

# Manipuri Literature: A Journey to Post-Independence Period

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## Abstract

The present Manipuri Literature, the so-called Post Independence Manipuri literature is the offspring of ancient or prehistoric Manipuri literature which has a long journey from oral to written form, i.e., from myths to scientific literature. In fact, the post-independence Manipuri literature, in its original theme, is ancient but has modern flavor. This paper presents a brief survey of Manipuri literature of both periods, namely, Pre- and Post-Independent Manipur. It is difficult to draw a distinct line between Pre- and Post- independence Manipuri literature. However, we can still characterize Post-Independence Manipuri literature in its own essence. The present paper presents a picture of the Post-independence Manipuri literature and its development.

## Introduction

Manipur is a beautiful state, which extends along the extreme Northeastern fringes of India, covering an area of 22,327 sq. km. Area-wise it is fourth among the North-Eastern states. Manipuri is also known as Meiteilon (language of the Meitei) since it is the native tongue of the Meitei. Manipuri is a member of the Kuki-Chin group of the Arakan-Burmese branch of the Tibeto-Burman sub-family of the Sino-Tibetan family of languages. Manipuri is the connecting link between the two important languages, i.e., Tibetan and Burmese. The Himalayan, Assamese (Indic language) and Naga groups of the Tibeto-Burman Sub-family, separate Manipuri in the North and North-East from the Tibetan.

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In the South and Southeast, there are Kuki-Chin and Kachin groups of the sub-family between the two sister languages, namely, Manipuri and Burmese. Nevertheless, Manipuri is intimately related to Burmese, Tibetan and in some ways to Chinese. We have to make a note of the fact that Manipuri and its three sister languages developed on parallel lines with their peculiar dialectal predispositions and often developed contradictory idiosyncrasies.

Historically, Manipuri society consisted of seven different clans, namely, Ningthouja/Mangang, Luwang, Khuman, Moirang, Angom, Chenglei and Khaba-Nganba, among which Ningthouja clan was the most powerful one from 33 A.D. when Pakhangba became the king of Meitei land and then the rest of the clans dissolved one by one into it through the ages by war or compromise. In due course of time, their dialects have also been coined into a common language, namely, the present Manipuri. Hence, in Manipuri literature we find various social themes with various vocabulary items.

### **Stages of Development**

Manipuri is the only language among the Tibeto-Burman languages of India, which has long and profound literature, and cultural heritage, which is more than two thousand years old. It is accepted that writing in Manipuri began by the middle of 7<sup>th</sup> to the beginning of the 8<sup>th</sup> century A.D. This argument is supported by the copper plate inscription of king Khongtekcha (Report on Archeological Studies in Manipur, Bulletin I. 1935) and by the bronze coin inscribing in Manipuri script of king Ura Konthouba's period (560-658 A.D.).

Manipuri literature, based on language and style, may broadly be divided into five categories as,

1. Pre History Literature, i.e., Oral form of literature before 8<sup>th</sup> century.
2. Old period Literature (8<sup>th</sup> century to 1074 AD).
3. The early medieval period literature (1074-1709 AD).

4. The late medieval period literature (1709-1819 AD).
5. The modern period literature (1819 till date)

### **Post-Independence Manipuri Literature**

The modern period of Manipuri literature started from 1819 AD and the literature of this period can be grouped into four subgroups based on the language used, style, and slightly variable themes.

- a) Prose/poetry written without using any foreign vocabulary
- b) Literary pieces written using foreign, archaic and modern words.
- c) Poems written using a language mixed with Bangla and Brajaboli and
- d) Prose/poetry written using a completely modern language.

During this time, Manipuri literature flourished and it was the time to sow the seeds of short stories, novels, dramas and poems on various themes. Textbooks were produced, and other books, journals and other periodicals began to appear. Tradition of drama also became more profound taking the theme of history, mythology, social and legendary stories. The prayer songs which already existed in Bengali got translated into Manipuri. Pioneer writers of Manipuri literature Kh.Chaoba, Dr. Kamal, H. Anganghal, H. Nabadwipchandra, and A. Darendrajit came up in a line. Then there was a short interim during World War II. After the war, literary work revived with new ideas. Literature of many diverse fields like – play, novel, poem, prose, history, translation, arts and crafts, began to emerge.

Literature goes on developing keeping pace with the changing society. The motto of sanctifying society through literature and society, in turn generates the need for literature.

### **Modernism in Manipuri Poetry**

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Modernism in Manipuri poetry emerged in the 1960s, novels came up with new challenges in the society. Feminist literature emerged in the 1970s. Notable writers of this time are – G.C. Tongbra, A. Minaketan, R.K. Shitaljit, M. Ramcharan, E. Nilakanta, R.K. Dorendra, N. Suhdir, E. Priyokumar, Birendrajit N, Memchoubi, Binapani, Sunita, and others.

### **An Appraisal**



MK Binodini 1922-2011

The literature of this time has varied themes like romanticism, modernism, contemporary topics in poetry and in prose. They dealt with experience showing the relationship of men and women, positive social values, problems of women, economy and differences between classes, degradation of traditional morality and rise of materialistic values, romanticism, etc. The language they use is purely modern in style. Some of the outstanding writers of the modern literature are Khwairakpam Chaoba Singh (1895-1950), Hijam Anganghal Singh (1892-1943); and Arambam Dorendrajit Singh (1907-1944) is another pioneer poet and dramatist whose works include three dramas,

*Moirang Thoibi, Bhagyachandra and Kaurav Parajay* and two epic poems, namely, *Kansa Badha* and *Subhadra Haran*.

L. Samarendra Singh (b.1928) is one of the forerunners of modern Manipuri poetry. He is renowned for his poetic collections *Wa Amata Hiage Telanga, Mamang Leikia Thambal Satle* and *Khun Amagi Wari*. H. Guno Singh (b.1927) is an acclaimed short-story writer in Manipuri. His important works include *Khudol, Langjin Mangkhrabi Kishi, Laman, Aroiba Paodam* and *Eikhoigi Tada*. He also translated Sukumar Sen's *History of Bengali Literature* into Manipuri. Pacha Meetei (1940-1990) set a new trend in Manipuri novel by introducing contemporary social problems in place of the romantic and passionate atmosphere prevalent in the Manipuri novel in the first half of the 20th century. He is acclaimed for his novel *Na Tathiba Ahal Ama*.



Kh. Chaoba Singh 1895-1950

## Poetry



Hijam Irabot 1896-1951

In the early decades of the 20th century, a band of educational patriotic writers heralded a renaissance in the arts and literature of Manipur. The period witnessed the birth of pioneers like Hijam Anganghal (1892-1943), Kh. Chaoba (1896-1950), Hijam Irabot (1896-1951), H. Nabadwipchandra (1897-1946), Ashangbam Minaketan Singh (1906-1995), Arambam Dorendrajit Singh (1907-1944), to name only few, who were the precursors of modern Manipuri literature in all its forms. Their works heralded the approach of modern Manipuri literature. Their writings made a rediscovery of Manipur's past glory, a new consciousness of the people, the richness of their language and also a taste of vernacular literature, which had been denied to them for number of years. They were the major writers who shed the luster of patriotism, national consciousness and reawakening and brought an efflorescence and lyrical outburst in modern Manipuri literature.



Khumanthem Prakash

After 1960, a new trend in theme, which is different from the earlier view of the pioneer poets, has inspired the society. Western view gradually enters into the minds of the younger poets which results in social change. The earlier religious themes have been replaced by the reality of modern thought. In a nut shell, the only voice of the people is that there is no meaning in life, no morality, gone are the beauties, the truth and honesty in human beings, all have gone. In the collection of poems titled 'Wa Amata Haige Telanga' (Lit. Kite, let me tell you a word) (1962) by L. Samarendra, we find the major changes even in the use of language. English words are coined with Manipuri; western technique, model and style of writing inspire his poetry. Fortunately, he could communicate with the native people. In 1966, Naharol Sahitya Premi published a book titled 'Lai Amagi Bindu,' a collection of twenty poems, which is in western style. This collection entirely deviated from Kamal and Chaoba's style. The western color and style are not matched with the feeling of the native. The same trend is always associated with the younger poets of the age. In the writings of modern poets, the theme and surroundings of industries, motorcar, nuclear power, killings, street fighting and struggle of evolution are favorably described. Unfortunately, these are absent in Kamal and Chaoba's work and contemporaries and the new approach is looked at as artificial because the readers cannot touch the emotion and sensibility of the description of industrial city. In 1969, Thangjam Ibopishak's '*Apaiba Leichil*' (lit. The wandering cloud) and Madhubir's '*Machu Machugi Atiya*' (Sky of different colours) were published. Western influence is lesser in Madhubir's poem.

However, Ibopishak's poetry is still in western color and style. In his poem, the cries of angry young men are seen. Madhubir's poem '*Kairaba Murti*' (lit. The broken idol) (1970) is also in western color. Shri Biren's '*Tollaba Sadugi Wakhal*' (lit. The thought of the helpless animal) (1970) is purely in western color and new experience. He tries to keep his distinct style and purely modern and western vision. He transforms the earlier vision into modern and mechanical life style.

A modern and western color poetry is the collection of Shri Nilakanta '*Chatlasine Kadaidano Ibani*' (lit. Let's go somewhere) (1971). This is the collection of old and modern visions; here lies the image of T. S. Eliot, Jibanand Das and Rabindranath Tagore. His writing is based on native themes. Sagolsem Dhabali's '*Sanarik Machu*' (1968), Kangjam Padma Kumar's '*Sandhyagi Isei*' (lit. The evening song) (1972), and Thiyam Ibohal and Thiyam Ratankumar's poems are revolutionary poems against the early traditional view, social beliefs and religion. There are many poems of the younger generation that are not named here. All in all, the poetry of post-independence era is a mixed variety of western color and Manipuri feelings. The concept is modern and dynamic, value-based with new spirit, new style and new theme.

The modernist poets who came after Nilakanta and Samarendra reveal their experience of modern sensibility of the changing society. After the war, there is a transition of the old aged traditional value and outside influence. These poets have sound knowledge of the transition. Therefore, their view and writings are sharp to give awareness to the masses. Their approach is profoundly modernist. They try to depict the experience of desperation, destitute conditions, frustration, and the downtrodden and helpless people of the society critically. These works include moral value, commitment and responsibility of humankind in a more realistic way. The poets march towards the theme of love, integration, and unity to bring a modern social value. The poets tempt to take the idea of western poets to bring the modernism in Manipuri society. Among the post independence poets, Shree Biren is the pioneer poet in this direction. His poems are rich in modern sensibility. He repents for not justifying what is truth in life. Life has no justice. In general, it is the human that neglects moral order. He blames god and seeks

freedom of the soul. Another two renowned poets Ibopishak and Ibomcha also try to depict the real sufferings of the modern society. Their idea is more subjective and more artistic. Ibomcha's poems are rich in expression of hopeless individualistic value and sorrowful lives. He tries to find the individual's identity. His idea is the reality of the present day life.

