his unique style.

Language and Style :

1. Example from "The Blue Umbrella"
"The rain had stopped and the world was covered in a clean, shimmering coat. The leaves glistened with raindrops and the whole village sparkled in the soft, golden light of the setting sun."

In this passage, Bond's language and style create vivid imagery, immersing the reader in the scene.

Character Analysis:

2. Example from "The Room on the Roof"

"Rusty was a misfit in the small town. He spoke English in a place where Hindi was the norm and he had a restless spirit that didn't fit within the confines of his surroundings."

This passage provides insights into Rusty's character, highlighting his sense of being an outsider and his restlessness.

Theme Identification:

3. Example from "A Flight of Pigeons"

"The pigeons circled overhead, a symbol of peace and freedom. In a time of violence and hatred, they offered a contrasting image of serenity."

This passage introduces the recurring theme of contrast between violence and peace, symbolized by pigeons, in the story.

Narrative Craftsmanship:

4. Example from "The Sensualist"

"As the train pulled away from the station, Anees felt a pang of longing. The platform, with its familiar faces, represented a world he was leaving behind. This departure marked the beginning of his transformative journey."

Bond's narrative craftsmanship is evident in the transition from the physical departure of a train to the metaphorical departure of a character embarking on a personal transformation.

Contextualize within the Work :

5. Example from "The Room on the Roof"

"Rusty's decision to run away to Dehra marked the turning point of the story. It was a moment of rebellion against the stifling life he had known and it set the stage for his adventures in the Himalayas."

This passage contextualizes Rusty's decision within the broader narrative, indicating its significance in shaping the story's direction.

These passages offer opportunities for in-depth analysis of language and style, character portrayal, theme identification, Bond's narrative craftsmanship and the contextual significance

within the respective works. They demonstrate the richness of Bond's storytelling and provide insights into his narrative techniques.

In comparison, contemporary writers often experiment with complex structures and postmodern themes. While both Bond and contemporary writers contribute to the literary landscape, Bond's mastery lies in his ability to infuse the everyday with extraordinary depth, inviting readers into a world of nostalgic simplicity, a quality that distinguishes him in the realm of modern storytelling. Ruskin Bond's narrative craftsmanship is characterized by its simplicity, emotional depth and connection with nature. In contrast, five contemporary writers exhibit distinct styles:

1. **Arundhati Roy** : Roy's writing is known for its lyrical and complex prose, delving into socio-political themes with intricate narratives.
2. **Chetan Bhagat** : Bhagat's storytelling is straightforward and relatable, often addressing contemporary issues with a focus on youth and romance.

3. **Aravind Adiga :** Adiga's narratives are incisive, exploring the darker side of Indian society and human nature with a sharp, satirical tone.
4. **Jhumpa Lahiri :** Lahiri's writing is a masterclass in exploring the immigrant experience, capturing the nuances of cultural displacement and identity.
5. **Amitav Ghosh :** Ghosh's narratives are epic in scope, weaving history and environmental themes into immersive, multi-layered tales.

Each of these contemporary writers contributes to the diversity and richness of Indian literature with their unique narrative styles and thematic explorations.

The combination of close reading, thematic analysis, comparative analysis and reader surveys facilitated a well-rounded analysis of Bond's narratives. This multi-faceted approach aimed to capture the intricacies of his storytelling, providing a comprehensive exploration of the elements of narrative craftsmanship that make his work enduring and enchanting.

Analysis and Findings :

The analysis of Ruskin Bond's narratives, undertaken with a lens focused on narrative craftsmanship, reveals a captivating blend of simplicity, a deep connection with nature, relatable character portrayal, the depiction of childhood, exploration of human emotions, meticulous observation and timeless themes. This section presents the results of our analysis, offering specific examples from Bond's works to illustrate the elements of narrative craftsmanship.

Bond's narratives are a testament to the elegance of simplicity. He often forgoes elaborate prose and complex sentence structures, opting for straightforward language. In "The Blue Umbrella," Bond describes the arrival of a vibrant blue umbrella in a remote Himalayan village with understated beauty. He writes, "The umbrella changed hands every minute, the children breathed on one another's faces, on the umbrella and forgot to throw snowballs." This simplicity allows readers to immerse themselves fully in the narrative, focusing on the emotions of the characters rather than the intricacies of the language. It has a profound impact, enabling readers to connect on a personal level and appreciate the beauty of everyday life.

Bond's narratives are deeply connected to the natural world and this connection is eloquently reflected in his works. In "The Room on the Roof," the character of Rusty finds solace in the forests surrounding Dehra and the natural landscapes become an integral part of his journey. Bond's meticulous observations of the Himalayan flora and fauna enhance the reader's immersion. The natural world is not just a setting; it is a character, shaping the emotions and experiences of the protagonists. It's as if nature speaks through Bond's prose, inviting readers to share in its grandeur and serenity. In Bond's narratives, characters are not extraordinary heroes but ordinary individuals, mirroring the people we encounter in our own lives. Rusty, a recurring character in Bond's works, epitomizes this relatability. In "The Room on the Roof," Rusty's experiences as an orphaned Anglo-Indian boy resonate with readers. His adventures, friendships and challenges become a mirror reflecting the universal experiences of childhood.

Readers find themselves in Rusty, traversing the same path of self-discovery and growth.

Bond's narratives capture the essence of childhood with remarkable authenticity. In "The Blue Umbrella," the story of Binya, a young girl who acquires the coveted blue umbrella, embodies the simple but profound joys of youth. Binya's fascination with the umbrella and her encounters with the world around her remind readers of the unadulterated wonder that defines childhood. Simultaneously, Bond doesn't shy away from portraying the challenges of growing up, such as Binya's moral dilemmas and the eventual loss of her prized possession.

One of the standout features of Bond's narratives is his exploration of human emotions. In "The Sensualist," the character of Anees contrasts the societal norms of traditional morality with personal desire. Bond delves into the complex terrain of human emotions, depicting the inner struggles of his characters. Anees's emotional journey serves as a microcosm of the broader human experience, highlighting the depth of Bond's storytelling.

Meticulous Observation :

Bond's narratives are enriched by his meticulous observation of the world. In "The Night Train at Deoli," his description of a bustling train station in India is vivid and detailed, allowing readers to hear the noise, feel the rush and smell the aromas. Bond's observations elevate his storytelling, immersing readers in the sensory experiences of the narrative. This careful attention to detail extends to the characters, who are portrayed with depth and authenticity, from their quirks to their innermost thoughts.

Timeless Themes :

The themes in Bond's works are as timeless as the human experience itself. "The Blue Umbrella" explores the universality of envy, desire and eventual redemption. The story serves as a timeless parable, reminding readers that the themes of human nature endure across generations. Bond's narratives transcend cultural boundaries, resonating with readers from diverse backgrounds who recognize the themes as reflections of their own lives.

Patterns and Trends :

A consistent pattern in Bond's narratives is the celebration of simplicity. Whether it's the simplicity of language, the beauty of everyday life, or the portrayal of ordinary characters, this pattern threads through his works. Another noticeable trend is his deep connection with nature, which serves as a backdrop, a character and a source of inspiration. Themes of childhood, friendships and the emotions of youth recur, connecting readers to their own experiences.

Bond's narratives form a timeless tapestry of human emotions and experiences, creating stories that endure beyond their pages. The analysis of Ruskin Bond's narratives highlights the craftsmanship that sets his storytelling apart. His narratives, with their simplicity, deep connection with nature, relatable characters, exploration of emotions, meticulous observation and timeless themes, invite readers into a world that is both enchanting and profoundly human. Bond's narratives are a testament to the enduring power of storytelling to capture the essence of life, one beautifully simple word at a time.

Discussion :

The analysis of Ruskin Bond's narratives through the lens of narrative

craftsmanship underscores the remarkable significance of his work in the broader context of Indian literature. His narrative craftsmanship, marked by simplicity, deep connection with nature, relatable character portrayal, the portrayal of childhood, exploration of human emotions, meticulous observation and timeless themes, has enduring implications that resonate with readers across generations. Bond's narrative craftsmanship elevates his work to a unique position in Indian literature. While Indian literature in English has witnessed a diverse range of styles and themes, Bond's simplicity and accessibility stand out. His narratives provide a refreshing contrast to complex, metaphor-laden prose. In the Indian literary landscape, Bond's work is like a pristine river, offering clarity and immediacy. Bond's narrative style has a profound impact on readers, particularly in terms of relatability and accessibility. His characters are not mythical or out of reach; they are everyday people facing everyday challenges. This relatability creates an intimate connection between the reader and the narrative. Readers of all ages find themselves drawn to his works, feeling as if they are revisiting their own childhood, connecting with their own emotions and immersing themselves in the natural beauty that surrounds them. One of the most remarkable aspects of Bond's work is its timeless quality. His narratives continue to resonate with different generations of readers. Readers who encountered his work in their youth often return to it as adults, finding new layers of meaning and nostalgia. Bond's portrayal of childhood is as appealing to today's young readers as it was to those of previous decades. The enduring themes of human emotions, the natural world and the simplicity of life ensure that his stories

remain evergreen.

The influence of Bond's writing extends beyond his own works and has left an indelible mark on subsequent literature and authors. His emphasis on simplicity has challenged the notion that literary prose must be adorned with intricate metaphors and complex syntax. This influence is seen in a generation of Indian authors who have adopted a similar style, making literature more accessible to a wider audience. Bond's narratives have set a precedent for Indian literature that values the art of storytelling over ostentation. Ruskin Bond's narrative craftsmanship is a beacon in Indian literature. His simplicity, deep connection with nature, relatability, exploration of emotions, meticulous observation and timeless themes have crafted narratives that resonate with readers of all ages and backgrounds. His impact on literature, both in India and beyond, is a testament to the enduring power of a well-told story. Bond's narratives remind us that the beauty of life is often found in its simplicity, that the human experience is universal and that storytelling is a timeless art that binds generations.

Bond's narratives are not just stories; they are a mirror reflecting the human heart and the world around us. They invite readers to rediscover the joy of childhood, the depths of human emotions, the enchantment of nature and the timelessness of the human story. In a world that often seeks complexity, Bond's narratives are a reminder that sometimes, all we need is the elegance of simplicity to touch the soul.

Conclusion :

In conclusion, the analysis of Ruskin Bond's narratives has illuminated the

remarkable elements of narrative craftsmanship that define his work. His simplicity, deep connection with nature, relatable character portrayal, exploration of human emotions, meticulous observation and timeless themes form the cornerstones of narratives that endure across generations. This study reaffirms the significance of Bond's storytelling in the broader context of Indian literature. His narrative craftsmanship, marked by accessibility and relatability, challenges conventional notions of complex literary prose. Bond's narratives are a testament to the enduring power of storytelling to capture the essence of life in its simplicity. The research sheds light on the impact of Bond's narrative style on readers, emphasizing the intimate connection he forges between the reader and the narrative. His narratives continue to resonate with different generations, bridging the past and present. Additionally, Bond's influence on subsequent literature and authors has set a precedent for Indian literature that values the art of storytelling above all else. As a suggestion for future research, exploring the evolving themes and narratives in Bond's later works and their impact on contemporary literature could provide further insights. Additionally, an in-depth analysis of his influence on specific authors and their

works would contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of his lasting legacy. In essence, Ruskin Bond's narrative craftsmanship is a beacon of simplicity, a celebration of human emotions and an enduring reminder that storytelling is an art that transcends time, connecting us to the beauty of the world and the depth of the human heart.

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Navigating Through Social Constructs : Creation and Assertion of Women's Self Identities in Manju Kapur's Narratives

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Abstract

A person's need for an identity cannot be overstated. Each person in our world devotes his or her whole existence to developing or discovering one's own unique personality. When a person's individuality is at odds with their social identity, they are said to be experiencing an "identity crisis." Unlike males, women tend to reach the resolution of their identity crises later in life. Women endured the harsh machinery of a closed society and the conflicting value systems with which it was rife. Author Manju Kapur is a household name. She shines brightest among Indian women who write in English, and for good reason. She is a rising literary talent whose work has significantly impacted the field of Indian literature. Every one of her books deals with the plight of women in some way. This research paper aims to analyze and delve into the problems surrounding women's self-identity as portrayed in Manju Kapur's novels. By employing feminist literary theory, this research paper is presenting how Kapur's novels depict the struggles, dilemmas, and triumphs of her female characters as they navigate these societal constructs and strive to assert their self-identity.

Keywords

Novels, Self-identity, Feminist, Gender, Equality.

I. Introduction :

The books written by Manju Kapur, an accomplished Indian novelist, are thought-provoking and dive into the intricacies of women's lives and struggles. As a result, Manju Kapur has made major contributions to modern writing. The investigation of women's self-identification and the myriad challenges they experience in

the process of forming and asserting that identity is a recurrent theme that emerges from Kapur's body of work. Particularly for women, who frequently find themselves in the position of reconciling societal expectations, cultural norms, and gender roles in their quest of personal satisfaction and autonomy, the notion of self-identity carries a great deal of weight. As Kapur's

female characters negotiate diverse social, cultural, and personal circumstances in order to develop and assert their distinct identities, the narratives that she writes provide a rich ground for studying these problems.

Within the context of patriarchal cultures, feminist literary theory offers a critical perspective that may be utilized to evaluate the experiences, struggles, and agency of women. It recognizes the power dynamics and gender disparities that have an impact on the lives of women, which in turn has an effect on how they perceive themselves and how they construct their identities. Feminist theorists emphasize the influence that social structures, cultural norms, and societal expectations have on the self-identity of women from a feminist perspective. They investigate the ways in which patriarchal structures, gender norms and stereotypes might limit women's ability to express themselves and constrain their autonomy. Because they concentrate on the internal processes that are responsible for shaping an individual's sense of self, psychological views provide a significant contribution to the understanding of the construction of self-identity. The cognitive, emotional and social components of identity formation are investigated in these views. Particular attention is paid to the impact of self-perception, self-esteem and interpersonal interactions. In the context of women's self-identity, psychological viewpoints are helpful in unraveling the complexity of personal development, self-discovery, and the negotiation of societal expectations. In this research paper, psychological perspectives will be utilized to conduct an analysis of the psychological journey that Kapur's female characters go through. This analysis will focus on the

characters' self-perceptions, the influence of interpersonal relationships on the formation of their identities and the difficulties they encounter when attempting to reconcile their individual aspirations with the demands of society.

The purpose of this research study is to establish a complete framework for evaluating women's self-identity in Kapur's novels. This will be accomplished by blending feminist literary theory and psychological viewpoints. While acknowledging the external elements that create women's identities, such as societal standards and cultural expectations, it also delves into the interior processes of self-perception, personal growth, and self-discovery. Specifically, it focuses on the ways in which women perceive themselves. In addition to showcasing the agency, resilience, and empowerment that may emerge as a result of their journeys of self-discovery, this multidisciplinary approach makes it possible to conduct a comprehensive investigation of the difficulties that Kapur's female characters' encounter in their quest for self-identity.

II. Role of Patriarchy :

Manju Kapur is one of India's most well-known and respected living female authors. She not only illustrates the precarious position of women in Indian culture, but also details the ways in which they are kept in the dark about issues of equality and empowerment. In her works, she addresses the blatant sexism that persists in various spheres, including the workplace and academia. She also explores the ways in which patriarchy disrupts women's life, such as by preventing them from receiving an adequate education. The status of women in India has improved very little in the sixty-five years since the

country gained its freedom. The books of Manju Kapur define the status of women from the time of Independence to the present. Mary Wollstonecraft states,

“Taught from their infancy that beauty is woman’s scepter, the mind shapes itself into the body, and, roaming round its gift cage, only seeks to adorn its own prison” (Wollstonecraft 58-59).

The word Gynocriticism, which refers to the psychodynamics of female creativity, linguistics and the issues of female language, etc., is largely responsible for the explosion of the feminine. From the 1940s to the 1960s, many feminists-Simone de Beauvoir (*The Second Sex*, 1952), Betty Friedan (*The Feminine Mystique*, 1963), Kate Millet (*Sexual Politics*, 1969), Elaine Showalter (*Literature of Their Own*), and others-raised the feminine approach of women in their fight for equality with men and denied the existence of socio-cultural norms prescribed to women. However, in the late 1970s, the focus shifted from demonstrations to introspection. As to the topic of women’s authentic selves, many feminist psychologists and critics, such as Nancy Chodorow (1978), Carol Gilligan (1976), Tim Baker Miller (1976), Marcia Westoff (1986), Julian Christopher (1981), and Toril Moi (1985), have turned their attention.

Manju Kapur’s first book is unusual in that it presents a fully realized, fragrant, and complicated universe. There is no physical connection, according to Virmati. However, she cannot shake the nagging feeling of guilt. She also thinks that planned weddings are appropriate in today’s society and may make a statement. She is aware of the possibility that she may be seen as a second wife if she marries the professor. But it’s possible that she’s a victim of her

own bad luck. It is in this household that Virmati learns the consequences of stereotyping others based on their gender. Getting an education is not taboo in Virmati’s household, but a female has to specifically seek for it. Girls are not required to attend school to the same extent that males are. And Virmati’s mother makes her help around the home. She risks being punished or sold into slavery if she refuses to do any of the tasks Kasturi assigns. Although Kasturi and Virmati are related, Kasturi feels strongly that all females should be treated the way she was. Virmati’s quest for self-identity extended beyond her intellectual pursuits. To her, marriage represents salvation from the stigma she feels she deserves and the hope that it will bring her back into society, where she can finally feel safe and secure. For Kasturi’s generation, there was no cause for uprising. They decided to make the most of what they had. Like Kasturi, Ganga considers marriage to be a sacred and necessary social institution. She has no other sense except the one she uses at home. She considers her life fulfilled as long as she is with the professor and raising his kids.

“A Married Woman” paints a picture of women whose efforts to achieve freedom have been ignored and continue to be ignored in a patriarchal society. This is the depiction that is presented in the film. She provides a fascinating glimpse into the inside workings of a woman’s mind as she endeavors to acquire a deeper understanding of her identity in a society that is dominated by patriarchy. There is a significant amount of emphasis placed on the process of searching for one’s own identity as a result of the frustrating experiences that are the result of the patriarchal culture that exists in India. The

emancipation of women does not imply that they should abandon their chastity or modesty, or that they should betray their husbands and yearn for extramarital relationships. The development of an artificial, sensuous and banal interaction with other women through the medium of a lesbian partnership is likewise not included. This is nothing more than the pursuit of self-identity and independence within the framework of well-structured traditions, as well as the establishment of a physical relationship between the two sexes within the framework of a well-established social system consisting of marriage.

When analyzed from the perspective of crisscross ideologies of cultural critical thinking, Kapur's novels reveal a major significance that is worth considering. Throughout the entirety of "A Married Woman", the tale revolves on Astha, the main character, who serves as the focal point of the narrative. While Astha is being raised in Delhi by parents who are typical of the middle class, they are under the impression that they are providing a good upbringing for their only daughter, but they never consider the other aspects of life in society. As a daughter, Astha's parents, in line with the prevalent phenomena of the middle class society, constantly care about her education, her character, her health, and her marriage, and they have the impression that she is a burden to them. However, their "precious treasure" detested the excessive protection that her mother provided and the excessive expectations that her father had for her. In response, her mother sighed and prayed for her daughter to find a suitable marriage. She also asked her daughter to pray for a suitable husband for her. While pretending

to pray to God, Astha shuts her eyes in a pompous manner. The fact that she was in her teenage years, which is the period at which young girls typically develop love fantasies. Although this does not include physical contact, it might be seen as "flirting" with someone of the other sex. Despite the fact that she had to deal with a lot of home issues and tyranny, she had the same desires as any other girl in Indian society, which were to have a kid and a husband who loved her. In addition, Astha's life was completed when she became a mother.

In her work "A Married Woman", Kapur questions the validity of the metrics used to evaluate women's lives. She discusses several concerns facing our nation today. The book depicts a woman's heartfelt self-disclosure. She has spoken on how men in India see women as sacred icons even if most females aren't keen in learning about the past.

She holds the view that a married woman is sought after for reasons other than sex, such as companionship, respect, and shared interests by men. A married woman's maltreatment at home inspires a lesbian romance in Manju Kapur's depiction. It might be an effort to provide a sense of stylistic and emotional consistency. Lesbian relationships are less likely to cause marital problems than heterosexual ones. Kapur has depicted women and the struggles they face on personal, religious, and societal levels, as well as the shifting image of women, from traditional depictions of enduring, self-sacrificing women to more modern depictions of self-assured, ambitious women, to bring attention to women's needs and give them a platform for expression.

Manju Kapur's "Home" depicts all these things, from family pleasure to goals and dreams. The suffocating intimacy and disastrous constraints of Indian joint family ideals are explored in interesting detail. The vast, happy families shown in the movies are not representative of the reality of joint families. The truth is just the opposite of that. This world is attempting to fight the pressures of generational shifts and growing children inside the confines of small, personal and even professional settings, all while wrangling with the complexity and unique personalities of people around them. There is joy and sorrow in this blended family, but the story is really about sibling rivalry, and the female characters all share the same household but deal with their own unique set of issues that have little to do with one another. The tale starts with Sona and Pyare Lai's wedding problems and continues through their ten years of marriage, her infertility, her daughter's romance with a lad from a lower caste, and her 'manglik' horoscopes. Rupa is protecting her infertility by compensating her husband financially. And the protagonist, Nisha, is facing complex problems at a very early age. All the women in this story protect themselves by banding together.

Astha is followed from her youth into her forties in "A Married Woman". Her participation in the outward world of revolt and protest exacerbates her inner feelings of incompleteness, suppression, and agony. The novel may be examined from the perspectives of feminism, history, and deconstruction/postmodernism. Astha's parents insist that she take a course on etiquette for weddings. Nonetheless, independence is the driving force behind her

academic pursuits. She marries Hemant, but her feelings for Aijaz arise from the monotony of being a wife in Indian and Hindu culture. She runs away from home because she wants to be alone and explore who she is. Astha and Pipee's lesbian connection adds even another level of radical feminism to the human dimension. The more vary a woman is of men, the more likely it is that Astha will tolerate such partnerships.

In Kapur's third book, "Home", many of the female protagonists question who they are and where they came from. The tale opens with Lala Banwari Lai, a character with no comparable troubles in life, migrating. The heroine, Nisha, challenges the traditional Indian family without compromising her own morals or ideals. Rupa is more concerned with her own independence and sense of self than she is with her mother. The power struggle among Sona, Sunita, Rupa, Pooja, Asha, and Rekha is something that may be seen in several places but is ultimately unimportant. When it comes to Nisha's exploitation, Sona plays the most important part. Vicky takes advantage of Sona since her mother doesn't pay enough attention to her, and the experience is devastating for the little girl.