The idea of commonness in the modern generation poets is not trust but frustration, not aggression but the challenges faced. These writers paint the darkness in the world and focus on broken idols, but there is no end in sight for the fulfillment of their hope for a better future. They present a more artistic and more scholarly note. Sometimes it is found that expression is more experiential than artistic. However, it is true that the idea of repentance and support for the downtrodden are prominent.

A calm and serene mood, an embracing humanism, cosmic sympathy for all living objects, spirit of sacrifice, and distinctive traits of Vaishnava character found adequate expression in the poems of these pioneer poets. The great influence of World War II in Manipur (from 1942-45) had brought many changes in the socio-political life of the people. As a theater of war, Manipur witnessed the destructive potential of science and technology; the impact of materialism eroded people's faith in the traditional value of life and it gave way to anger, frustration and disillusionment. The poetry of the post-war period was dominated by two poets, viz., E. Nilakanta Singh and L. Samarendra Singh. These two poets were regarded as harbingers of modernity in Manipuri poetry. E. Nilakanta Singh (1927-2000) had published three collections of poetry: i) *Chatlasine Kadaidano Ibani* (lit. I wish, we two shall go somewhere) (1971), ii) *Tirtha Yatra* (1985), and iii) *Pukning Leikolgi Athuppa* (lit. The secret of the heart) (2000). And L. Somarendra Singh (b. 1915) is a well-known satirical poet. The works to his credit are: i) *Wa Amata Haige Telanga* (lit. Kite, let me tell you a word) (1962), ii) *Mamang Leikai Thambal Satle* (1974), iii) *Khul Amagi Wari* (lit. The story of a village) (1983), and iv) *Wakching Kavita*, (lit. The poetry of Wakching month).

After Nilakanta and Somarendra, a host of young poets arrived on the scene. Among them, the names of Shri Biren, Y. Ibomcha, and R.K. Madhubir are worthy to mention. Their poems present pictures of degradation, violence, moral bankruptcy, mechanical civilization and disintegrated values. They make bold experimentation of new forms. With the emergence of their poems, there is a break with the romantic or conventional poetry of the pre-war period.

Alongside of the above poets, there are a number of other poets who enrich the tradition of Manipuri poetry with many forms and style. Among them, the names of K.Padmakar, K.Ibohal Singh, Tokpam Ibomcha, Borkeinya, Ibempishak Devi, Kshetrimayum Subadani, Kiyamuddin Pukhrimaym, Sarat Arambam, Memchoubi, Lanchenba Meitei, L. Ibemhal, A. Minaketan, S. Nilabir Shatri, Kheiruddin Choudhury, S. Brojeshwar, Saheed Choudhury, Ak. Seram and Raghu Leishangthem may be mentioned. Among the youngest, Kshetri Rajen, and others may be mentioned.

## Novel

The novels of post-independence era mainly focus on the reality of life. The novelists paint the story based on the present social life and they look at the social themes more transparently. There are developments in all aspects: artistic expression, form in structure, and presentation. More focus is on the growing dissatisfaction with the value system and disagreement with the present social system. They give up sentimental and moralistic themes. The view of the novelists is more objective, deeper, and focused on social realism. In short, the novel has become the social document of the post-independence era. However, the sense of romanticism in the Manipuri novel is not fully gone from its theme. Hence, the product of post-independence era is a blend of romance and the reality of life.

Hijam Guno is a major novelist of the post-war period. His novels—*Khudol* (lit. Gift) (1964), *Aroiba Paodam* (lit. The last report) (1965), and *Laman* (Indebt) (1958) are popular for his romantic themes associated with the grim realities of life. In *Bir*

*Tikendrajit Road*, and *Ipam Meihoure*, he depicts the predicament of modern life, the complex human relationship and the degradation of moral values.

R.K.Shitaljit is an idealist. All his novels – *Ima* (Mother) (1947), *Thadokpa* (Sacrifice), *Rohini* (1948), and *Nungshi Wakheiba* show the value of chastity, noble-heartedness, sacrifice, etc. After Shitaljit, came Ram Singh Leitongbam with his *Jat Onba* (lit. Transformation of caste) (1954). He depicted the current and changing social practices. The boy and the girl in the novel belong to families that are not socially permitted to enter into marital relations. They flee to the hills where there is not such a social restriction. '*Khangani Poloida* (lit. The last one will speak) (1963) is another novel of Ram Singh.

Among the female writers, the names of Thoibi Devi, M.K. Binodini Devi, and Kh.Pramodini Devi may be mentioned. Thoibi Devi has written four novels *Kaina Echou* (1957), *Radha* (1965), *Nungshi Eechel* (1967), *Chingda Satpi Eengellei* (1979), *Lamja* (1979). She writes with simple diction; the plot and characterization of the novel are not complex. These novels deal mainly with the small and placid world of women. M.K. Binodini Devi is famous for her novel '*Bor Saheb Ongbi Sanatombi*' (1976). The novel depicts the splendour of the royal court, the cultural life of the people, the romantic life between Sanatombi and Mr. Maxwell, the first political Agent of Manipur, in beautiful prose. Kh. Ibohal, Th. Birchand, A. Chiteshwar Sharma, E. Sonamani, T. Ibomcha, Indrakumar Thiyam, etc. are some of the novelists who came on the scene dealing with many social problems.

With the coming of Pacha Meitei, a new trend in Manipuri novel has started. His novels— *Na Tathiba Ahal Ama*, *Imphal Amasung Magi Ising Nungsitki Phibam*, *Anouba Pao Ama*, *Pigi Wari*, *Lamdiam Asida Eibu Khangba Amatangdi Thorakpa Phei*, *Kalimai Mamangda Laibak Katpasu Yaowi Kattabasu Yaowi*, etc. are famous for exposing the decay and rottenness of contemporary society with bold experimentation in form, style and diction.

After Pacha Meitei, the names of B.M. Maisnamba, Arambam Biren, Kshetrimayam Subadani, Punyabati, R.K. Radhesana, M. Borkeina, E. Dinamani Singh may be mentioned. Many young novelists are also coming up.

### **Short Story**

The changing political image, economic development, living standard, modernization and the history of contemporary society evolved as the root of short story in Manipur. However, the idea of short story had been in practice during 1932-1941. The short story got its ultimate effective launching during 1946-1960; it got matured in 1960-70 and reached its important milestones from 1970. The writings are based on the theme of social reality; after independence the influence of social, economic and political life of the people were focused upon during the 1960s. All the short story writers approached dealt with common themes such as freedom, meaning of democracy, the futile hope of social life after the colonial rule, of the kings before that, and the British rule. In the 1960s discontent over the administration, social reformation, and economic instability had impacted the society. Keeping the social structure that was changing, the same which had earlier led to the weaker becoming downtrodden, as the central point, the writers marched towards social reformation. The varieties of themes, viz., degradation of moral value, advancement of materialistic life, expression of fear and anger and anxiety in the torrent of time, increase of corruption, loosening of the respect between male and female, deteriorating position of the common people are the popular subject matter of the post independence short story writers. Shree Biren, Kunjamohon, Prakash and Guno are the pioneer short story writers in this line. Kunjamohon depicts the loose moral value of women for money and power; *Wanomba* Prakash depicts the illicit relationship between a mother-in-law and son-in-law; *Manorama*, for the hope of a son, a woman has illicit relationship with a stranger; *Icha*, a woman having relationship with her husband's doctor friend, etc.

Kunjamohon depicts the destitute life of the poor and the down and out social class people living hopeless lives - *Ilisa Amagi Mahao* (lit. The taste of an Ilisa

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fish),(1973). After 1974, the writers have drawn closer towards western colour and style adopting the new technique of new trends in the short story like allegory, symbol, dream, fantasy, folk element and more of the philosophical and psychological view in their form and expression.



E. Dinamani

E. Dinamani started writing on the comic theme, an ironic impression of the present day society. He uses injustice as the present day symbol. Iboimcha depicts human relationship and the kinship terms as an artificial one (*Sunita and Menaka*; *Nong Ngankhridraba Ahing* (lit.The night never met daylight). Rajkumar Mani and Ranbir depict the difficulties and responsibility of mankind, and so on. After 1990 there is a major change, and the ideas of emancipation, self-respect, identity, and cultural identity have emerged. Tracing back their identity, the writers try to create a new history. They take more universal interest in metaphysical problems, intellectual isolation, etc. Yumlembam Iboimcha predicts the revolutionary feelings of the people, the sufferings of the common people as victims of society. He tries to pull the scenes of Vietnam and Bangladesh to Manipur society. Ch.Ningomba, Premchand and Priyokumar depict the restlessness amongst the youth and among the hill people due to their social and community clashes.

The modern period in Manipuri short story begins with the publication of some stories in the journals like '*Yakairol*' (1929), '*Lalit Manjuli Patrika*' (1933). However, this new genre has its firm foundation laid in the hands of R.K. Shitaljit Singh with his

collections of short stories, *Leikonnungda* (1946), *Leinungsi* (1946). The idealist R.K. Shitaljit Singh depicts in his stories the ideals of womanhood, sacrifice and love. Next comes R.K. Elangbam with the collections, *Chingya Tamya* (1955), *Yumgi Mou* (1958) in which he portrays the romantic aspect of feminine sentiments. Nevertheless, in his later collections of short stories, '*Leipaklei*', he depicts the despair and suffering of Manipuri women.

After the pioneering works of these two writers, a group of writers appeared on the scene in the 1960's. They are M.K. Binodini, N.Kunjamohan, Kh. Prakash, Shri Biren, H. Guno, E.Dinamani, Chitreshwar Sharma, Nilbir Shastri, etc. There is a strong release of Manipuri short stories in the 1960s. The works of these writers gave new color and direction to the Manipuri short story as a fully developed art form.

M.K. Binodini (*Nungairakta Chandramukhi*, 1965), N.Kunjamohan (*Chenkhidraba Ichel*, 1965, *Illisa Amagi Mahao*, 1973), Kh. Prakash (*Ichegi Sam*, 1965), Shri Biren (*Leichillakki Thaja*, 1967), H.Guno (*Phijang Marumda*, 1969), E. Dinamani (*Thaklabi*, 1970), Chitreshwar Sharma (*Ngasidi Lakle*, 1970), Nilbir Shastri (*Basanti Charang*, 1967), etc. are the impressive production of the time; these writers started to study social reality critically and depicted in their stories realistically the socio-economic-political issues of the day.

In 1974, a journal called '*Meirik*' was published by a group of storywriters. This group includes writers like Shri Biren, Ibomcha, Viramani, Priyokumar, Premchand, Kishorchand, Ibohanbi, and others. With a manifesto, they revolted against the exploitation of the people and depicted boldly the moral degradation, and many social ills using new idioms.

After the 1970's, number of young short story writers came on the scene and they started writing on the new themes like search for cultural identity, regional patriotism, ethnic issues, etc. Lanchenba Meitei (*Mikap Thokpada Manglaknaba*, 1989), Birendrajit Naorem (*Amambadasu Anganbadasu*, 1992), Memchoubi (*Leiteng*, 1992), A.

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Kholchandra (*Amamba Atiyagi Makhada*, 1995), are some of the writers (and works). Among the contemporary short story writers, the names of K.Priyokumar (*Nongdi Tarakkhidare*, 1995), L.Premchand (*Imagi Phanek Mchet*), L. Viramani (*Picnic Picnic*), Dr. Ch. Ningomba, Kshetrimayum Subadani, H. Satyabati, Dr. I.S.Kangjam, and N. Kunjamohan, may be mentioned.

### **Light Essay and Criticism**

Kh. Chaoba Singh is primarily a poet. He is regarded as the father of modern Manipuri essay (prose). The prose works of Chaoba include the following collections of essays -i) *Chhatra Macha* (1923), *Kannaba Wa* (1924), *Phidam* (1925), *Wakhal* (1926), *Wakhalgi Ichel* (1930), *Sahitya Ahanba* (1935). There are about twenty-four essays published in the journals. Chaoba was a teacher, a scholar and an analyst by the standards of his age. The depth and vastness of his knowledge and scholarship proved that he was an essayist and analyst of all times. His didactic, chiselled form and diction really bear the mark of excellence. His poetic vision and tender treatment naturally softens the generic harshness of critical renderings. Some of his serious essays include *Kavi*, *Kavi Amasung Kaviya*, *Khamba Thoibi*, *Wari Amasung Mahakavya*, etc. No doubt, Chaoba was a pioneer essayist and critic of modern Manipuri literature.



G.C. Tongbra

The famous dramatist G.C. Tongbra was also a well-known essayist of the post independence period. *Wareng Pareng* (a collection of essays, 1966), *Seireng Wareng Singju* (a collection of essays, 1967), *Leirammi Nok-wa Shannaba Nipa Ama* (a series of essays published in *Sahitya*), Prefaces, etc. are a well known collection of essays. His essays are characterised by *Nganggoi* - his humour, satire, light and crisp prose with

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devastating metaphors. A. Minaketan in his *Pareng* (1949), *Bharat Chanu* (1951), *Ramayangi Wari Khara*, (1955) have shown the beauty of Manipuri colloquial diction. E. Nilakanta Singh has brought out more than three collections of his essays — *Acaiba Lei* (1957), *Matamgi Wakhal* (1973), *Sanskritigi Saklon* (1998). He discussed various issues counting Manipuri literature and culture. Ch. Pishak Singh, H. Ranabir Singh, B. Manisana Sharma, R.K. Surendrajit, and L. Somarendra Singh are well known essayists of Manipur.

### **Criticism**

A. Minaketan Singh was the pioneer critic of Manipuri literature. His '*Meitei Upanyas*' published in 1950 was the first work in criticism, discussing the novels of Kamal, Chaoba, Shitaljit, and a translation work of Bankimchandra by M. Koireng Singh. In his impressionistic way, he attempted at the comparative study by these novels. E. Nilakanta Singh is both an essayist as well as a critic. His analysis of the contemporary Manipuri literature is noteworthy. As a critic, E. Dinamani Singh has published the following critical works — a) *Manipuri Sahitya Amasung Sahityakar* (1969), Khwairakpam Chaoba (1971), Dr. Kamal: *Punshi Amasung Sahitya* (1982), Anganghal: *Sahitya, Samaj Amadi Sanskriti* (1992). Dr. Baasi (I.R. Babu Singh) in his critical writings (*Krishnachuragi Angangba Mapal*, 1977), made a reappraisal of Dr. Kamal, and the modern novel. S. Brojeshwar's '*Anouba Manipuri Kavitagyi Shaklon*' (1983) gives a critical survey of Modern Manipuri poetry.

In due course of time, many critics have been appearing with their published works. Among them, the names of Ak. Sharma, Ch. Manihar, L. Damodar, N. Tombi Singh, Thokchom Jogendra, H. Gourdas, L. Joychandra, Shri Biren, I.S. Kangjam, N. Aruna Devi, and Th. Ibohanbi, may be mentioned.

### **Play**

The western proscenium theatre came to Manipur in the beginning of the 20th century. The first Bengali play, *Pravas Milan* was staged at the Babacharan Mukhopadhyay Bandhav Natyasala, which was run by the Bengali Babus at Babupara, Imphal. Many Bengali plays were staged in the first two decades of the century. Then came the first original play, *Nara Singh*, written by L.Ibungohal Singh and staged at the palace compound during the Durga Puja festival on September 30, 1925. It was a landmark in the history of Manipuri drama.

In the 1930's, many theatre houses were established - Manipur Dramatic Union (1931), The Aryan Theatre (1935), The Society Theatre (1937), etc. Then came a number of dramatists staging in these new theatre houses. The dramatists are S.Lalit Singh (*Sati Khongnang*, 1930, *Areppa Marup*, 1939), A.Dorendrajit Singh (*Moirang Thoibi*, 1935, *Bhagyachandra*, 1939), A. Minaketan, Singh (*Sita Banabas*, 1936), H.Anganghal Singh (*Poktabi*, 1935, *Ibemma*, 1936) and others. These plays were mostly historical and mythological in nature.

The Second World War reached Manipur in the year 1942. The war brought many changes in the economy and outlook of the people. There was a mushroom growth of playhouses in Manipur. Along with this, many native playwrights came up with plays on mythological, historical and social themes. Some playwrights explored the rich treasures of Manipuri folk culture and legends, out of which they wrote beautiful plays. H. Tomba Singh (*Tamna*, *Sayon Saphaba*, *Pidonnu*, *Thainagi Leirang*, *Sajik Thaba*), S. Bormani Singh (*Kege Lamja*, *Tonu Laijinglembi*, *Nura Santhalembi*, *Haorang Leisang Saphabi*) were two important playwrights using this new form of drama. These plays were very popular and gave a picture of the beauty and charm of ancient Manipur, adding native color and taste. Other playwrights like M. Birmangol Singh, L.Netrajit Singh also wrote plays of such kind. The themes of patriotism and revival of local faith were also very popular. M.Bira's *Tikendrajit* became a very popular drama of the period.

Quite different from this trend, G.C. Tongbra who was regarded as G.B.Shaw of Manipur came up on the scene. He wrote more than ninety plays during his life time.

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Some of his famous plays are - *Matric Pass* (1964), *Hingminnaba* (1961), *Hengni Khujai*, *Ngabong Khao*, and *Kakkharaba Kokyam*. His satirical and humourous plays deal with the problems of injustice; corrupt practices, the prevalence of bribery, exploitation of the weak and poor and other forms of misuse of power. He stood out as an undaunted revolutionary. He is indeed a phenomenon in the history of Manipuri drama. Maibam Ramcharan Singh has published more than eighteen plays of which mention may be made of the following few works — *Sarat Purnima* (1966), *Ningol* (1955), *Thadokpa* (1970). He deals mainly with family problems and human relationships in his plays.

Apart from these, there are few writers, who are actively involved in Manipuri theatre. They are H. Kanhailal, P.Shamu, A.Tomchou, and A. Somarendra. These writers felt the pulse of the changing society, the social reality, and the problems arising out of socio-political, economic and cultural contradictions. They started questioning the traditional value system and started a new trend of playwriting. Kanhailal's *Tarel Leima* (1967), *Tamna Lai* (1975) depict a realistic picture of a Brahmin family as well as the menace of goondaism in Manipur. A.Tomchou Singh takes up major problems in his plays. *Promotion* (1978), *Jali Mee* (1975), and *Nunghshiba Thiba* (1978), are some of the famous plays of A. Tomchou Singh. P.Shamu Singh (*Ayekpa Lai*, *Jagoi sabi*, *Atonbi* 1975) is a sensitive playwright, and he is searching for a new meaning of life. His endeavour is to search for the inner truth in order to redeem mankind from its tragic plight.

A. Somarendra Singh is one of the most famous playwrights in this new group. He writes in a realistic mode and tries to expose the problems of the present day society, specially the middle class. He writes to expose the sharp anomalies and inherent characteristic weaknesses of this class, their perpetual tendency to exploit the lower classes. Some of his popular plays are – *Judge Sahebki Eemung* (1973), *Karbar* (1976), *Dasha* (1978), *Tirtha Jatra* (1975), *Yening Thagi Isei*, *Sanatombi*, etc.

The other writers who emerged on the scene are K.Dhiren, Shri Biren, B.K.Wahengba, W.Kamini, Niladhawaja Khuman, Kh. Brajachand, Kh. Brojendra, Y.

Rajendra, etc. Among the female dramatists, the names of M.K. Binodini Devi, Kh. Pramodini Devi may be mentioned.

### **Autobiography**

A. Minaketan Singh is a pioneer writer in the field of autobiography writing. He has published two volumes i.e., '*Punshigi Saktam*' (1980, part I) and in 1983 (part II). The first part of the autobiography covers the period from 1906 (the birth of the writer) to the time he was 60 year old. It has 17 small chapters and 27 small poems. The first part (Volume I) describes his parentage, childhood, environment, etc.; the second part (Volume II) has eight chapters, 60 poems and covers his early education, later life etc. No doubt, his racy and poetic prose has its own charm and beauty. L. Ibungohal Singh has written '*Jivan Charit* (1975 ) - his autobiography in a different style from his creative works.

In the book, he depicted the pre-war Manipuri society, the experiences of education outside the state, etc. Dwijamani Dev Sharma's short autobiography '*Eigi Punshigi Wari Khara*' (1980) is a documentary account of the educational backwardness in Manipur and the hardships suffered by the people in the early decades of the twentieth century. A well-known novelist, A. Biren has brought out his autobiography entitled '*Ningshing Wari*' 1998 in which he recounts his experiences as a writer. The youngest writer is Babudhon Singh. In his autobiography, '*Eigi Punshi*' (2002), he narrates many interesting episodes of his life. Nongmaithem Pahari's '*Eigi Diarydagi*' (2002) is an account of the writer's experiences in the Imphal and Tripura jail.

### **Biography**

Kh. Pramodini is one of the pioneer writers of biography in Manipuri literature. The '*Nuja Phidam* (1957), '*Leimarol* (1958) contains the life-sketches of few renowned Indian and Manipuri women. A. Minaketan wrote some childrens' books namely '*Ramayangi Wari Khara*' (1952), '*Angangi Ramayana*' (1952), '*Ngangoi Pareng*', etc. in

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which the lives from the puranas have been portrayed. Ch. Pishak's '*Bharatki Sadhaksing*' (1966) is a biography of some great men of India. Chhatradhari Soyam and Langol Iboyaima have published biography on Jananeta Irabot, the legendary leader of Manipur who fought against British imperialism. L. Iboyaima's '*Irabot: Punshigi Shaktam Khara*' (1996) is a well-researched biography of Irabot. R.K. Sanahal's '*Bir Tikendrajit*' (1973) and '*Thangal General*' are two important biographies on two historical personalities of Manipur. The works are more historical than projecting the men. Dr. N. Tombi's '*Shaktam Macha Machasing*' (2001) is a collection of important profiles of Manipuri writers. He wrote '*Meitram Bira Singhi Punshi Wari*' (2000), a biography on the life of a well-known dramatist and director of Manipur. Shri B.S. Rajkumar also has published two biographies - 1) '*Guru Govind Singh*' (2000), 2) '*Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose*' (2002).