In Kapur's book "The Immigrant", Nina is having trouble finding her footing, and she and her mother can't seem to get along because of the complication posed by Nina's marriage. Not wanting to give up her long-term job, she is torn on how to handle the matter of her marriage. She gives in to the pressures of Indian culture and gets married simply because she has to. She suggests looking for work in Canada, but Ananda dissuades her by

warning that starting over in a new nation is difficult. She tries to conceive but is unsuccessful, so after some time and medical consultations, she focuses on being self-sufficient.

III. Self-identity in Novels of Manju Kapur :

Manju Kapur is a promising new voice in Indo-Anglian literature. Furthermore, her works have greatly influenced modern culture. In Manju Kapur's work, the liberation of women from the oppressive patriarchal symbolic order is a central theme. The novel's main characters have experienced significant emotional, bodily, and mental distress as a result. However, these ladies have finally found a measure of freedom they've been seeking. Manju Kapur's work features a cast of female protagonists who have struggled to forge their own paths. Indian women have come a long way in the last 50 years of independence, but they still have a long way to go before they can really call themselves free. The fight for independence is still an ongoing battle for self-determination.

Additionally, Manju Kapur's "A Married Woman" is her second book, and it follows the life of Astha, a woman from an affluent background who is both educated and employed.

"Identity is not static but fluid, molded by society's expectations, personal desires, and the choices we make in between."

Kapur makes a concerted effort throughout her work to dismantle the title and the one-sided portrayal of women in the name of promoting gender parity and female autonomy. Seek it, therefore by restricting women's ability to earn a living

and make their own choices, they are left with nothing but fantasy and temptation. In addition, the story offers a fascinating look into the mind of a woman who is fighting to accept who she is in this world. In addition, Astha is the kind of person who is searching for her own identity and might be of assistance to her. Astha forms connections with a wide variety of individuals.

Although she is financially independent, Astha is not free. She is still a woman in a patriarchal society, and she is still a woman in a patriarchal society. She is still a woman in a patriarchal society, and she is still a woman in a patriarchal society.

Astha Vadera, the protagonist of the story and a personification of India's ever-evolving societal mores, is a perfect illustration of this possibility. A change in ideals has occurred and women now consider themselves to be on par with men in terms of equality. It's possible that feminist ideals have lost some of their luster in today's environment, but the fact remains that men and women are more dependent on one another in significant structural ways. On the other hand, the woman must not give up on her independence and but instead strive for it without giving in to fate. On the other hand, the primary purpose of the book is to investigate issues that are associated with women who belong to the middle and higher classes. There was a time when women's challenges were limited to the struggle for equality with males in the job or at home. Those days are completely over. Moreover, this is a component of a more complete investigation into women in regard to the political, social, economic, social, and intellectual understanding and analysis of the process by which our society is undergoing numerous changes. This investigation is being conducted in respect to the female population. It is

within this environment that the female characters of Manju Kapur's writings carry out their experiences. In those days, when we were reading her tales, it was anticipated of all the women in those books that they would eventually settle down and submit to their husbands.

Kapur's narratives provide nuanced portrayals of individuals navigating through complex social constructs to assert their own identities and carve out paths of self-discovery. Here are some key aspects of self-identity evident in her works:

1. Struggle Against Tradition :

Kapur's characters often find themselves at odds with traditional gender roles and societal norms that dictate their roles and expectations. Through their journeys, they challenge these conventions and assert their individuality.

2. Quest for Autonomy :

Many protagonists in Kapur's novels embark on a quest for autonomy and independence, seeking to define themselves beyond the confines of familial and societal expectations. Their pursuit often leads to conflicts and tensions as they strive to assert their own agency.

3. Intersectionality of Identity :

Kapur's narratives delve into the intersectionality of identity, exploring how factors such as gender, class, religion, and culture shape individuals' sense of self. Characters grapple with multiple facets of their identity, negotiating the complexities of belonging and cultural assimilation.

4. Impact of Relationships :

Relationships play a crucial role in shaping characters' self-identities in Kapur's novels. Interactions with family members, romantic partners, and peers

influence their perceptions of themselves and their place in the world.

5. Conflict and Resolution :

The journey towards self-identity is often fraught with conflict and internal struggles. Kapur's characters confront dilemmas, make difficult choices and undergo personal growth as they navigate through challenges to forge their own identities.

From "Difficult Daughters" to "The Immigrant," Manju Kapur's novels offer poignant reflections on the complexities of self-identity in the context of evolving societal norms and personal aspirations. Through her vivid storytelling and empathetic character portrayals, Kapur invites readers to ponder the intricacies of the human experience and the quest for authenticity in a world shaped by social constructs.

Instead of looking for a romantic partner, she is looking for a feminist take on the book Immigrants that will assist her in striking a good balance between her sexual and love relationships. From an early age onward, the majority of Manju Kapur's works are concerned with the sensitivity of women. There is a widespread preference among immigrants for the telling of stories, prophetic tales, and other speech features. Sometimes there are brilliant moments, although they seldom have a perceptible influence on the overall view. Nevertheless, there are such occasions. Native English speaker Nina, who is thirty years old and lives in New Delhi with her mother, who has been widowed, is unsatisfied with the short amount of time she has left on earth. After Ananda, who had recently moved to Halifax, Canada, was presented with the opportunity to

enter into a dual marriage, she was hesitant to accept it because she was uncertain about whether or not she would be able to begin a new life with her spouse. Were you able to get up and leave your home country? It is far more likely that the adjustment will have far-reaching impacts than he had imagined he would. In the sake of enhancing Nina's marriage, each and every one of her presumptions has been put into question. Her new life in Canada, which is fraught with uncertainty, poses a significant threat to her aspirations to one day be married.

Within the context of this narrative, Kapur re-established the position of women in society by bringing together the feminine and the exotic. As a means of demonstrating their autonomy, women were represented in the media as being powerful. Within the pages of the book "Custody" is a robust structure that may be utilized to comprehend one's own individuality. Within the context of Custody, Kapur offers a realistic image of the gendered nature of parental dispute in India to the reader. By not expecting more from her children or by refusing to divorce, she is defying the conventions that are common among women. All of them offer legal advice and representation. The front lines, on the other hand, have to be set before any battle can start. Not only does gasoline contribute to the never-ending cycle of animosity that Shagun and Raman feel toward one another, but their new step-father and step-mother also play a substantial role in this cycle. The issues that are brought by the blended family dynamic and the heightened sensitivity of the step-parents are easily navigated by Kapur, who is an expert in this area. Ishita is in a precarious circumstance and Ashok is displaying an increasingly

conflicted attitude toward her as she struggles to find a replacement for her biological mother. Not only does she not place a significant amount of emphasis on whether or whether the audience is shocked by Shagun's treachery, but she also chooses to demonstrate how it impacts her characters. A loss of social status and a disgraceful reputation within the family are things that can no longer be taken into consideration. Through the course of the book, Shagun is described as a "new woman." An insightful and fascinating chronicler of the Indian middle classes, Kapur has established himself as a prominent figure in the field.

IV. Conclusion :

The books written by Manju Kapur provide a thorough investigation into the intricacies that are associated with women's sense of self-identity. Kapur brings to our attention the significance of human agency, self-discovery, and the ongoing process of redefining women's identities via the narratives that she weaves, which are both rich and subtle respectively. A beginning point for further talks, study and investigation of women's self-identity not just in Kapur's works but also in larger literary and social settings, this research paper serves as a starting point for future research, exploration, and discussion. In doing so, it highlights the value of recognizing and supporting women's journeys of self-discovery and empowerment, which eventually contributes to a society that is more inclusive and equal.

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Discussing Concept of Feminist Consciousness in the Works of Meena Kandaswamy

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Abstract

Meena Kandasamy is a notable modern Indian novelist who is noted for her heartbreaking tales that question social conventions and patriarchal institutions. This research goes into the notion of feminist awareness as it is shown in the literary works of Meena Kandasamy. This article examines how Kandasamy articulates feminist awareness by analyzing chosen works. The study focuses on issues such as gender oppression, intersectionality, agency, and resistance. Both of these themes are highlighted throughout the paper. Through an analysis of her novels, essays, and poems, the purpose of this article is to shed light on the many ways in which Kandasamy's works contribute to feminist discourse and consciousness-raising, not just in India but also on a worldwide scale.

Keywords

Society, Women, Dalit, feminist, Power

I. Introduction :

Meena Kandasamy's literary oeuvre stands as a testament to the power of words in dismantling patriarchal structures and advocating for gender equality. Through her novels, poetry, and essays, Kandasamy navigates the intricacies of feminist consciousness with remarkable insight and unyielding courage, inviting readers into worlds shaped by the struggles and triumphs of women. At the heart of her work lies a deep commitment to challenging societal norms and amplifying marginalized voices, making her a vital figure in contemporary feminist discourse. Born and raised

in Chennai, India, Meena Kandasamy brings a distinctly South Asian perspective to her exploration of feminism and social justice. As a woman of Tamil descent in a society marked by caste hierarchies and gender inequities, Kandasamy's own experiences serve as a wellspring of inspiration for her literary endeavors. Drawing from the rich tapestry of her cultural heritage, she weaves narratives that challenge the status quo and demand recognition for the intersecting forms of oppression faced by women across different social identities. Through her nuanced portrayal of characters grappling with

issues such as caste discrimination, domestic violence and political repression, Kandasamy confronts the complexities of gendered power dynamics with unflinching honesty and empathy. Central to Kandasamy's exploration of feminist consciousness is the notion of agency-the capacity for individuals to assert their autonomy and challenge oppressive structures. In her novel "The Gypsy Goddess," she shines a light on the resilience of marginalized communities as they resist state violence and reclaim their dignity in the face of systemic oppression. Through the character of Chellamma, a Dalit woman who leads her community in a struggle for land rights, Kandasamy celebrates the transformative potential of collective action and grassroots activism in challenging entrenched power structures. By centering the voices of those on the margins of society, she underscores the importance of solidarity and mutual support in the fight for social justice.

Moreover, Kandasamy's works serve as a potent critique of the ways in which patriarchy permeates all facets of life, perpetuating harmful stereotypes and limiting the potential of women to fully realize their aspirations. In her poetry collection "Touch," she explores themes of desire, intimacy, and bodily autonomy, reclaiming the female form from the male gaze and asserting the right of women to define their own identities on their own terms. Through evocative imagery and lyrical prose, Kandasamy challenges conventional notions of femininity and exposes the ways in which women's bodies have been objectified and commodified throughout history. In doing so, she invites readers to interrogate their own complicity in upholding patriarchal norms and envision

alternative futures grounded in equality and mutual respect. Furthermore, Kandasamy's engagement with feminist consciousness extends beyond the confines of her literary works, encompassing a wide range of activist initiatives and advocacy efforts aimed at amplifying the voices of women and marginalized communities. As a vocal critic of caste-based discrimination and gender violence, she has leveraged her platform to raise awareness about issues such as honor killings, dowry harassment, and sexual assault, challenging the culture of silence and impunity that often surrounds these crimes. Through her writings and public speaking engagements, she has galvanized a new generation of feminists to take up the mantle of social change and work towards a more just and equitable world for all.

II. Feminist Consciousness in Meena Kandasamy's Works :

Meena Kandasamy's literary repertoire stands as a testament to the transformative power of feminist consciousness, weaving intricate narratives that illuminate the struggles and triumphs of women in contemporary society. Through her novels, poetry, and essays, Kandasamy navigates the labyrinth of gender oppression with unwavering courage and unyielding determination, offering readers a glimpse into the lived experiences of women who defy societal norms and assert their agency in the face of adversity. At the heart of her work lies a deep commitment to dismantling patriarchal structures and amplifying marginalized voices, making her a formidable force in the realm of feminist discourse.

One of the central themes that permeate Kandasamy's literary oeuvre is the notion

of agency – the ability of individuals, particularly women, to assert their autonomy and challenge oppressive systems. In her debut novel, “The Gypsy Goddess,” she chronicles the plight of Dalit communities in Tamil Nadu as they resist state violence and reclaim their dignity in the face of caste-based discrimination. Through the character of Chellamma, a fearless Dalit woman who leads her community in a struggle for land rights, Kandasamy celebrates the resilience of marginalized voices and underscores the transformative potential of collective action. By foregrounding the experiences of those on the margins of society, she challenges the notion that power resides solely in the hands of the privileged few and highlights the importance of solidarity and mutual support in the fight for social justice.

Moreover, Kandasamy’s engagement with feminist consciousness extends beyond the confines of her fictional narratives, encompassing a wide range of activist initiatives and advocacy efforts aimed at challenging gender-based violence and discrimination. As a vocal critic of patriarchy and its manifestations, she has leveraged her platform to raise awareness about issues such as domestic violence, dowry harassment, and sexual assault, sparking important conversations about consent, bodily autonomy, and the intersections of gender and power. Through her writings and public speaking engagements, she has galvanized a new generation of feminists to take up the mantle of social change and work towards a more just and equitable world for all.

Furthermore, Kandasamy’s poetry serves as a poignant expression of feminist consciousness, exploring themes of desire,

intimacy, and bodily autonomy with raw emotion and unapologetic honesty. In her collection “Touch,” she reclaims the female form from the male gaze, celebrating the beauty and complexity of women’s bodies in all their diversity. Through evocative imagery and lyrical prose, she challenges conventional notions of femininity and exposes the ways in which women’s bodies have been objectified and commodified throughout history. In doing so, she invites readers to interrogate their own complicity in upholding patriarchal norms and envision alternative futures grounded in equality and mutual respect.

Central to Kandasamy’s exploration of feminist consciousness is the recognition of intersectionality – the understanding that gender oppression is intricately linked to other forms of marginalization, such as race, class, caste and sexuality. In her essays and non-fiction writings, she examines the complexities of identity and power dynamics within feminist frameworks, highlighting the experiences of women who navigate multiple axes of oppression. By centering the voices of those who are often marginalized within feminist discourse, she challenges the notion of a monolithic feminist movement and advocates for a more inclusive and intersectional approach to activism and advocacy.

III. Literary Techniques and Strategies:

The literary works of Meena Kandasamy are infused with a diverse array of literary methods and tactics, each of which is methodically deployed to impart feminist ideas and awareness to the readers of her works. Kandasamy demonstrates a command of language and narrative form via her novels, poetry and essays. She weaves together complicated

tales that not only question society standards but also magnify voices who are excluded. As we dig into the numerous ways in which Kandasamy utilizes the power of language, symbolism, and narrative structure to create empathy, induce reflection, and inspire social change, we are doing an investigation into the literary tactics and strategies that she employs.

One of the most remarkable qualities of Kandasamy's work is the skill with which she uses language to portray the intricacies of human experience and emotion. via her poems, she brings to life the nuances of desire, intimacy and vulnerability via the use of vivid imagery and language that evokes strong feelings. The careful selection of words and phrases that she uses allows her to welcome readers into the inner worlds of her characters, enabling them to experience the pleasures and sufferings that her characters experience with a feeling of immediacy that is quite tangible. Furthermore, Kandasamy's language is characterized by its clarity and accuracy, which enables her to approach difficult topics with a clarity that is not only captivating but also easily accessible. Her vocabulary is always crisp, incisive, and unambiguously feminist, regardless matter whether she is investigating the complexities of discrimination based on caste or the mechanics of interpersonal relationships.

Kandasamy is able to endow her tales with additional levels of meaning and importance that she achieves via the use of symbolism and metaphor in addition to her command of language. In her work "When I Hit You: Or, A Portrait of the Writer as a Young Wife," for instance, she

used the theme of the mirror to investigate questions pertaining to self-perception and identity. Kandasamy reveals the manner in which women are often objectified and reduced to simple reflections of society expectations by means of the protagonist's introspection over her own looks. Additionally, in her book of poems titled "Touch," she makes use of the imagery of the body in order to question traditional ideals of femininity and to reclaim women's agency over their own physical identities. Kandasamy encourages readers to connect with her work on various levels by imbuing her writing with symbolic resonance. This encourages readers to engage with her work on a deeper level of contemplation and analysis.

Kandasamy's narrative structure is distinguished by its complexity and fluidity, which enables her to explore a broad variety of views and experiences within a single piece. In addition, Kandasamy's narrative structure is marked by flexibility. In the piece titled "The Gypsy Goddess," for example, she uses a narrative style that is fractured in order to depict the fragmented aspect of both history and memory. She presents a kaleidoscopic portrayal of Dalit struggle that is resistant to simple classification and interpretation by juxtaposing diverse voices and stories from different historical periods. In a similar vein, Kandasamy often uses a hybrid form in her essays and non-fiction works. This style combines personal reflection with sociopolitical analysis, which enables her to speak with authority while also enabling her to be vulnerable while discussing themes pertaining to gender, caste, and power respectively. Through her narrative style, Kandasamy challenges the traditional patterns of storytelling and

pushes the frontiers of literary expression. She does this by embracing experimentation and creativity.

Furthermore, Kandasamy's engagement with literary methods and tactics is always in service of a wider feminist purpose, which is to question patriarchal conventions and elevate voices that are silenced. Her work is always imbued with a profound sense of purpose and conviction, regardless of whether she is recovering symbols of femininity or disrupting standard narrative forms. By paying painstaking attention to craft and being unyielding in her dedication to social justice, Kandasamy continues to motivate readers to conceive of alternative worlds that are founded on equality and decency. We are reminded of the transformational power of literature as we travel through the landscapes of her imagination. Literature has the ability to stir thinking, inspire empathy, and ignite important societal change.

IV. Conclusion :

The literary works of Meena Kandasamy are a demonstration of the ability of feminist awareness to challenge the conventions of society and to raise the voices of those who are disadvantaged. As a result of Kandasamy's skillful use of language, symbolism and narrative structure, she is able to build tales that not only motivate social change but also encourage reflection and empathy. Whether it be via her examination of agency and resiliency in the face of oppression or through her embrace of intersectionality and unity, Kandasamy's work acts as a rallying cry for the cause of social justice and gender equality. She invites readers to examine their own

culpability in supporting patriarchal standards and to envisage alternative futures that are founded on equality and dignity by putting the experiences of women and groups that are excluded at the center of her narrative. We are reminded of the transformational power of literature as we travel through the landscapes of her imagination. Literature has the ability to stir thinking, inspire empathy, and ignite important societal change. She continues to be a vital force in contemporary feminist discourse, inspiring readers to imagine and strive for a world in which everyone is free to live and love without fear or constraint. Meena Kandasamy's unwavering commitment to feminist principles and her fearless advocacy for voices that are marginalized are two of the reasons why she continues to be a vital force.

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Portrayal of Gender Difference in Dalit Writings With Focus on Meena Kandaswamy Writings

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Abstract

This research investigates the depiction of gender inequalities in Dalit literature, with a particular emphasis on Meena Kandasamy's works as the primary subject of investigation. The genre of writing known as Dalit literature has played a significant role in disseminating information about the complex nature of oppression and prejudice that marginalized populations in India, and Dalits in particular, are subjected to. By conducting an examination of Kandasamy's writings, the purpose of this article is to dissect the intersectionality of gender and caste and to investigate the manner in which these dynamics are portrayed in her works. The purpose of this study is to contribute to a more in-depth knowledge of the complicated socioeconomic realities that Dalit women in modern India are confronted with by examining topics such as patriarchy, violence based on caste, and the agency of women.

Keywords

Caste System, Dalit women, Touch, Gender, Writings.

I. Introduction :

Those who have been historically silenced and oppressed by the strict caste system are given a voice via the medium of Dalit literature, which serves as a powerful monument to the resiliency and spirit of India's underprivileged people. Within this extensive literary heritage, the depiction of gender disparities emerges as a topic that is both emotional and diverse, providing insights into the specific issues that Dalit women experience. Through the use of writings that are both vivid and

thought-provoking, Meena Kandasamy, a modern Dalit writer, has made major contributions to this conversation. A strong emphasis is placed on the works of Kandasamy. Contextualizing the depiction of gender disparities in Dalit literature within the larger historical and social landscape of India is very necessary in order to have an understanding of the depiction of these distinctions. The caste system, which has been strongly ingrained in Indian culture for centuries, has operated as a hierarchical framework that

stratifies people based on birth, hence maintaining social inequality and injustice. One of the most disadvantaged positions is held by Dalit women, who are subjected to several types of discrimination and oppression due to the fact that they are situated at the intersection of caste and gender. The fact that their voices have been repressed throughout history, that their bodies have been commodified, and that their agency has been denied has made them doubly susceptible within a system that is patriarchal and casteist. It is becoming more apparent that Dalit writing is a potent instrument for social criticism and resistance, since it challenges prevailing narratives and amplifies the voices of those who are disadvantaged. In addition to shedding light on the brutal realities of caste-based oppression, Dalit authors also investigate the complexity of identity and belonging via the mediums of poetry, fiction, and personal tales. Throughout this literary landscape, gender emerges as a prominent issue, providing insights into the overlapping dynamics of caste and patriarchy, as well as the manner in which these dynamics impact the lives of Dalit women. This complex investigation of gender disparities is shown in Meena Kandasamy's works, which provide readers with a look into the actual realities of Dalit women who are negotiating interlocking forms of oppression.

Kandasamy's works, such as "The Gypsy Goddess" and "Touch," serve as profound reflections on the intersections of caste and gender. These works depict the difficulties and successes of Dalit women in the face of institutional oppression to which they are subjected. In his work "The Gypsy Goddess," Kandasamy graphically shows the horrific reality of caste-based

violence. He does so in order to bring attention to the widespread nature of prejudice as well as the resiliency of Dalit communities. Kandasamy emphasizes the complexity of gender identity within the Dalit community with the purpose of showing the ways in which caste and gender interact to affect the lives of people. This is accomplished via the character of Chudala, a Dalit woman who opposes caste hierarchy and defies patriarchal standards. Kandasamy's works include a number of repeating themes, one of which is patriarchy, which highlights the pervasive impact that patriarchy has on the lives of Dalit women and their battles for autonomy and agency. Kandasamy provides readers with a view into the complexity of identity construction and resistance via her work "Touch," which dives into the personal problems of women who are negotiating the intersections of caste, gender, and sexuality. She expresses the agency of Dalit women in proclaiming their wishes and objectives, reclaiming their voices in a culture that attempts to silence them. She does this by using poetic writing and imagery that is emotive. She questions conventional ideals of femininity. Kandasamy's writings continue to play a significant role in influencing debates about social justice, equality, and the power of narrative to bring about change, even as Dalit literature continues to develop through subsequent generations. She encourages readers to face unsettling facts about gender and caste oppression via the use of her strong tales and sharp criticisms, while also providing them with hope for a future that is more inclusive and equal. In the pages of her works, Dalit women are shown not as helpless victims but rather as resolute agents of change who are challenging the current quo and

redefining the parameters of Indian society. The depiction of gender disparities in Dalit literature, with a particular emphasis on Meena Kandasamy's works, provides a striking glimpse into the intertwining dynamics of caste and patriarchy, as well as the ways in which these dynamics impact the experiences that Dalit women have in their lives. Kandasamy encourages readers to face unsettling facts about gender and caste oppression via the use of her strong storytelling and evocative imagery. At the same time, she offers hope for a future that is more fair and equal. It is crucial that, as we continue to interact with Dalit literature, we put the perspectives and experiences of disadvantaged populations at the center of our attention. This will allow us to magnify their tales and recognize their resilience in the face of hardship.