O. Shyamananda's book on '*Eina Khangba Madhumangol Sharma*' (2000) is a biography of a Manipuri politician who was killed in the prime of his life. Laishram Tarini Kanta is a biographer from Cachar, Sihar who published a biography on '*Yengkhom Kamal*' (2003), a social worker of the region.

### **Travelogue Resources**

Travelogue (travel literature) as a new genre in modern Manipuri literature appeared in 1937 when Hijam Irabot Singh wrote an article called '*Mandalegi Khongpham*' which was published in Manipuri Sahitya Parishad Patrika. It was an account of the journey on ship from Chittagong to Mandalay, Burma. The writer gave a vivid and firsthand experience of a journey in a beautiful language.

N. Kunjamohon Singh (*Sovietki Leibakta*, 1977), and (*G.D.R. Diary*, 1985), is a major writer in Manipuri travelogue. In the books, the writer describes in detail the historical and socio-economic conditions as well as the intimate encounters with the people of the places he visited. He praises the achievements of Soviet Union and G.D.R. in his books. Kh. Pramodini Devi in her '*Icrisatki Cooli Nupi*' (1991), '*Torbung gi Tera Pambida Shatpa Meibul*' (1993), '*Huntre Hunpham Manipur*' (2001), takes the readers to

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the different parts of India and Manipur. She narrates her experiences and the episodes in a simple language.

Now, the travelogue has become a popular genre. Many writers have come up with their new travelogues. Some well known writers are - Shoni (Manihar) ' (*Khongchat*',1999) and (*Thawanmichak*',2003); L.Somarendra Singh (*Swargada Awaba Amasung Nungaiba*, 1999); E. Nilakanta Singh (*Americaga Unaba*, 2001); Ibotombi (*Baikal*, 1977); Panthoiba (*Imphaldagi Kanyakumari*, 1994), (*Bangladesh Khongchat*, 1994), (*Gujarat Khongchat*, 1994); Dr.Ch Jamini Devi (*Swargagi Leibaktuda*, 1994), (*Korouhanbana Ironnungdagi Khongdoirakpa Lamdamduda*, 1998), (*Americagi Khongchat*, 2001), (*Kohinoorgi Mashaigonda*, 2000); Saratchand Thiyam (*Hajillaba Isinggi Manakta*,1994), (*Nungshibi Greece*,2002); L. Ibomcha ( *Chatsi Puri*,1995); J.K. Luwang ( *Pullambagi Mahao*,1998); O.Shyamanada Singh (*Tlomngainagi Lamdam: Mizoram*,2000); Ch.Somarendra ( *Numitna Thorakpa Japan Urubada*,2001); Memchoubi (*Eropagi Mapao*,2001); Bimol Chongtham ( *Tripura Lamnungshi*,2001), M.K. Binodini Devi ( *Oh! Mexico*, 2004), and Dr. Th. Ibohanbi (*Bangabondhugi Leipakta*).

## **Female Poets and Literary Criticism**

### a) History:

In the 1980's, many women writers emerged on the scene, of which there are many women, who oppose the social system and are on the way to finding out a new way, and another group of women who became aware of the negative impact of being submissive to the patriarchal society. Still another group of women writers agrees with the traditional value system; they are neutral and they find peace in their own life. Despite their desire to cross social barriers, the first group of women writers, are unable to stand on a steady footing. Therefore, they stick to the idea of sacrificing themselves for the society. Notable writers of this age are – Thoibi Devi, Subadani, Rajkumari Radhesana, Punyabati, Hemolata, and others. Then appears the second group of writers, describing a traditional phenomenon with a new vision and a new consciousness of their

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lives existing under a patriarchal morality. They wish for a revolution of women. Writers of this tradition include Borkeinya, Subadani, Ibemhal, Satyabati, Rashi, and others.

b) Movements:

The numbers of female poets or female writers as compared to male writers or poets are comparatively less. This is because in the early days before the 1960s, women in Manipuri society were hardly allowed to have school education. Those women who were educated were generally considered as polluted. Due to this reason, elders did not send their daughters or female members to school. After the 60s, people gradually understood the importance of women's education. Therefore, with the coming of a new vision, the seed was sown for the rise of women writers and poets. The real feminist literature in Manipur started with the coming of Jannaneta Hijam Irabot (1896-1951), G.C.Tongbra (1913-1996) and Memchoubi and others.

All these writers in one way or the other, encouraged many other women writers to show their talents, which resulted in the appearance of women writers and poets of substance. Many women writers or poets of the new age come up with their different views according to their experiences, or look into the inner and outer world of women's lives. Some of them need to be mentioned here.

Haobam Nalini, her love of God, depicting the theme of life and death as the main subjects of her poetry; Nalini mentions God in most of her poems. She has a strong feeling of patriotism as well. There are five poems entitled Nupi (woman) written by Ibemhal, Bimabati, Hemolata, Nima and Urmila. Other poems, which reflect women's conditions, are Ibeyaima's *Meitei Nupi*, Landanbala's *Ima*, Mangalliema's *Nupigi Mapok*, Borkanya's *Malika* and Memchoubi's *Eigi Palem Nungshibi*. Thoibi Devi and Khwairakpam Anandini's poems commemorate the Nupilal (Women's War) in the history of Manipur. Pramodini, Leingaklembi, Memchoubi, Rani, Sapam Bijaya, Sumila Asem and Nungshitombi write patriotic poems. The post war conditions and situations of Manipur are reflected vividly in the poem *Mareibak Ningbadi Makhoini* by W.

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Kolamema. Vanumati's poem which follows the theme of revolution. There are other women poets, who write their poems with the revolutionary spirit. Benubala writes satirical poems. Themes of death and loss of justice are apparent in the poems of Ekasini. Nevertheless, her poems are lacking in seriousness. Chandrakala writes seriously but the standard of her poems is not high. Nanda Devi appeals to women to be courageous. M Borkanya's poems have the special womanly quality and innocence.

### **Feminist Literature Resources**

Feminism started in the West in and around the 1960's and then spread very quickly in other parts of the world. Many Manipuri male writers, no doubt sympathize with the movement; they visualize women as ideal and worthy to be given favour in facing the odds of life in a society. Manipuri women from the time of ancient myths have occupied a distinct place. Mention may be made of Panthoibi (the goddess of power, knowledge), Phouwoibi (the goddess of food grain), Leima Namun Khambi (the one who took revenge to her husband's murderer), Thoibi (the one who even challenged her father, the king's brother). All these characters have a trait of bravery, which is distinct.

The history of Manipuri novels indicates that women were important and they were the centres of the novels. Out of three novels of pre-World War II, two are titled with the names of the heroines. However, what they portrayed is the women of the upper class, of high esteem, tradition-bound and are living within the accepted norms of society. Jannaneta Irabot, in the early part of the 20th century, stepped forward to emancipate women. Post-war novelists like Shitaljit Guno portray women as ideal characters who could face social challenges.

The next phase of feminism in Manipuri literature starts with the emergence of three women writers of profound influence, Thoibi Devi (1920-96), Khaidem Pramodini (1928-), and Maharajkumari Binodini (1922-). Thoibi Devi's novels portray women of almost perfect personality, mixed with traditional values and the educated, rational viewpoint, the women who could object to the social norms and dare to go their ways, the

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women who could dedicate themselves in the cause of humanity. Binodini's novels and short stories are full of sobriety mixed with hilarity, which could charm the readers. She, in her Sahitya Academy Award winning novel, portrays a woman who could break the social, religious, and class barriers, to handle the unpredictable with an unusually independent mind. Pramodini took interest in the social condition of women. She could not bear the pulse of the weak women; she gave a message to oppressed womenfolk to rise and lead a respectable life.

## Conclusion

The flavor of post-independent Manipuri literature, in a real sense is the essence of early Manipuri literature which has many qualities of ancient myths and folk tales. In the later stages, from time to time, the influence of existing life styles, changing social strata and other un-definable reasons exalt it, especially with its peculiar model. No doubt, there are lots of influences of other Indian literature like Sanskrit, Bangla, Hindi and so on in Manipuri literature. This article narrates briefly, how the post-Independence Manipuri literature flourished and what kind of motivation moved and inspired those writers.

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## Attempting to Construct 'Voice' Diaspora Experiences in *Tales from Firozsha Baag*

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### Focus of This Paper

This paper examines the problem of isolation and involvement while looking at man's hopelessness, him being unable to find a meaning in life due to his rootless existence. Human feelings, ideas, passions, experiences, joys, sorrows, aspirations and struggles in life form the basis of all arts and particularly, of literary art. All the literatures of the world are the outpourings of the innermost feelings of creative writers. The various commonwealth countries had easily adapted to novel writing with its comparative flexibility and variability. It has become a vehicle for the expression of their native ethos. Every novel might be said to rest upon a certain view of the world and to present a general philosophy of life. The novel is the most influential and the most widely practiced of the prose genres. It first emerged in 18<sup>th</sup> century England as a product of the middle class. The 'novel' as a literary form is one of the most notable gifts of Britishers to India.

### The Problem of Individual Identity

The problem of individual identity has a complexity in its different manifestations. Psychologists and philosophers have all discussed the predicament of modern life and man, finding in both traits of deep-rooted anxiety, alienation and absurdity. People's international connections have rendered them rootless. One of the facets of a rootless existence is self-isolation which in its turn is related to the loss of identity and its quest to get out of the crisis.

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Isolation from the self is the basic form of human predicament. This is not only a sociological, but also a psychological problem of contemporary man and modern life.

### **Rohinton Mistry and Diaspora Experience**

Rohinton Mistry, an Indian of Parsi origin residing in Canada is a writer of the Indian diaspora. Diasporic existence results in loneliness and a sense of exile often leading to severe identity crisis. He records this bitter experience in his fiction. Nilufer Bharucha has explored the multiple aspects of Mistry's works: his search for identity, his need for roots, the desire for location in history. Parsis in India feel insecure, experience identity crisis and feel threatened by possible submersion into the Hindu culture. The Parsi people, a minority group, has found the economy and the living conditions in India not favourable to them. So they migrate to other countries thinking that their new country would be more favourable to them. This sudden emigration to an alien land leads to identity crisis. Neither have they had their former identity, nor do they have a new one. Mistry himself had left for Canada seeking good fortune.