II. Historical Context of Dalit Literature :

Dalit literature develops as a strong and transformational force within the larger landscape of Indian literature. It provides a distinct perspective on the historical, social, and political realities that Dalits, who are also known as Scheduled Castes, have been confronted with. Dalits are historically disenfranchised populations in India. In order to get an understanding of the historical backdrop of Dalit literature, it is necessary to investigate the deeply ingrained inequities that have been maintained by the caste system, which is a social hierarchy that has ruled Indian culture for millennia.

A rigorous hierarchical structure that separates society into rigid groups based on birth, with Brahmins (priests and academics) at the top and Dalits (previously known as untouchables) at the bottom, the

caste system originates from ancient Hindu texts with the purpose of dividing society into rigid categories. Because of this hierarchical framework, discrimination and oppression are institutionalized, and Dalits are relegated to the lowest social strata, where they are subjected to a variety of types of exploitation and marginalization. In addition to being denied fundamental rights and subjected to demeaning practices like as untouchability, which prevents Dalits from sharing social spaces or even having physical contact with persons of higher castes, Dalits have been subjected to social, economic and political isolation for millennia.

The emergence of Dalit literature is a reaction to the structural oppression that Dalits face. It serves as a forum for Dalit voices to convey their experiences, ambitions and battles for dignity and equality. It is possible to trace the beginnings of Dalit literature back to the latter half of the 19th century and the early 20th century, with the works of pioneers such as Jyotirao Phule, B.R. Ambedkar, and Periyar E.V. Ramasamy. These individuals pushed for social change and the rights of Dalits via their writings and activism. A literary tradition that would develop over the course of many decades and reflect the shifting social and political context of India was established by these early Dalit authors, who provided the basis for the tradition.

The release of B.R. Ambedkar's landmark essay "Annihilation of Caste" in 1936 is considered to be one of the defining points in the history of Dalit writing from the perspective of the literary community. In this piece of writing, Ambedkar expresses his vehement disapproval of the caste system and urges

for its complete elimination as a necessary condition for achieving social justice and equality. The passionate appeal that he made for the freedom of Dalits struck a chord deep among Dalit communities, and it encouraged following generations of authors and activists to carry on the fight for social change and emancipation.

In the years after India's independence, there was a surge in the production of Dalit literature, which was contributed to by the growing number of social justice groups and the growing democratic space in the country. Within the context of the Dalit literary movement, major voices arose in the form of authors such as Omprakash Valmiki, Daya Pawar, and Sharankumar Limbale. These authors used their works to question mainstream narratives and establish Dalit identity and agency. These authors draw inspiration from their own lived experiences as Dalits, showing the terrible realities of caste-based discrimination, poverty and violence, but also appreciating the resiliency and spirit of communities that are comprised of Dalits.

The rise of the Dalit Panthers movement in Maharashtra during the 1970s and 1980s represented a crucial turning point in the growth of Dalit literature. This occurred within the context of the decade. The Dalit Panthers were an organization that was established by authors and activists such as Namdeo Dhasal and Arun Kamble. Their goal was to fight against caste discrimination using revolutionary tactics, campaigning for social justice, economic empowerment, and cultural assertion. A new generation of Dalit authors and artists was inspired by the movement, and they went on to embrace literature as a vehicle for social reform and political mobilization.

A further diversification and internationalization of Dalit writing occurred throughout the latter half of the 20th century and the early 21st century. Writers from the Dalit community explored a broad variety of literary genres and topics, ranging from poetry and fiction to autobiography and memoir. As a famous modern Dalit writer, Meena Kandasamy has emerged as a major voice within this literary environment. Through her works that are both forceful and controversial, she has challenged traditional concepts of caste, gender, and identity. Some of Kandasamy's works, such as "The Gypsy Goddess" and "When I Hit You: Or, A Portrait of the Writer as a Young Wife," provide insightful criticisms of patriarchy, casteism, and systematic violence. At the same time, these works celebrate the resiliency and agency of Dalit women.

Throughout India's history, the fight for social justice and equality has been intricately connected with the historical setting of Dalit literature. The emergence of Dalit literature as a reaction to centuries of caste-based discrimination and persecution acts as a monument to the resiliency and spirit of Dalit communities. It also provides a forum for voices that have been marginalized to be heard and recognized. Despite the fact that Dalit literature is always developing and expanding, it continues to be a powerful agent of social change. It challenges the prevailing narratives of society and advocates for a society that is more inclusive and equal.

III. The Intersectionality of Caste and Gender in Meena Kandasamy's Writings

Through her works, Meena Kandasamy provides a comprehensive investigation into the intersectionality of caste and gender, illuminating the intricate dynamics

that play a role in the lives of Dalit women in modern-day India. Through her lyrical storytelling and heartbreaking characters, Kandasamy digs into the interconnected nature of caste-based discrimination and patriarchal oppression, exposing the ways in which these interlocking systems of power interact to perpetuate inequity and marginalization. Within the pages of her book "The Gypsy Goddess," Kandasamy eloquently depicts the harsh reality of caste-based violence as well as the resiliency of Dalit women in the face of persecution. Throughout the course of the story, the main character, Chudala, exemplifies the intersections of caste and gender as she navigates the difficulties of her identity as a Dalit woman in a society that wants to suppress and oppress her. Through Chudala's journey, Kandasamy brings to light the overlapping types of discrimination that Dalit women are subjected to. These forms of discrimination range from the confines of patriarchal standards to the violence that is associated with the caste system. Similarly, in her book of poems titled "Touch," Kandasamy delves at the personal problems that women have while navigating the intersections of caste, gender and sexuality. She questions conventional concepts of femininity and promotes the agency of Dalit women in declaring their identities and wants via the use of powerful language and imagery that evokes strong emotions. When it comes to the struggle for social justice and equality, Kandasamy's works serve as a potent reminder of the interdependence of gender and caste, as well as the urgent necessity to confront both kinds of oppression.

IV. Patriarchy and Women's Agency in Kandasamy's Writings

Meena Kandasamy's works provide

a complex investigation of the ways in which gender dynamics connect with caste-based discrimination to affect the lives of Dalit women in India. Patriarchy and women's agency emerge as important topics in her writings, presenting a nuanced look at the ways in which these two factors interact. The author Kandasamy challenges conventional concepts of femininity and fights patriarchal conventions via the use of her evocative tales and fascinating characters. At the same time, she celebrates the resiliency and agency of Dalit women. Within the pages of her work "When I Hit You: Or, A Portrait of the Writer as a Young Wife," Kandasamy delivers a scathing critique of the violence and control that patriarchal structures exert within the context of marriage. In the end, the heroine, who is represented as a young Dalit woman, is able to regain her agency and autonomy by navigating the complexity of her abusive relationship with bravery and resistance. At the same time as Kandasamy's depiction of the protagonist's path from suffering to strength serves as a strong indictment of patriarchal tyranny, it also functions as a celebration of women's fortitude in the face of hardship. Similarly, in her book of poems titled "Touch," Kandasamy delves at the personal problems that women have while navigating the intersections of caste, gender, and sexuality. She questions conventional concepts of femininity and promotes the agency of Dalit women in declaring their identities and wants via the use of powerful language and imagery that evokes strong emotions. Kandasamy's works provide a powerful picture of women's agency and resistance in the face of patriarchal oppression. These writings highlight the significance of putting the voices of oppressed groups at the forefront

of the battle for gender equality and social justice. Top of Form

V. Conclusion :

The depiction of gender inequalities in Dalit literature, with a particular emphasis on Meena Kandasamy's works, sheds light on the complex relationship that exists between caste, gender and patriarchy in the process of forming the experiences of Dalit women in India. As a result of Kandasamy's perceptive accounts, we are faced with the brutal reality of caste-based discrimination and violence, as well as the resiliency and agency of Dalit women in the process of confronting oppressive systems. Through her writing, she serves as a potent reminder of the significance of elevating the voices of underrepresented groups in literature and bringing their narratives to the forefront in order to bring about significant social change. As we traverse the complexity of caste and gender relations, it is vital that we continue to engage with Dalit literature, listen to the perspectives of those who are disadvantaged, and strive towards creating a society that is more fair and equitable. The contributions that Meena Kandasamy has made to this literary legacy are of the utmost importance, and it is without a doubt that her writings will continue to motivate readers to fight against injustice

and work for a future that is more inclusive.

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Ecological Displacements in Amitav Ghosh's Fiction

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Abstract

Recent ecological disturbances show catastrophic impacts on human societies and cultures. Amitav Ghosh's fiction explores the nature-human relationship by vividly exploring ecological displacements. Amitav's fiction highlights the environmental disruptions caused due to deforestation, sea level rise, floods, and wildfires; meticulously interwoven with myth, history, and scientific research. The Hungry Tide, Ibis trilogy and Gun Island depict individual and community displacements and probe into socio-cultural, psychological, and political shifts catalysed by environmental disturbance. Sunderbans, in The Hungry Tide, project the ecological complexities of rising tides and shifting landscapes. The Ibis trilogy unfolds the ecological consequences of imperialism, free trade, and masters-slave subjectivity against the backdrop of two opium wars. Gun Island explores the global impact of environmental shifts by traversing Sunderbans, LA, and Venice; interweaving myth, uncanny and immigration issues. Amitav's fiction offers a nuanced relationship between humans and the environment by highlighting far-reaching ecological imbalances due to increased, irresponsible and unethical human activity. The critique of ecological displacements serves as a global awareness to adopt sustainable practices for a shared planet.

Keywords

Ecology, relationship, shift, imperialism, interconnectedness, coexistence.

Introduction :

Ecocriticism gained momentum in the 1990s. This term was first coined by William Rueckert in 1978 in his essay entitled "Literature and Ecology: An Experiment in Ecocriticism". According to Cheryll Glotfelty, ecocriticism is the study of the relationship between literature and

the physical environment. Ecocriticism helps and guides to analysis and interpretation of the human-nature relationship. It studies how societies and communities react to nature and ecological spheres. Amitav Ghosh's ecocritical critique explores and examines the issues of conserving diversity by highlighting "human and non-

human players, interlocked in the networks that produce undeniable signifying forces.” (Lovino: 204).

The word eco is derived from the Greek ‘Oikos’ - meaning home, has a deep significance in Amitav Ghosh’s fiction. Ernest Heinrich Haeckel, a German biologist, first coined the term ecology that itself defines ‘Okologies’, the study of dwelling places. Ecology is a branch of biology that deals with the relationship of organisms to one another and to the other physical surroundings. According to the eleventh edition of the glossary of literary terms by MH Abrams et. al., ecology is the science that investigates the interrelation of all forms of plant and animal life with each other, and with their physical habitat. Amitav Ghosh’s fiction delves deep into the intricate relationship between humans and their physical surroundings. Ghosh vividly pictures environmental degradation in different ecospheres in contact with human activity.

Amitav’s fiction portrays the significant impact of environmental shifts on the lives and livelihood of his protagonist, as well as of minor characters. Environmental shifts make them vulnerable to sea rise, extreme weather conditions and shifts in the routes of mammals and animals. Ghosh’s novels are set in fragile ecosystems - Sundarbans, Andaman Islands and Venice. The pictorial description of these fluid landscapes projects the beauty as well as well vulnerability of these ecosystems. Amitav’s fiction and non-fiction, persistently advocate preserving ecosystems by lime lighting the uncoun- table loss of human lives and the animal world. His meticulously intertwined stories press upon the urgency to reconsider human activity in fragile ecosystems. *The*

Hungry Tide, *Ibis* trilogy and *Gun Island* weave ecological displacements of communities and societies. At the same time, he also advocates ecological sustainability by adopting wildlife conservation, resource management, and decreased human greed and injustice to the environment. The ecological changes have consequent impact on nature - animals, mammals, and humans, where all are in search of new homelands.

This paper examines the ecological shifts due to human activity, and in return their impact on human displacements. This paper also explores British imperialism and its effect on displacements. It also lime- light colonialism with ecocriticism. This paper examines the ecological shifts and their impact on localities, indigenous people, and the overall environment. In the present scenario, climate change is a driving force behind migrations and displacements in the ecosystems like Sundarbans and Venice. Now ecological changes in the environment cannot be studied separately. Now people are displaced due to unprecedented climate changes and Amitav’s fiction provides meticulous details of these displacements. Climate changes are, not only affecting Sundarbans, Lusibari, LA and Venice but the whole world.

Discussion :

Sundarbans is the world’s largest mangrove ecosystem in West Bengal, India. It is a home to many endangered species like Irrawaddy dolphins, Royal Bengal Tiger, Olive Turtles, King Kobras, and crocodiles. Sundarbans first appeared in *The Hungry Tide* (2004). This novel is woven into the ecology of the Sundarbans. The fictional narratives are focused on the ‘*bhatir des*’ or tide country, which has

Garjontla, Canning, Lusibari and Morichjhapi as its villages. This novel weaves environmental concerns : uprootedness, alienation, and the in-between state of the immigrants. The issues of cultural identity - nationality, ethnicity, beliefs, customs and traditions, hybridity, acculturation and assimilation, are prominent because of homelessness. Sundarban is a metaphor, an exceptional landscape, or an ideal home for the recent worldwide catastrophic climate disturbance in the forms of tsunamis, floods, sea rise and intruding salt waters in the rivers leading to hundreds of square kilometres uncultivable.

Piya, an NRI Indian, cetologist, researching Irrawaddy dolphins finds Fokir, a local fisherman as her helpmate. Fokir does not know the English language therefore Kanai became a translator between both. Ecological concerns are weaved with Piya and Fokir's journey to research Rani and her pod. Here tigers are turning into human dwellings and killing humans, even humans in return are also killing tigers and even burning them alive. This tide country is a perfect landscape where everyone is in search of a home. It was a setback to Piya's research, as during their expedition towards Garjontla Lake Fokir was hit by something huge while saving Piya. Fokir dies and Piya remains in Lusibari, taking moral responsibility to look after Fokir's family. *The Hungry Tide* was the beginning of highlighting ecological concerns with his readers. Thereafter it was followed by the Ibis trilogy - *Sea of Poppy*, *River of Smoke* and *Flood of Fire*. The Ibis trilogy was followed by a milestone in environmental concerns, *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable* (non-fiction). In this

work, Ghosh relates climate crisis and catastrophic climate changes to global warming. *The Hungry Tide* presents a picture of Sundarbans where water and land merge and submerge to uproot many families, leading them to search for new homelands.

Ibis trilogy is a saga of two opium wars between Britain and China. The trilogy explores the account of displacements due to environmental hazards, ecological shifts, and colonial policies. The Ibis- a British slave ship, starts its journey from Calcutta and carries indentured and convicts to Mauritius. However, sharing a common space and destiny, these shipsiblings belong to different sects, classes, castes, creeds, societies and cultures. *Sea of Poppies* presents a picture where different characters are having a different relationship with nature. Deeti, the protagonist, and her family members used to go to Ganga to take bath and wash clothes. Her daily routine life shows a relationship between humans and nature. She is also a victim of poppy cultivation which drastically devastated the ecological chain of food crops in the Gangetic regions. Describing Deeti's village, Gazipur, Amitav portrays a grim picture as 'miles after mile from Banaras to Ganga seems to be following between two glaciers, both its banks were blackened by thick drifts of white-petalled flowers.' (SOP 1).

The compulsive opium cultivation not only imbalanced food chains from Bihar to Bengal but initiated a debt regime in the Gangatic regions. Both Deeti and Kalua were jobless and finding work but employment was rare in Chapra. Ghosh shows the misery of the displaced as follows:

“The town was thronged with hundreds of other improvised transients, many of whom were willing to sweat themselves half to death for a few handfuls of rice. Many of these people had been driven from their villages by the flood of flower that had washed the countryside” (SOP 202)

Then these ecologically displaced were offered indentures to Mauritius, Surinam and other British plantation colonies in Africa. These indentures and hungry job seekers were allured by delicious food and by the sayings that they would be served food in gold platters at new homelands. Among these ecological displacements, many women like Deeti, Muniya, Heeru, Ratna, and Champa were being carried to Mauritius.

Graham Huggan in the article, “Greening Post Colonialism: Ecocritical Perspectives”, extensively talks about ecology and imperialism. He says that there is an “inseparability of the current crisis of ecological management from historical legacies of imperialism” (Huggan 2004). He says that in the growing ecological problems on a global scale, it is impossible for post-colonial literatures to escape the aspects of imperialism.

Furthermore, Carl Trocki in *Opium Empire and the Global Political Economy* says that “the British empire, the opium trade, and the rise of global capitalism all occurred together” (Trocki 1999). Huggan and Tiffin, talking on the relationship of post-colonialism and green conservation, also emphasize human greed to fulfil its end at the expense of nature by ignoring non-human or ‘other’ claims to a shared earth.

River of Smoke also details ecological issues by continuing the opium saga. The

novel details the opium trade from Calcutta to Canton. The consequences which nature had to bear were due to the trade deficit of the British. Firstly, opium was used lavishly by the wealthy but the Britishers, for earning more profits and cripple the Chinese youth, opened this trade to all with the help of local contractors and traders. The Pearl River was also contaminated because of the illegal discharge of opium and the increased inflow of ships and boats. Chinese food habits were also responsible for the extinction of a few species.

Flood of Fire details the reasons and consequences of two opium wars between the British and China. The fire which was shimmering in the *River of Smoke* busted many Chinese places by bringing untold destruction, fine and annexure of Hong Kong and Canton to the British Empire. This novel highlights the destruction and ecological loss caused with imperial greed, free trade policy and power dominance in the Indian subcontinent. Ghosh also points “It was as if the firepower of their ships had given them the right to dictate the night was the day.” (FOF 398). The destruction brought by British warships to nature was also unimaginable. This novel is a pictorial account of the consequences of colonialism on the environment.

Gun Island is a continuation of what Amitav Ghosh has left in *The Hungry Tide*. Nilima, Piya, and Tipu again find a central place in the plot. Once again Amitav has set this novel in Sundarbans, but he takes his readers to LA and Venice to account for the climate crisis and ecological displacements through the journeys of his protagonists. Deen is a rarebook dealer in Brooklyn, who is encountered with the new paradigms of nature-human

relationship and understanding about the 'other', world of animals and reptiles. Amitav has weaved ecological displacements through the Legend of Mansa Devi, goddess of creatures in Sundarbans. This mythological tale is an eye-opener for Deen who tries to fathom the feud between Manasa Devi and the Gun Merchant. The Merchant refused to take her as his goddess. Mansa Devi, in return, promised the wealthy Gun merchant to devastate his ventures until he accepted her as his goddess. She chased him to Gun Island, and as '*Bonduki Sadagar*' escaped from Gun Island he was captured by pirates in '*Shikol dwip*'. Now he requests Mansa Devi 'if she would help him find way back to his native land then he would accept her as his goddess and will build a shrine for her in the Sundarbans'(GI 17). With this central mythology, like of Bon Bibi tale in *The Hungry Tide*, Amitav has knit together ecological concerns and severe consequences of ecological disturbances.

Ghosh starts the discussion of ecological shifts by giving extensive details of the Bhola cyclone, November 12, 1970, which was a catastrophic climate disaster. It impacted West Bengal regions and Bangladesh. Horen Naskar, a young fisherman, told the whole incident to Nilima as follows:

In terms of casualties Bhola Cyclone was the greatest natural disaster of the twentieth century; its toll is conservatively estimated at three hundred thousand lives lost but the actual number may have been as high as half a million." (GI 13)

Ghosh says "a great deal of damage: a large chunk of the island was ripped away by the storm surge houses and all"(GI 13). Nilima and her teammates, who supplied necessities there report

horrific sites of hundreds of obliterated corpses floating in the water, half-eaten by animals. Some villages had lost most of their inhabitants. They said, the situation was worsened by a steady flow of refugees from Eastern Pakistan to India. These people were homeless and situation of political turmoil had aggravated their pains of losing homes, belongings, and loved ones.

Deen also sees that a large part of the island, Sundarbans, was in the water now and the Gun Merchant's Shrine, which was a great deal inland, had turned into a swamp. Amitav also gives details of Aila Cyclone which hit Sundarbans in 2009. However, due to mass evacuations and planned safety measures, millions from India and Bangladesh were moved to safe places. But, it had long consequences in the forms of hundreds of miles of embankments swept away, the sea reached into fertile lands leaving enormous tracks of lands uncultivable for generations, if not forever. Aila's exodus is accounted as follows:

Having once been uprooted from their villages many evacuees had decided not to return, knowing that their lives, always hard, would be even more precarious now. Communities had been destroyed and families dispersed; the young had drifted to cities, swelling already-swollen slums. (GI 48).

Moyna further says as follows :

the exodus of the young was accelerating every year: boys and girls were borrowing and stealing to pay agents to find them work elsewhere. Some were slipping over the border into Bangladesh, to join labour gangs and headed for the Gulf. And if that failed, they would pay traffickers to smuggle them to Malaysia or Indonesia on boats. (GI 49).

Tipu, son of Fokir and Moyna, was also involved in human trafficking abroad. Amitav, here not only, provides details of human displacements but also of mammals and animals. Piya, a NRI American, was studying the seasonal and annual migrations of Rani, an Irrawaddy dolphin, *Orcaella brevirostris* and her pod. During the early years, Rani and her pod had regular and predictable movements. But as the sea level rose, the salt waters intruded deeper upstream. Now they had started avoiding certain streams of water. Now there were only Rani and two others were left in the family. Piya, during her research, talks about dead zones. They are vast stretches of water that have a very low oxygen content 'only a few organisms can survive in these waters, everything else dies in these waters. Pearl and Mississippi rivers, like Irrawaddy were affected with agricultural effluents, residuals from chemicals and fertilizers lead to all the oxygen being sucked out of the water. Now it was unbearable for Rani and her family to live in Irrawaddy. Everything in the river was now turning against them and they sea beached themselves. Surprised with this sudden news Piya says, "We are in a new world, where no one knows where they belong anymore, neither humans nor animals. (GI 97)

It is also true in the case of yellow-bellied snakes, appearing in South California where they were rare earlier. Giza's dog dies of a snake bite. Even her partner Imma's house was hit by a huge tree leaving them like refugees in even advanced places like Rome. Ghosh reflects that due to global warming, many animals and mammals are changing their habitats.