Savita Goel comments on this:

As a Parsi and then as an immigrant in Canada, he (Mistry) sees himself as a symbol of double displacement and this sense of double displacement is a recurrent theme in his literary works. His historical situation involves construction of a new identity in the nation to which he has emigrated and a complex relationship with the political and cultural history of the nation he has left behind. (119)

### ***Tales from Firozsha Baag***

Rohinton's *Tales from Firozsha Baag* is a book of eleven inter-related short stories. It deals with the Parsi residents in an apartment complex 'Firozsha Baag' in Mumbai. Mistry narrates the day – to –day joys and sorrows, trials and tribulations of the Parsis. The three short stories of Rohinton Mistry, namely, 'Squatters', 'Lend Me Your Light' and 'Swimming Lessons' sharply focus on the identity crisis of the Parsi.

### **Emotional and Cultural Conflicts**

The stories show the emotional and cultural conflicts in the minds of the characters. His focus is on the internal conflict of the characters which may be the result of cultural, spiritual and psychological crisis undergone by the characters. His fiction includes race, gender and class and the main themes are the social issues such as poverty, violence and family disintegration. He also emphasizes human isolation, alienation and personal trauma that arises out of male-female relationship and individual conflicts with social institutions. His main concerns here are the declining Parsi population, late marriages, inter-caste marriages, urbanization, alienation, modernist as well as traditionalistic attitude towards their religion.

### **Identity Crisis and Multiculturalism**

Rohinton's main focus is on the identity crisis faced by the Parsi characters as they feel threatened in the land to which they have emigrated. The inhabitants of Firozsha Baag are mostly Parsis and they constitute a tiny minority in a multi-cultural country like India. Mistry portrays the Parsis' search for their identity in the lands to which they had emigrated. This situation is well revealed in the short story 'Squatter'. This story illustrates that names represent different cultures in the same way as toilet habits do. The central character Sarosh is an emigrant in Canada. He changes his name to Sid. Sarosh's attempts to give up his own identity result in alienation and displacement. Renaming himself and his failure to defecate like a westerner, prevent him from obtaining a successful identity as a Canadian. His story is a story of a man who has lost his identity in a new land. He does not want to become adapted to the new identity. But he wants to become assimilated to it. So he changes his name to Sid. Assimilation becomes irrelevant in multi-cultural Canada. Multi-culturalism does not demand Sarosh to erase his old identity. To become a Canadian, assimilation is not necessary. He could have preserved his cultural difference and would have fully qualified to have a Canadian identity by being the way he had been.

### **Squatter**

'Squatter' tells the story of a character who attempts to erase his Indian identity. Nandini Bhautoo-Dewnarain critically evaluates the story as a critique of post-independence Indians and the process of 'othering'. She remarks:

The story of Sarosh's evacuation problems in his host country is deliberately absurd and is meant to be read against the numerous narratives of immigration of a factual, official and fictional nature. (14)

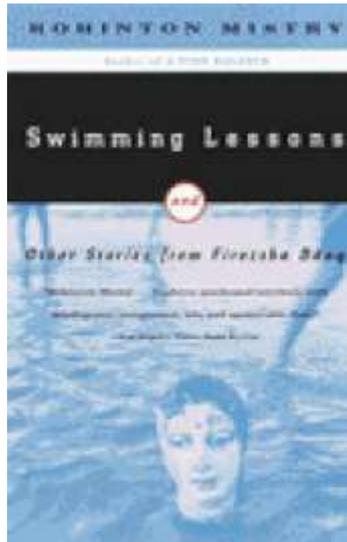
### **Lend Me Your Light**

The story "Lend Me Your Light" considers in depth the question of the ethnic identity of immigrants. It is prefixed with an epigraph from Tagore and compares three attitudes to the Old and New worlds through the characters of Jamshed, who immigrates to America and despises everything Indian, Percy Boyce, who leaves Bombay to work for the uplift of farmers in rural India, and Kersi, his brother, who has chosen to immigrate to Canada but can sympathise with his brother's choice as well. Jamshed remains a haughty snob, bemoaning the fact that *jhatis* voice was flooding all India institutions; while Kersi feels ashamed of the word *jhati* "oozing the stench of bigotry" while "consigned a whole race to the mute role of coolie and menials, forever "unredeemable" (164).

### **Life in Little India**

This last question seems to be one that Mistry, an immigrant, asks himself. Kersi writes to Jamshed, describing that segment of Toronto known as Little India, without confessing that the place left him "feeling extremely ill at ease and ashamed, wondering why all this did not make me feel homesick (181). The three of them meet again at Kersi's parent's flat; Jamshed and Kersi, home on a visit, and Percy, home unexpectedly, following the murder of his friend and fellow social worker at the hands of moneylenders from whom they had been trying to save the farmers. They discover that they have nothing really to say to each other. On his return to Toronto, Kersi is aghast at discovering that his visit had not helped him to sort out the basic values, which sustained him as an immigrant.

### **Swimming Lessons – Abundant Cultural Signs in a Foreign Land**



The final story in the collection, “Swimming Lessons”, which is structurally the most complex of the stories, portrays Kersi as having taken yet another step in the process of adaptation, without losing his roots, because, as Margaret Atwood puts it, “Refusing to acknowledge where you come from is an act of amputation you may become . . . a citizen of the world . . . but only at the cost of arms, legs or heart” (113).

Kersi attempts to yoke the realities of existence in Bombay and Toronto and discover the true essence of human existence, which is the same everywhere, beneath superficial differences of colour, race and nationality. Kersi while working as a clerk in the insurance company, enrolls himself for swimming lessons in the high school behind his apartment. The Chowpatty Beach near his house in Bombay is too dirty to arouse such passion in him.

The disposal of coconuts and clay gods and goddesses by the Hindus, ashes of the sacred sandalwood fire and the leftovers of the dead men by the Parsis in the sea reflects the Indian cultural practices and the squalid sea water contrasts the clear blue water of the high school swimming pool in Toronto. The women he sees sunbathing from his upper floor window, upon closer inspection, turn out to be rather unattractive with “wrinkled skin, ageing hands, sagging bottoms, varicose veins. The lustrous trick of sun and lotion and distance has ended” (233). This is as true of the lust of the West as it is of these sunbathing women. The next disillusionment for the immigrant comes when the woman in the swimming pool reveals her pubic hair only to hide them during subsequent encounters.

### **Symbols of Life**

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The swimming pool and the eponymous swimming lessons provide Mistry with the opportunity to elaborate upon water as the symbol of life. Water is here the primal amniotic fluid, the medium in which Kersi is finally reborn into his new life. The failure to learn swimming in Canada is linked to earlier inability to master the sea on the Chowpatty Beach in Bombay. These failures could symbolize the failure of Kersi, and through him most Parsis, to assimilate either Indian or Western Diasporas. However, by the end of the story, Kersi is able to open his eyes underwater in his bathtub and see life in a double perspective Indian and Western.

Though Kersi rejects the squalor of Bombay, which he views symbolically through dark glasses as he boards the plane to Canada, full of glorious dreams about a rosy-tinted life there, his subsequent nostalgia for Bombay, his family and friends, seems to be Mistry's own. He struggled to come to terms with his cultural heritage, even as he attempts to adapt to his environment.

### **Parsi Coloring**

Rohinton Mistry uses a number of Parsi terms in every story and refers profusely to Parsi customs, beliefs, superstitions and religious rituals. As Uma Parameswaran points out, "Mistry has bolstered the India-in-Canada reality by confidently using Parsi words without either glossary or textual explanations such as resorted to by earlier writers of Commonwealth Literature" (21).

One finds a skilful portrayal of this yearning backward and a looking forward in Mistry's fiction. His writing is governed by the experience of being a Parsi, a diasporic minority community in India, and the predicament of being an immigrant in Canada.

In *Tales from Firozsha Baag*, Rohinton creates a fictional Parsi en-clave, Firozsha Baag, in metropolitan Bombay. With richness of detail and subtle irony, he evokes a Parsi world – with its customs and traditions, conventions and food habits. With deftness, he displays the Parsi mentality of remaining confined to themselves, and with wit and humour, their erotic, cultural, as well as scatological details. The stories are disparate, and yet interwoven. They share the same Parsi locale and mood, yet each distinctly unfolds different aspects of Parsi specificity.

At one level, the author describes the experience of being a Parsi in India, and on another level, he deals with the class hierarchies, patriarchal power and other patterns of empowerment within this Parsi world.

### **New Homeland in the Backdrop of Firozsha Baag**

From Firozsha Baag, Mistry takes us to his new homeland, Canada, in “Squatter”. The protagonist of this story is shown as facing the problem of adjusting himself to the Western-style toilets and thereby undergoes severe mental agony because of it. “Lend Me Your Light” relates the story of two immigrants, Kersi who relinquishes his dream to return to his homeland and settles down as a young writer, and the other, Sarosh who fails to fit in the Canadian multicultural mosaic and takes his final flight to India. The last tale, “Swimming Lessons”, gives us the most enthralling picture of the predicament of an immigrant in Canada. Despite Canada’s policy of promoting multiculturalism, the racism rife in Canada is brought to the fore through Kersi’s experience at the swimming classes. As Kersi narrates:

As I enter the showers three young boys, probably from a previous class, emerge. One of them holds his nose. The second begins to hum, under his breath : Paki, smell like curry.

The third says to the first two: pretty soon all the water’s going to taste of curry. They leave. (238)

Elsewhere, he feels that the “swimming pool is the hangout of some racist group, bent on eliminating all non-white swimmers, to keep their waters pure and their white sisters unogled”. In an interview with Dagmar Novak, Mistry says that although multiculturalism is supposed to promote peace and harmony, it fails to do so.

### **Looking Back at the Home Land from Different Angles**

Mistry’s emigrant experiences make him think of his own native land from different angles. As a creative writer, his expatriate experience leads him to compare India and Canada. Like his characters he too emigrated to Canada in order to earn money and lead a prosperous life. The alienation he feels in the new land and his attachment to the homeland

often come in conflict with each other. As he experiences a sense of alienation, he wishes to come back to India and rejoin his community. He compares his native land with a multi-cultural nation like Canada.

### **Centuries-old Parsi Loyalty**

Most Parsi writers who have emigrated to other countries focus on identity crisis as a principal theme. There is a sense of loss and a feeling of nostalgia in them. The rootlessness, insecurity and adverse financial conditions are the factors that place the emigrants in the three short stories in *Tales from Firozsha Baag* under pressure. The absence of a sense of home creates anger and resentment in the migrants.

Rohinton Mistry, therefore, successfully evokes a sense of loss and nostalgia in the immigrant's experience and the alienation of Parsis in India. Through the characters' sufferings Mistry portrays the progress of meaningless protagonists attached only by their own self towards a realization of humanity and responsibility.

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Attempting to Construct 'Voice' - Diaspora Experiences in *Tales from Firozsha Baag*

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# A Study of Humour through Words and Ideas in the Select Works of R. K. Narayan

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## Humour through Words

Language has a vast potential for comic possibilities. Humour arising out of words, or rather from the incongruity of words and speech, is probably the earliest and the most primitive form of humour conveyed in language, apart from pantomime, gesture and action. R. K. Narayan has used different techniques to produce verbal humour arising out of jokes, jests, exaggeration, under statement and also by the clever use of language in various ways.