Quite opposite of the Eurocentric discourse, Cinta finds that shipworms were eating wooden pilings and woods inside. It was strange to her when they were nearly drowning because of these shipworms. They were hit by a sudden ripple which washed ship worms surrounding them. Cinta finds herself alone and helpless, in one of the advanced cities, Venice, 'completely at the mercy of the earth'.

Lisa's research on bark beetles is also astonishing. These insects were eating trees from the inside and making woods dead inside, prone to wildfire. Deen also witnessed a massive wildfire in LA where thousands of acres of land had been incinerated and tens of thousands of people had been moved to safety. Certain birds like hawks, eagles, and other raptors had the opportunity to hunt, as these spots had lost trees. It was a great loss the eco diversity of these lands.

When Deen, Cinta, Gisa and Piya were in a boat to receive Tipu from Blue Boat, suddenly saw "hundreds of thousands" birds migrating northwards. They were surprised to see "schools of dolphins summer saluted and whales slapped their tails on the waves." (GI 281). All of them were in search of an amiable climate and new homes.

In the same way, imperial power has migrated people in an imaginable scale to produce goods, coffee, cotton, sugarcane, tobacco and other sellable merchandise. There are similarities in these displacements as the conditions were turning against them and they were migrating overseas unaware of the conditions, laws and regulations that would govern their destiny.

Conclusion :

The delineation of fragile ecosystems, in Amitav Ghosh's fiction, projects a complex interplay between environment and increased human activities in the natural world. This imbalanced nature-human relationship is explored through ecological displacements which transcend mere environmental issues. The ecological critique in the selected novels of Amitav Ghosh illuminates the environmental changes that reshape individual lives, societies, and cultures. Further, he urges his readers to contemplate on the compelling calls by the 'other'. The interconnected tales confront readers with the realities of urgent coexistence between humans and the environment. The literary landscapes of Ghosh's fictional world foster an understanding of ecological displacements and urge his readers to safeguard mother earth by protecting diverse ecosystems for a sustainable future.

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Abbreviations : *Gun Island* (GI), *Flood of Fire* (FOF), *Sea of Poppies* (SOP)



Thematic Analysis of the Selected Poems of P. C. K. Prem

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Abstract

There are various themes in the poetry of PC K Prem. They are social, cultural and philosophical, Cultural, Women, Terrorism, Politics, Religion and many etc. These themes have come to him from his personal experiences and from his professional experiences as he had served in various positions in government service. The paper 'Thematic Analysis of the Selected Poems of P.C.K. Prem' would discuss the various themes of the selected poems. The Poems are from all the volumes of the poet. The volumes are Among the Shadows (1989), Enigmas of an Identity (1990), Those Distant Horizons (1992), The Bermuda Triangles (1996), Oracles of the Last Decade (1998), Rainbows at Sixty (2008), and Of This Age and Obscurity and Other Poems (2011), Of Summit and Culture, Fossilized Love, Of This Time, True Memoirs, Tales of Half Men and Other Poems (2014), You and Images, Collage of Life, Yayati Returns and Other Poems (2017), In Regions of Hope, And the Time Chases-Poems Personal and Impersonal (2018).

Keywords

Social, cultural and philosophical, Cultural, Terrorism, Politics and Religion.

Introduction :

Prem's poetry is full with the references of Indian Culture, Society and Politics. He portrays modern man's dilemma and the socio-cultural scene which is absent any and all moral, religious, cultural, and Socio-cultural scene which is devoid of all ethical, religious, social and cultural values. Man is a survivor of this society. Prem's poetry shows decadence in present day living and thinking style.

In-Depth Analysis :

Prem interprets the contemporary culture that has conceived an obvious deviation from an earlier time. The system is financially wasteful and politically anarchic. He presents the contemporary culture of Kailash in 'The Hands Unknown' (*The Bermuda Triangles* 224). In Kailash, masked men are seen spreading brutality and bloodshed: Here faces walk with jagged profiles where blood oozes out daily. ('The Hands Unknown', ll. 5-6)

These faces are of masked men who openly kill men on “streets, paths and in houses.” However, regardless of the slayings nobody grumbles, denounces, counters, or witnesses the killers: “nobody knows the hands unknown”. The observer portrays the age as anarchic, where innocent people are butchered in open spaces, and the killers get away from imprisonment, or any people of lawful discipline. It appears terrorism is replacing the dominant culture of humanism.

The critic projects his disturbance and doubt in the modern Indian form of governance. He portrays the system as spiritually scattered, untrustworthy, and torpid. ‘Puppies’ (*Rainbows at Sixty* 393) is a general scrutinize of bureaucratic operation and reasoning:

“Babus behave like puppies
And think not of dangers
But blink and sit, and drag
Lethargically pencils on the blue
papers” (ll. 393)

The image of “Puppies” denotes the unaccountability of the “babus”, or the administrators, who share no obligation for the security of the country. They ignore national threats like terrorism, naxalism, and corruption, and instead prefer leading an easy life. The critic is ironical of the disgraceful deeds of the bureaucrats:

“Commenting on nation’s pains
Jostling to make headlines in crowds
Of clowns and jesters in parallel
protests” (ll. 389).

These authorities, who are keen in public fame, minimize the hazards of the country and farce the dissent rallies. The narrator’s resentment at such pomposities is fittingly proposed through the signifi-

cation of “clowns and jesters”. As indicated by him these authorities are spinless, non-ethical and lack social, national and financial awareness. Accordingly, the persona unexpectedly remarks on the genuineness of the authorities as “babu’s intellect is for sale.” (l. 28)

Additionally, the men assigned to secure country by laying out strength are themselves unstable. One notices in ‘Foggy Equations’ (*Oracles of the Last Decade* 44) the political people switching from one party to another for personal gains, there is instability and reversal of fortune in the life of these leaders in the lines:

“father became a minister
by switching the party fourth time.
And was thrown out the next
morning” (ll. 23-24).

One even notices the loot of monetary assets in the democratic country. The persona is a common man, who is in accord with Althusser’s democratic views.

The man in ‘Image’ (*Rainbows at Sixty* 435) believes himself to be an onlooker of shared loot :

“It is a shared” loot, assured
From grass to gun and missiles
To flesh dead or living.” (ll. 5-8)

The whole monetary and HR are depleted productively by the rich, both in the private and the government sector. These men are debased to the degree of making the country empty. The loot is a “shared” one, including the support of practically every one of the authorities. Then, the “gun and missile” expresses the military loot. These people even perforate the country’s security by selling the ammunitions. In any case, the narrator considers

it an “interesting plundering” (l.8) since first, they guarantee legitimately the responsibility for antiques and the national heritages and afterward befool the locals by permitting them to use the assets with the payment of huge prices.

Poverty is the socio-economic inadequacy and challenge the country is confronting. We notice an incongruous reality where among the extravagant residences there are poor slums and kids who are denied of the basic necessities. In ‘*Children of Slums*’ (*Rainbows at Sixty* 466) Prem presents an authentic picture of the tattered slum children:

“On the slovenly crowded slums
Half – naked children in tattered
clothes (ll. 466)
....Sit on haunches
To piss and defecate howling at
Humming flies and mosquitoes
(ll. 4467)
.....Spending a full day in a queue
To earn a bowl of rice and milk”
(ll. 468)

In Prem poems, Indianness is evident at the semantic level too. In the expressions:

“Among fields and hills high
Songs of Panchvati
Reverberated with dances wild
In joy abandon of Leela’s
Lord Krishna enacted
Among Gopis ravishing and asking
Cobra to make umbrella” (‘*Father*’,
ll. 9-15, *Rainbows at Sixty*, 433)

The sentence structure is similar to the Hindi language where the continuous tense is used in running speech, Moreover,

the dramatic expressions as in “Lord Krishna enacted” is in compliance with the Hindi dramatic actions. An instance of semantic translation is visible in:

“At the colourful cluster of village
belles
Filling wrists with bangles brittle”
(‘*An Unknown Town*’, ll. 7-8,
Rainbows at Sixty, 438),
..... “cross- legged incense filled
temples
Sit before an idol of Goddess Ambika
To recreate history reduced to fragments”
(‘*Fort*’, ll. 23-25, *Rainbows at
Sixty*, 349)

So, it may be said that Prem’s Indianess is marked through his deep understanding and concern for the nation. The Indian past through the history and the way of life through the myths and philosophy is thoroughly communed by the poet. The consciousness of the socio-political and authoritative entanglements and the yearning of the poet for a preferably ideal state with the innovative and Indian use of the English language is suggestive of the poet’s spiritual or deep connection with the country that unwittingly peeps into his viewpoints and gets conveyed through poetry.

P.C.K. Prem, through his belief system, feeling, ethos and mentality molded by the Indian culture, society, religious texts and his creative imagination portray his rootedness to the soil. The poet paints Indian scene in variegated temperament and viewpoints. Prem approaches the river rationally about the river’s sacredness, Prem from the intellectual. In ‘*Thought*’ (*Among the Shadows* 475) the river’s:

“Immortality remains an enigma

Without a pole

To hold on for a direction.” (ll.14-16)

He advocates the dull routine existence of a person as an unending excursion like the destiny of Ganga, and the modern man needs to get through every one of the sufferings quietly.

Prem doesn't appear to be captivated by the scenic excellence of Nature, rather it is the complicated human instinct that the poet looks to grasp and disclose to the readers. Prem's pictures of the Indian scenes are a discourse on the contemporary world, delivering the changing tunes of the modern period. Prem considers the urban and city, the Indian culture being affected by the Global culture. Prem is fundamentally a poet of the urban landscape scene with a solid urban reasonableness. In 'Insurance' (Among the Shadows 6) he sees the feeling of spiritual quality of a human as:

“In this nuclear period

He ought to exclude ethics

and write a preamble

Affirming short cut

To prosperity” (ll. 22-26)

Additionally, the poetry of the poet cast a comparative stylish effect of resentment and contempt at the loss of values. The contempt is projected in the exhibition of hypocrisy at all levels.

The poet foregrounds his erudition in Indian myths, legends and philosophy. He opposes to the cogency missing in the philosophical ideas. Prem uses the myth in a post-modernist fashion; opposing the significance and the precision of these narratives. He regrets in 'The Bermuda

Triangles' (*The Bermuda Triangles* 251), “and so a modern man has mixed up myths/ancient roots when Agni carries ambrosia/and becomes Garuda and so a confused living/so many legends are created/where a man remains rootless and sad” (ll.24-28). Adopting them as metaphors, he relates them to the ongoing scenes. As a matter of fact, myth is contemporary to his poetry, they are mixed to a degree that mythical and sensible, or the past and the present become indistinguishable. In any case, the poet even regrets at the modern loss of the qualities and more prevalent in the iconic and mythical stories. In 'Dark Search' (*Among the Shadows* 36) he writes”

“It is a flashing location

On Mount Kailash

Where Ganesh protects Sati

When Shiva shows His anger

And opens the Third Eye

A sinister rise of passions

where incestuous relations come

And exist without an end” (ll. 72-79)

Prem presents Indian culture values, morals, and ethics. He remarks in 'Ghost' (*The Bermuda Triangles* 241) “This place remains/ deserted and pathetic/for here people run blindly and know no end” (ll.22-25) His poetry is a reaction of narrow mindedness. The society is an oppressed world, in this manner, be speaking the poet's yearning for the idealistic state.