## Reciprocal Interference

Bergson observes that “repetition, inversion and reciprocal interference of series are methods of light comedy” (117). These methods can be applied to a series of words, events or actions. Repetition means repeats of certain words for its humorous effects. Inversion is the least interesting device and it means putting a subject in the place of an object. Narayan does not make use of this technique. Bergson explains how “the reciprocal interference of two sets of ideas in the same sentence is an inexhaustible source of amusing varieties” (138).

There are many ways of bringing about this interference, such as bracketing in the same expression two independent meanings that apparently tally. In pun, for example, the same sentence appears to offer two independent meanings, but it is only an appearance: in reality there are two different sentences, made up of different words, claiming to be one and the same because both have the same sound. The true play upon words is different from pun. In this instance, there is only one sentence through which two different sets of ideas are expressed. Here the advantage is taken of the different meanings a word may have, especially when used figuratively instead of literally.

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## Alliteration

Alliteration means the reappearance of the same letter used as a means of emphasis or of amusement. Narayan does not indulge in verbal tricks like repetition, alliteration, pun, bad spelling and grammar. In the earlier works like Swami and Friends (1935) one can occasionally come across queer expressions and comparisons like “Fire-eyed Vedanayagam” (3) or “Mighty Good – For – Nothing” (8). He uses exaggeration when he describes Shanker:

There was a belief among a section of the boys  
that if only he started cross examining the teachers  
the teachers would be nowhere.... He knew all  
the rivers, mountains and countries in the world.  
He could repeat History in his sleep. Grammar  
was child’s play to him (8-9).

When the teacher asks Swaminathan what he knew about the Indian Climate, he curtly replies: “It’s hot in summer and cold in winter” (16). When Shanker asks ‘the pea’, “What is a Tail?”, he replies, “A long thing that attaches itself to an ass or a dog” (31). When Swami receives his first shock in his life, when he learns that he is nicknamed “Rajam’s Tail”, his reaction is described with mock-heroic seriousness. At home Swami spends his time sitting on the Pyol and “vacantly gazing into the dark intricacies of the gutter that adorned Vinayaka Mudali Street” (Swami, 32). The description of the paper boat floating through the gutter with an ant in it shows Narayan’s ability for minute observation and description of every simple act. It gives the feeling of a big boat floating through a swift and turbulent river. Finally a thick dry leaf from a tree fell down and upset it:

Swaminathan ran frantically to the spot to see if he could  
save at least the ant. He peered long into the water, but there  
was no sign of the ant. The boat and its cargo were wrecked  
beyond recovery. He took a pinch of earth, uttered a prayer  
for the soul of the ant, and dropped it into the gutter. (Swami ,33).

## Mischief and Fun

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Swami and Friends is full of mischief and fun. Swami mews like a cat and Mani barks like a dog while entering Rajam's room. Sitting on the last bench Swami and his friends pass bits of paper such as "Are you a man?" or "You are the son of a dog if you don't answer this"(16). When the teacher asks Swaminathan to stand upon the bench as a punishment, his eyes fell on the little heads below which he classified according to the types and colours of the caps they wore. When Somu and Mani were fighting in the field, somebody reported the matter to the Principal that "in the adjacent field two murders were being committed at that very moment" (41).

### **Repetition of Words for Humorous Effect**

Similarly Narayan repeats certain words for its humorous effect. "If Mani jabbed, Rajam jabbed: If Mani clouted, he clouted: If Mani kicked, he kicked" (14). In The English Teacher Principal Brown summons his staff and informs them of an English Honours boy who did not know that "honours" had to be spelt with a "u". Sometimes the ignorance of children leads to their deceptions. Swami and his friends do not understand words like "obliged" and "remit" which they find in the letter by M/s. Binns, Sportsmen from Madras. They think that the letter was sent to them by mistake, and so they send it back.

### **Humour in the Opening Page of the Novel**

As in Swami and Friends so also in The Bachelor of Arts we get verbal humour in the opening page of the novel:

Chandran was just climbing the steps of the College Union when Natesan, the secretary, sprang on him and said, "You are just the person I was looking for. You remember your old promise?"

"No," said Chandran promptly, to be on the safe side. "You promised that I could count on you for a debate any time I was hard pressed for a speaker. You must help me now. I can't get a Prime Mover for the debate to-morrow evening. The subject is that in the opinion of this house historians should be slaughtered first. You are the Prime Mover. At five to-morrow evening". He tried to be off, but Chandran caught his hand and held him: 'I am a history student. I can't move the subject. What a subject! My professor will eat me up'".

“Don’t worry. I won’t invite your professor.”

“But why not some other subject?”

“We can’t change the Union Calendar now.”

Chandran pleaded, “Any other day, any other subject.”

“Impossible”, said the secretary, and shook himself free.

“At least make me the Prime Opposer,” pleaded Chandran.

“You are a brilliant Mover. The notices will be out in an hour. To-morrow evening at five...” (1).

Chandran did move the proposition and ‘felt he was already a remarkable orator’. Here in this extract we have an insight into Narayan’s characteristic handling of his material: The right man for the wrong thing and vice versa; and the man’s awareness of his self-importance and the attempt to be equal to the task despite the incongruity, for such is his craze for personal distinction.

### **Humour through Deflation**

There is another verbal humour arises through the deflation of the professor Raghavachar. Chandran cuts professor to size- a size with which the student feels quite comfortable. It is this which makes survival possible for Narayan’s heroes: the illusion of their own loftiness coupled with a healthy disrespect for others, teachers not excepted. At first he felt nervous when he went to see the professor. He suddenly pulled himself up,

Why this cowardice? Why should he be afraid of Raghavachar or anybody? Human being to human being. Remove these spectacles, the turban, and the long coat and let Raghavachar appear only in loin-cloth and Mr.Raghavachar would lose three quarters of his appearance. Where was the sense of feeling nervous before a pair of spectacles, a turban and a black long coat? (26).

In the last sentence of the passage quoted above we get an instance of Narayan’s wit, clever use of language which amuses and delights.

### **Humour in Tragedy and Pathos**

The English Teacher is over-flooded with tragedy and pathos but Narayan has restrained his sense of verbal humour in different situations and characters. Mr. Brown, the principal of Albert Mission College leavens his sermon with humour “It would be a serious enough blunder even from a mathematics honours man” (6). Krishna and his colleagues were talking on the spelling of the word ‘honours’ but Gopal, the teacher of Mathematics, did not seem to be agreeing with them. Narayan makes fun of Gopal, “His precise, literal brain refused to move where it had no concrete facts or figures to grip. Symbols, if they entered his brain at all, entered only as mathematical symbols” (8).

### **Solemnity and Humour**

When Krishna returned to his hostel room, he found two letters. There was a pale blue envelope from his wife. He humorously explains his wife’s letter as, “I knew the pale blue envelope from my wife who was in the habit of underlining the town three times, she seemed to be always anxious lest the letter should go off to some other town” (17). Susila in the early years of her married life, she used to read out her stanzas from the poems and she would laugh at everything. Even the most solemn poem would provoke her, especially such poems as were addressed by a lover. “My true love hath my heart and I have his”. She would laugh till she became red in the face. “Why can’t each keep his own or her own heart instead of this exchange?” she then searched all Krishna’s pockets saying, “In case you should take away mine” (43).

### **Sarcasm and Humour**

On the third birthday of Leela, Krishna and Susila went to a restaurant. Susila was so much pleased with the marble walls that she ran her fingers over them. She told Krishna that she would like to have tile walls in her house. She was a bit discouraged when Krishna told that in civilized cities marble tiles were used only in bathrooms. Later, when in order to please her, he says generously that he will have coloured marbles fitted along the walls of her room, she quips: “So that you may call it the bathroom” (60). Mr.Sastri, a colleague of Krishna arranged a house with the help of the contractor. “The contractor commanded the boy, “Are all the house open?” ‘Yes master’, ‘Don’t say ‘yes’! Keep them open he said, ‘Yes, master’ he said?” (58).

### **Human Foibles, Eccentricity and Humour**

Krishna with the help of his student went to see a rented house. Krishna liked one house at first sight. After seeing the house, Krishna decided to engage a friendly conversation with the owner of the house but he owner did not want it. “He had his pocket filled with fried nuts, and was ceaselessly transferring them to his mouth” (25). When Krishna checking out the hostel room, Singaram joined with him in packing up and loading his things. He walked behind the creaking cart and warned the driver: “When you unload, remove the trunk first and the table last. If I hear that you have been broken any leg, I will break your hear” (27).

### **Seizing Every Opportunity for Humour**

Susila is hospitalized because of typhoid. Even though the atmosphere is pathetic, Narayan cannot stay away from humour. The way in which the pain travels is humorous here: “Last night, the other began and gave a long-winded account of a pain in the back of the head, which traveled all the way down to his ankle and went up again” (73). The humorous episode narrated by the Doctor to Susila who laughs so much that her sides begin to ache: “He then narrated his experience of a home, ... where a daughter-in-law fell ill and was in bed for two weeks or so, and put on weight. Her husband came to him privately and said, ‘Doctor, please keep her in bed for a fortnight more. It is almost her only chance of being free from the harassment of her mother-in-law” (76). In his later works Narayan does not very much depend on verbal effects for humour. It can be seen that Narayan uses a very simple, prosaic style and there are no “tricks and turns”, and other artifices of words that produce verbal humour.

### **Wit and Humour**

“Wit” and “Humour” are always taken to mean the same thing. Wit is basically playing with ideas. William Hazlitt describes wit as an arbitrary juxtaposition of dissonant ideas for some lively purpose of assimilation or contrast, generally both. It has also been described as ‘contrast of ideas’, ‘sense in nonsense’ and ‘confusion and cleverness’. George Eliot calls wit “reasoning raised to a higher plane” (218). Leacock defines wit “as being an expression of humour involving an unexpected play upon words... There could not be real wit without humour” (HH, 57). The essence of wit is a quick pounce on similarity. The witty comment will often consist of an amusing comparison of two things that normally would not be thought of as similar. Though wit

is often based on similarities between things, it can take other forms as well. Sometimes witty comments achieve its effect by looking at a situation from an incongruous point of view. To understand the comment we have to shift to that point of view from the ordinary one: doing so amuses us and we express our amusement in laughter. In written humour there is always some word or phrase in which the whole matter of the joke is fused and from which its power radiates. Humour always operates on a dual principle of an ambiguity, and a contrast or incongruity between appearance and reality.

Hazlitt considers wit essentially as a species of the ludicrous. Leigh Hunt included wit and humour as two species of the laughable, even though laughter need not result from both. According to him humour deals in incongruities of character and circumstances, as wit does in those of arbitrary ideas (10). It has been said that brevity is the soul of wit. Wit thus being brief expresses itself by leaving things unsaid. Thus wit unearths something hidden and concealed. Because of its keener edge and effective stroke, wit has often been associated with satire and sadism; humour is related to depression, narcissism and masochism” (Gortjahn, 33). Narayan does not make use of the ‘tricks and turns’ of words to produce humour, but there are indeed very mild and subtle verbal effects in his early works and some of the stories.