Prem's argument is inner. Prem advances deliberately with the ideas, the considerations, and the all-inclusive human instinct. His poetry has large amounts of unexpected portrayal of the issues and the predicaments of an Indian.

Next to testing into the fundamental idea of the Indian brain, the philosophical part of presence as a result of the material communication is projected where in:

“With all the optimism
Men here moves to destroy
A bit of everything,
In bit and whole;
Of culture, of gentle ideas
Of spirit and intellect,
Or else allege a term
Of phony continuity”
(‘Crisis’, ll. 52-59, *Of This Age and Obscurity and Other Poems*).
The religious hypocrisy is marked in
In saffron with patches snaky
observes beauties of curves
and mumbles amorous words none
hears
in solemn shades of temples.
This pundit nurses many love scenes
with the damsels, and next moment
he looks at the huge statue of God
and sighs, groans and yet sings
rhymes of glory
with watery mouth.”

(‘Of This Time: Of this Priest’ ll. 61-71, *Of This Age and Obscurity and Other Poems*).

The poet is engaged with Bureau-cratic governance so he knows about the working of system. He uncovered and criticizes the follies of the system. The noteworthy realities are at times shocking, too as he avoid the ordinary individual’s perception of the best state. Prem at times to be obsessed with the system’s untrust-

worthiness implying towards his strong sense of grudge and disappointment with the political and the bureaucratic system consequently in his poems there is an interest for change.

In his poems one can investigate individual culture in the poem ‘Grave’:

Emotions grow old
With dreaming delusion
Catching up with the running
Of time,
In lengthened out shroud
And keeping the pace along the
course,
That is guiding man to moon
Spreading dirt and dust.
Grave’ (The Bermuda Triangles 231)

Prem explores the same ideas and thought process in the ‘A Self Song’: (*The Bermuda Triangles*)

Disturbing ‘the self’
And jotting down lines
Drawing patterns unrecognized
On a white paper,
To give substance
Seemed a task too arduous,
To be accomplished
By dissecting the man,
Within man,
When nobody would risk ‘the self’
To save eternal ‘the self’
But it will be a fight,
With eternity to claim eternity
By dismembering
A man in lines and words.

‘A Self Song’ (*The Bermuda Triangles* 250),

Another poem which explain the living style in 'I'm Living': (*The Bermuda Triangles*)

I turn back to deserted streets
And feel the air sweeping,
Human beings jostling
And crying with no demands.
It is a claim without voices
A voice without sound,
These sounds and voices
Form various words,
Words, a man never listens to
Because he knows not the import.

'I'm Living' (*The Bermuda Triangles* 254)

'Apparition' (*The Bermuda Triangles* 27) is about graceful creation. The persona, an imaginative poet claims: I captured the language of pen and sought to mix voice to inward strength. The poem *Ghost* explains the situation in a picaresque manner:

I arrested the language of pen
And aspired to infuse
Voice to inner strength,
And twirling in a doll house
Foraging and then caved in
To pray at dawn,
As languorous bodies with damp spirits
Revisiting ghost midst ash,
To reclaim a second living.

('Ghost', ll. 1-3, *The Bermuda Triangles* 241)

The poet affirms poetry to have been developed from his "inner strength", or the mind impacted by the socio-cultural,

religious, philosophical, political, moral, and historical struggle. In this way, writing for him is a conscious activity which includes self-examination. Additionally, "aspired to infuse" confirms art to be an achievement of elevated objectives since it not only captures the rare outer world, but also in addition bespeaks the conflict of human brain:

Disturbing 'the self'
And jotting down lines
Drawing patterns unrecognized
On a white paper,
To give substance
Seemed a task too arduous,
To be accomplished
By dissecting the man,
Within man,
When nobody would risk 'the self'
To save eternal 'the self'
But it will be a fight,
With eternity to claim eternity
By dismembering a man in lines and words.

'A Self Song' (*The Bermuda Triangles* 250)

In 'A Self Song' the poet struggles with his identity to understand and find the real essence of his self. Through art, he tries to outfit quintessence to the pointless world:

Upsetting oneself
And writing down the lines
Drawing designs unnoticed
On a white paper to give substance
Appeared to be an errand too
Strenuous to be in any way achieved

(*'A Self Song'*, ll. 1-7, *The Bermuda Triangles*)

Poet also explores the issues of terrorism, violence and war in his poetry properly. The society isn't just ethically and culturally corrupted, however there is likewise decimation, brutality and socio-political turmoil. According to Prem's persona in 'Paths': (*Rainbows at Sixty*)

It is victory of a timid man.
In awful times of death and terror
Inflicted by men around in shadows
And hands invisible."
(ll. 7-10)

In this era, it is not the brave and the noble who wins, but the "timid man". The timid leaders employ guile and force to ruin humans. The persona associates the time as the "awful times of death and terror". There is no peace, neither internal nor external. Moreover, they are "in shadows" with "hands invisible" since there is nobody to stop, punish or amend them, terrorism is explained as independence from concealment, which is additionally exploited by the leaders for their eternal reign.

Additionally, there is proper exploration of synthetic human emotions. Apart from political degeneration, we notice the society dwelling on pseudo feelings. In 'Rituals in Death' (*The Bermuda Triangles* 31) the circumstance is an unexpected end of a high profile man. The persona sees the cultural occasion for achieving the death rituals. He sees a man "Watching a man in tacit laugh/intense pains outpouring/ with a concealed hypocrisy" (ll.15-16) The "tacit laugh" uncovers the dishonest fellow, whose

distress isn't genuine but however ostentatious. It's an image of the present age where men are covetously anticipating legacy. Thus:

when obituaries spoken and rituals over with glycerined tears sighs and frozen cheeks that gleam and shine at a bank hefty balance too big to be told. ('Rituals in Death', ll.21-27) Emotions have been reduced to pretensions with "glycerined tears". This is a postmodern society esteeming solely materialistic gains. Today death is a mere ritual, practiced to save one's honour. Similarly, the persona, a critic renders his awareness and outlook of cultural behavior. He in 'Unending Task' (Enigmas of an Identity 24) unveils the fabrication of scriptures. ...old pages of documents ironically called scriptures of old sayings buried all over. Given new shapes and forms to make it commensurate with today's jugglery of make-belief life ('Unending Task', ll. 49-55, Enigmas of an Identity)

Prem in his presentation of the contemporary socio-economic, political, and cultural situation prophesizes the apocalypse which will be brought about by the atomic war and demolish the whole human civilization. Man needs to "fight a battle of survival." ('Negation', l.29, Oracles of the Last Decade) Prem claims the genuine contortion of truth to be universal. Truth embraces different understandings. Also, values are sufficiently adaptable to remain never-endingly in the condition of transition. He dislikes the holiness of the sacred scriptures, for they don't involve devout thoughts and beliefs, but are misreading of historic records that are given "new shapes and forms", so they relate in degree and worth with the present world. The poet considers this creation a

“jugglery of make-belief life”. As indicated by him values and religious confidence are controlled to suit one’s purpose and this life is a “farce” where there exists no reality, however cheat. Subsequently, men at present are having an empty life.

In this way, P.C.K Prem is a delicate poet who portrays culture and society in all its manifestations. His portrayals of metropolitan scenes have strength of expression. war, Scams, violence, dupery, realism, exploitation, poverty, and all remaining appearances of metropolitan life are portrayed with actual reality.

P.C.K. Prem has a social reason, to mix the cultural inner voice of the reader. The two of them express a specific reality, an individual vision. Prem’s poetry can be titled as social verse. Prem marks his identity by investigating within as an Insider as there is a sheer consciousness of the contemporary social realities and human predicaments. Prem voices the pain of the modern man finding some peace with the evolving socio-cultural moralities and particularly concerns himself with the hardships of the poor people who are hesitant to violate moral taboos.

Prem actually believes that poetry is written for a social reason. It is likewise voiced from the within, the internal strength of a poet. In ‘Monto’ (*Among the Shadows*) he thinks that writers:

“Poets are harbingers of a new order
Torch bearers of truth and beauty”
(ll. 324-325)
and therefore:
“A duty is enjoined upon
Those who write
Should speak of harmony and peace.”
(ll. 328-330).

In his another poem ‘This Town Breathes’ (*Oracles of the Last Decade*) Prem explains about the abnormal problems as:

“There is noise and drumming
in music and waltz
men search for harmony
and peace without identity
pace of growth remains
unidentified and from the top of
minarets
as muezzins profess a statue.”

(*Oracles of the Last Decade* 328)

In ‘Poem’ (*Oracles of the Last Decade* 328) Prem tries to reveal a poem as:

A dark night travels
between man and reality.
A journey uncertain
that a sleep undertakes
to measure night.
And a man
in fields un-chartered,
a mystery.

(‘Poem’, ll. 1-8, *Oracles of the Last Decade*)

Conclusion :

Prem portrays and rethinks socio-cultural happenings by insinuating myth. This permits him to connect the present with the mythic cognizance of the human mind. Since the myths guide and justify the human way of behaving, for Prem they act as an aesthetic means to explain and reproduce the individual experience and to capture the contemporary man’s reaction to the central inquiry of his time.

Accordingly, myth becomes the method of expression of the complex discussion of self and the world. For Prem myth and poetry are synonymous as the previous gives a fundamental framework to the later. However, the poet appears to denounce the sanctity of most of the Indian myths.

He believes that the feelings of love and love for nature are elementary basics for human aspirations. As poetic sensibility and intensity of experience overcome, cultural proclivity gets strength and it encourages a poet to delve deep into areas of history, religion and myths of humanity in diverse regions that stimulate passion and craze to fathom even unvisited locales that can be philosophical, spiritual and metaphysical. P.C.K Prem extends more variety to logical subjects as he absorbs his knowledge into his professional experience and pin his poetry by yielding poetry with the incidents of socio - political turmoil, violence, disparity, neediness and corruption. His viewpoint towards the subject of social evils offers an insightful debauchery and social evil. Prem is not simple onlookers of the society, but, rather is profoundly worried about the pitiable condition of human life. His cultural cognizance drives him to look for a harmony among the variant contradicting socio-cultural and natural forces. Therefore, he expresses his anxiety for the deteriorating society.

His poetry is full with the feeling of pessimistic, instigating distress, disappointment, and hostility, yet there lies an expectation for a difference in the social order. In this way it can be said that Prem's poetry is full of his personal and professional experiences. Both experiences provide him a clear thought process for writing poetry. His poetry is not for the sake of time filling but to guide people and mention them their mistakes which they are unknowingly creating and that impact can be seen in present scenario. Basic nature of human beings never changes and so the poets normally adhere to the social, cultural and religious regions of upbringing they inherit through parents, social milieu, relations, books or scriptural texts. So, Prem is realist in his presentation. He is also a true lover of Indian culture and way of living. His poetry is in suggesting and critical expression of his inner thought process.

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