### **Humour through Ideas – Incongruity of Ideas**

Incongruity of ideas is a very fertile source of humour which may be expressed without any special departures in the use of the single words. Hence the two run close together. Narayan delighted in the expression of humour through ideas. Even though he laughs at or points out the discrepancies, disorders and oddities in human society, his humour is not essentially satirical. His satire is mild and gentle and does not go to the extent of attack or ridicule.

### **Transposing**

According to Bergson, “a comic effect is always obtainable by transposing the natural expression of an idea into another key” (140). The means of transposition are so many and varied that the comic here is capable of passing through a number of stages from the most insipid buffoonery to the loftiest forms of humour and irony. For example, if the solemn is transposed into the familiar, the result is parody. Similarly inverse transposition may be even more comic.

According to Bergson the most common contrast is between the real and the ideal, between what is and what ought to be. He further argues that here again transposition may take place in either direction:

Sometimes we state what ought to be done and pretend to believe that this is just what is actually being done: then we have irony. Sometimes, on the contrary, we describe with scrupulous minuteness what is being done, and pretend to believe that this is just what ought to be done: such is often the method of humour. Humour, thus defined, is the counterpart of irony. Both are forms of satire, but irony is oratorical in nature, whilst humour partakes of the scientific. (142-43).

### **Humour in Narayan's Sketches and Essays**

Narayan delighted in the expression of humour through ideas which can be found in his essays and sketches. Even though he has not written parodies and burlesques like the western writers, Narayan always tried to write discursive essays. As he himself says:

I have always been drawn to the personal essay in which you could see something of the author himself apart from the theme... The personal essay was enjoyable because it had the writer's likes, dislikes, and his observations, always with a special flavour of humour, sympathy, aversion, style, charm, even oddity... the mood may be somber, hilarious or satirical and the theme may range from what the author notices from his window, to what he sees in his waste-paper basket, to a world cataclysm. (A writer's , 8)

Next Sunday (1956) and Reluctant Guru (1974) are collection of essays and sketches which Narayan contributed to the Sunday edition of "The Hindu", a Madras daily. Selections from these books and later essays are put together in A Writer's Nightmare (1989) and A Story Teller's World (1989). Inspired by modern English essayists like Robert Lynd, E.V. Lucas and a host of others, these essays cover a wide variety of interesting contemporary topics.

Next Sunday, a collection of fifty-five essays and sketches, reveals Narayan's personality as a humorist in the essayistic mode. It covers a wide variety of topics such as red-tapism and bureaucracy, education, leisure, marriage, parenthood, humour, wit and various forms of human oddities and contradictions. In the title essay, which is placed towards the end of the book, Narayan reflects on the anticipated freedom and leisure of Sunday and its overcrowded schedule, and finally postpones a particular work to the next Sunday. "Government Music" is a satire on Indian bureaucracy and the government's enthusiasm for nationalizing everything. "When music came to be nationalized the director-general of music will say in his administration report: During the period under review two hundred thousand hours of vocal and sixteen hundred hours of instrumental music were provided for a total audience of 1,25,000..."(11).

### **Poking Fun at the Original Constitutional Provision to Retain English for Only 15 Years**

Narayan has repeatedly written about the importance of English language in the Indian subcontinent where each state has a different language. "Fifteen Years" is a very interesting argument between the English language and the Indian judge who, though he speaks very good English, is out to banish "the language of those who were our political oppressors". The English language pleads on the ground that it has been here for two hundred years and that the red tape, parliament and courts still continue to use it and the criminal and civil procedure codes are still in English. The judge finally rules that English is going to be deported. "The utmost we shall allow you will be another fifteen years..." The English language asks, "Fifteen years from what time?" The judge felt so confused that he allowed no more discussion on this subject and rose for the day (16-17).

### **Humour in Allergy**

"Allergy" is a playful exercise of pure wit. Narayan begins with a brief account of the good old medical system where the doctor wrote with one hand, while feeling the pulse of the patients with the other, and "the compounder in the adjacent room issued ready-made mixtures out of gigantic bottles and placed his stamp on the prescriptions with an air of dismissing sickness for ever" (28). Narayan mocks at the modern craze for new scientific terminologies. About 'allergy' he observes that in the course of one week he heard four different doctors mentioning 'allergy' under four different conditions. People suffering from rashes, cough, high

fever, and even those feeling fidgety are all said to be allergic. It has become “a very generous and compendious word meaning anything” (30). Narayan concludes the essay by saying that “it will be possible to say some day, pointing at a passing funeral, “That man is not dead, but is only allergic to life” (30).

### **Humour Out of Politics**

“Two-way Democracy” is a plea to call back or “de-elect” unwanted or erring politicians already elected. In the essay “On knowledge” the paradox is very clear. Just as a little knowledge is a dangerous thing, so too are much knowledge and unnecessary knowledge. “The test of a man’s worth will ultimately have to be not how much he knows, but how much he has avoided knowing” (100).

### **Humour in Foreign Lands**

“A Writer’s Nightmare” is a humorous nightmare account of how Narayan found himself in a strange country called Xanadu, where the government had to start a new department called the controller of stories. The government explained the matter thus: “Through an error in our Government printing section, five tons of forms intended for the controller of ‘stores’ were printed controller of ‘stories’, an unwanted ‘i’ having crept into the text” (124). Since the stationery was inadvertently ready, the government was obliged to find a use for all this printed stuff by starting a department of stories. The rest of the essay deals with the explanation given by the minister at the parliament about the working of this new department.

### **Making Fun of the Varieties of English**

Reluctant Guru, which contains forty essays, is further testimony to Narayan’s ability to write engagingly on any relevant topic. Narayan himself is the reluctant guru, reluctant to play the all-knowing mystic before a group of students and the faculty of a mid-western university. “My Educational Outlook” is a satire on the Indian system of examinations and the secrecy attached to examinations. In “Toasted English”, Narayan makes fun of American English. “Murder for Pleasure” is a thought-provoking study in which he wonders how a detective story, which begins with a murder, and a tragedy which concludes with a killing, can be a source of pleasure. “Taxing Thoughts” is a hilarious account of the government’s policy of taxation. While

the citizen hates all associations with tax, Narayan fears that the tax authorities may tax even walking and breathing. For Narayan 'culture' is a trouble-free word that came handy to politician, scholar, dreamer and the wind bag alike. A Professor started off his lecture with "Culture may be divided into agriculture, horticulture, apiculture, sericulture, pisciculture, and of course you must have heard of cultured pearls" (65).

### **Non-sense Humour**

Narayan at times shows a tendency to indulge in nonsense humour. In the modern big cities children have no idea where the milk at home comes from—may be from the milk shops or milk cans. Whatever be the topic Narayan writes—on music, colour, weather, noise, cast—system, brain—drain or election games—his genial humour and good sense make them quite readable and enjoyable. "Elephant in the Pit" is a moving account of elephant—hunting and how the villagers capture an elephant. He falls into the pit, but dies. It is indeed a touching account and shows Narayan's capacity for pathos. As a keen and critical observer of life, Narayan shows genuine flashes of humour and wit and most of the pieces have a touch of Bacon or Addison.

### **Fantasy and Humour**

"Sorry-No Room" in A Writer's Nightmare is an interesting fantasy in which a soul reaches the portals of heaven "far ahead of his time". He explains to the guard in a humorous way how he happened to be there. But the guard directs "him to the gates of hell where admission is more difficult than at other places. The standards here are much stricter, being reserved for VIPs from the world of politics, diplomacy and business. When asked how they are chastised and chastened, the guard explains:

That's only a formality here. Not for them the vigours. Although they are put through all that in a routine manner, the purging of sins is gradual and in agreeable doses. We apply a system called "Tempered Torment", "Cold Branding", and "Cushioned Flogging"—but all that is a formal procedure once a day. On the whole they are at peace with themselves and do not want a change. (163).

The guard assures to put him on the waiting list, for sometimes a vacancy occurs through a freak cancellation or absence. He asks the soul to go back to earth or "float around the galaxies

or better still get on to one of those satellites and you'll be near enough earth too, and may be you could also communicate with your kith and kin" (163).

### **Argument and Humour in Self-Protection**

"Love and Lovers" is an imaginary conversation with a professor who finds fault with Narayan's use of love and sex in his works. In "History is a Delicate Subject", he pleads for proper judgment in history. While he recommends that birthdays of the living be overlooked, he advocates total abolition of the birthdays of those who are no longer with us: "The two-hundredth birth anniversary of someone who died a hundred years ago is an impossible concept. One is either living or dead, can't be both. It is illogical to perform a Memorial service to someone and follow it later with a birthday celebration of the same person" (189).

### **Respect and Humour for Pick-Pockets**

Narayan has certain respect for pick-pockets. Once a pick-pocket restores his favourite parker pen. One thing he admires in them is that they are gentle and non-violent. His delicate skill and sensitive fingers could be put to better use. "His genius for painless extraction must be utilized, his presence or pressure is no more than that of a butterfly flitting past" (192). "Misguided Guide" is an account of how the producer and director of The Guide spoiled all the artistic values of the book and even shifted the locale Malgudi to some North Indian town where the customs, tone and culture are entirely different. Here Narayan describes his bitter experiences with the film world.

### **British and American Contrasts**

Narayan speaks about colonial India and imperial England, and the wide chasm that existed between the two. Two centuries of colonial rule changed the very socio-political life of the country—the creation of "Brown sahibs", the civil service cadre, British superiority and racial segregation, mission work and conversion, British educational system etc. are some of the aspects that Narayan talks about. He also mentions the British planter who loved to live here and died leaving behind their fortunes to Indian beneficiaries. In "India and America", Narayan talks about the spread of American influence after the Second World War; grants, fellowships, technical training and cultural exchanges. While the English man was content to isolate himself

as ruler and keeper of law and order, leaving Indians alone to their religion and ancient activities, the American chose to live like Indian, tasted Indian food, wore Indian dress and tried to understand everything about Indian life. Narayan himself was one of the beneficiaries, and was awarded a Rockefeller grant which enabled him to visit America. The rest of the essay deals with and account of his American experiences and concludes with the hope that though entirely different in attitude and philosophy, they could complement each other's values.

### **Age No Barrier for Wit and Humour**

Published in 1993, Salt and Sawdust is a delightful new collection of stories and essays which shows Narayan's sparkling wit and humour even at his old age. In addition to short stories, this book has a section called "Table Talk" which according to Narayan is a new form of writing: "Table Talk unlike an essay could come to life without too definite a form, on any theme, a few lines without the compulsion of an argument conclusion, stimulated by a passing scene or mood, or a wisp of an idea floating down from somewhere and vanishing the same way" (vii).

### **Looking at the World with a Heart of Humour**

Writing in this vein, Narayan gives humorous pieces on, among other things, language, personalities, travel and government. In the first piece entitled "Table Talk", Narayan mocks at the government's policy of 'force-feeding' Hindi through "profound and prolonged interviews", features and other programmes for five hours at a stretch. South Indians neither understand nor appreciate Hindi. Even when the English news comes up, the news readers look dull and monotonous. They are "in a hurry to reach the last line of the script within the allotted time, and grin with unconcealed relief, only when they say 'Good-night'" (74).

Narayan suggests English subtitles and summaries for all Hindi programmes, and as a reciprocal courtesy North Indian stations should telecast national programmes in southern languages and thereby achieve national integration. "Permitted Laughter" reminds one of the horrors of emergency clamped during 1975. "Reflections on Frankfurt" is a humorous account of what went on in a book fair at Frankfurt. Narayan also heard rumours that he was to be awarded the Nobel prize that year, that is, 1986. But to his relief it did not happen so. Narayan does not

like public attention, greetings and felicitations. In a serio-comic manner he describes the arguments one might have heard from the committee room before the decision on 16 October.

### **Directory of Enemies More Important than a Directory of National Heroes**

In “The Enemies” Narayan thinks that instead of compiling a long list of our national heroes, why not compile a directory of enemies of society. “This enemy does not rob or shoot, but invents something which causes damage and destruction, unintentional though” (129). The man who first got the idea of polishing floor tiles, the man who invented air horn, young man who pull out the silencer from their motorcycles etc. must go into the black list. “Korean Grass” is a very funny and satirical account of a minister’s enthusiasm to undertake a ‘foreign tour’ on some silly pretext or other like studying about the cultivation of Korean nation, with limitless pasture, providing milk for the millions (164). The minister wants his daughter and son-in-law also to accompany him as he is not allowed to travel alone after his last operation. “Minister without Portfolio” describes how the Prime Minister rejected the minister’s proposals for the foreign tour and asked him to concentrate on the problems of his constituency and strengthen the party there. A few days later the minister comes across a newspaper report that at the Bangalore zoo a little girl, who was watching the animals, was mauled by a tiger. The minister soon orders his secretary for a first hand report, but later found out that it was all an exaggeration. Any way he decides to go to Bangalore and orders his secretary to find out if an Air Force plane will be available to fly to Bangalore airport and a helicopter from the airport to the zoo, which will also enable him to have a survey of the flood-affected areas and assess the relief measures needed. His dreams extend to a visit to Africa at a later date to study the precautions at safaris in Kenya.

### **Talkative Humour –The Judge**

“The Judge” is a humorous narrative by the Talkative Man who describes his experiences as a judge when he had to pronounce his judgment over a baffling murder case. At last he went to the temple at Tirupati Hills to pray and seek guidance of the Lord. While he was praying, his spectacles were snatched away by a monkey. When he got another pair of glasses after a couple of days, he ordered the immediate release of all the seven accused. The Talkative Man says: “I viewed the monkey as a bearer of diving message in response to my prayer” (183-184). Some one from the audience asked him how and when he was a judge. He replied by quoting Falstaff.

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A Study of Humour through Words and Ideas in the Select Works of R. K. Narayan

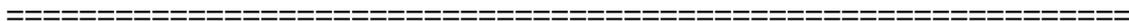
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“No...if reasons were as plenty as black berries I would give no man a reason upon compulsion (184).

### **Insightful Humour in Lively Prose**

Narayan thus writes essays, sketches, skits and light commentaries on contemporary matters very much in the line of A.G. Gardiner and Robert Lynd. Very often he uses polite and euphemistic words to describe a mean act. He also assumes mock-heroic seriousness to describe simple matters as when he gives elaborate details about making coffee-the quality of milk, water, coffee powder and various other factors. He also makes his observation on the right temperature at which coffee must be sipped. This section, which deals with the coffee temperature, he calls it “Thermodynamics of coffee” (STW, 45). In his introduction to A Story Teller’s World, Syd Harrex observes that Narayan’s short essays reflect the milieu of the early 1950’s and his “non-fictional prose is most lively and rewarding when applied fiction techniques shape the writing, and when perspectives of humour mellow the author’s opinions just as they irradiate most of his novels and short stories with the wisdom of comedy”. (xii).

It can be seen that Narayan has the humane and sympathetic outlook on life and he points out the frivolities and shortcomings with an amused tolerance and indulgence. He uses mild satire and poke fun at almost every fad of his days. Narayan excels in epigrammatic statements and his conversation is indulged in as a social pleasantry.



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# An Analysis of the Themes of Death, Decline and Disappointment in Philip Larkin's Poetry

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Courtesy: <http://www.philiplarkin.com/statue.htm>

## Introduction

Philip Larkin (1922-1985), a noted British poet, novelist and critic was born in Coventry, England, and educated at the University of Oxford. He treats the modern English setting in a withdrawn and non-sentimental manner. As a matter of fact, the very non-sentimental approach has been the hallmark of his poetry. Throughout his poetic career, his bleak outlook on human life has been an essence of his poetic stance. Human life and its predicament and the

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disappointment and disillusionment have been the recurring motifs of his poetry. Moreover, Larkin's agnostic approach has played a pivotal role in shaping his personality and poetry simultaneously.

### **Larkin's Agnostic Approach**

The age of Larkin was an age of disaster and chaos on a social and moral level all over the world. The flames of Second World War were still burning in the late nineteen-fifties and there was a decline in the values cherished by societies. People had seen much destruction in the wake of first and second world wars and they had started raising questions about the existence of God. That was a scenario where Philip Larkin was born and brought up. No wonder he gives the runaround to God, religion and religious creeds. In spite of this non-sentimental and agnostic approach, he has earned a reputation of a great poet of his time as he deals with the stark and harsh realities of his time with great realism. In fact, it is his non-romantic approach towards the precarious conditions of life that has given his poetry a long lasting popularity. As a poet, he has a great command over his emotions that doesn't let him romanticize human life in any capacity and enables him to capture the chaos and decline of human life on social and religious levels.

### **The Religious, Social and Political Context of Larkin's Poetry**

Larkin was not a prolific writer and he published just four major collections of his poetry, which he did so with long intervals. But even with this limited writing legacy, he has been successful in leaving an indelible mark on his poetic era. His first collection 'The North Ship' was published in 1945; 'The Less Deceived' in 1955; 'The Whitsun Weddings' in 1964 and 'The High Windows' in 1974. From the very first to the last collection, a sense of alienation, detachment and disappointment prevails very strongly.

### ***Church Going***

Larkin has composed his poetry in the context of his temperament and of his personal views on life, religion, and religious dogmas. He shares his thoughts about God, religion and the existing scenario of religious beliefs of different classes of society in one of his poems, 'Church Going' in a realistic manner. His poem 'Church Going' chronicles the account of that time, when

people had become suspicious of the existence of God and religion. Larkin's sarcasm is seen from the very first line of the poem,

Once I am sure there's nothing going on  
I step inside, letting the door thud shut.  
Another church: matting, seats, and stone,  
And little books, sprawlings of flowers, cut  
For Sunday, brownish now; some brass and stuff  
Up at the holy end; the small neat organ;  
And a tense, musty, unignorable silence,  
Brewed God knows how long. Hatless, I take off  
My cycle-clips in awkward reverence,

On a surface level, this poem makes fun of the church going tradition, but on a deeper level, Larkin points out the dilapidation of a church, as people's religious credibility also was a victim of dilapidation. There was a time of general decline in the attendance of churches as churches were no longer able to attract all people towards religion.

### **Impact of Social and Political Atmosphere**

Deep and profound is the influence of the social and political atmosphere of his time on Larkin's poetry. Larkin's realistic approach towards his time makes him write what he has written. We can see the true portrait of the post-war England in Larkin's collection of poetry, or it can be said that his poetry is greatly reinforced by the cataclysmic scenario of post-war England.

#### ***Grass***

Larkin's poem 'At Grass' is one of his great poems, where Larkin describes the situation symbolically and connects his main theme with the current awkward situation of the post-war England. The retirement of some horses from the horse-race and their idle life after the retirement symbolized Britain's loss of power and glory. Critics have rated this poem as one the most popular poems of post-war Britain. This poem expresses much more in a sympathetic way

to convey the elegiac mood of that time, when Britain was facing the aftermath of the Second World War.

‘At Grass’, is according to an eminent critic, “an essentially English poem. Its Englishness is to be found not merely in its memories of ‘cups and stakes and handicaps’, but also in the modified mood of the pastoral convention.” (Chapter 2, Page 7)

This poem is enriched with eighteenth century pastoral convention and the elegiac tone simultaneously as the poem asks the wistful question.

“Do memories plague their ears like flies”?

### **Differences of Class and Culture in Larkin’s Poems**

Larkin’s poetry is filled with themes and images portraying the changed social climate of his era. Besides giving plenty of space to his pessimistic and agnostic approach, he delineates a crystal clear picture of his society where the differences of class and culture emerge from the advancement of the industrial revolution.

The volume ‘The Whitsun Weddings’ (1964) reflects the circumstances, in the late nineteen-fifties, when class and culture conflicts were coming into vogue. In this perspective, Larkin couldn’t keep himself detached from the changing atmosphere. His poem ‘Here’ points out the change in the life style of people, who were gradually getting attracted towards the material comforts of life, to the exclusion of the finer things of life. We come across the following lines in ‘Here’.

‘Cheap suits, red kitchen-ware, sharp shoes, iced lollies, electric mixers, toasters, washers, driers’

#### ***Mr. Bleany***

The same scenario runs through another one of his famous poems, ‘Mr. Bleany’, where he presents the sketch of a person, named Bleany, who is leading a sub-standard life in his apartment. Mr. Bleany is a lonely person, isolated from others; there is nothing neither charming

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nor attractive in his life and in his apartment. Apparently, this poem tells the story of Mr. Bleany, a very boring person. But Larkin describes very realistically the truth of our social life, wherein a person's character is judged by his style of living. There are no digressions or superfluities in the poem, but just a character-portrait with a spontaneous flow of thought, very vividly rendered.

### **Pessimism in *Afternoons***

Another poem 'Afternoons' from this volume has been written with the same approach, which records the changing social and cultural climate of the late 1950's and early 1960's in an extraordinary way. The climate is depicted by the references to the 'new re-creation ground, to husbands in skilled trades, to an estate full of washing, to the albums lettered 'Our Wedding' lying near the television'.

These phrases undoubtedly indicate the changes, which had begun to take place in the social life of England at the time this poem was written. The pessimism of this poem is obvious as the young couple in this poem find that something is pushing them to the side of their own lives.

One thing is very certain that Larkin's poetry is encompassed with the same kind of dissatisfaction, which goes parallel even in his poems where he writes about the social and cultural changes. This dissatisfaction is part and parcel of Larkin's poetic ability so much so that he does only portray the inability and incapacity of human life that seem inevitable to human existence.

### **The Inevitability of Death for All Classes of Society**

Larkin's poetry is greatly overwhelmed by one single thought and that is death, which eventually leads the human mind to decline and deprivation. In this case, critics are unanimous in calling him, 'the saddest heart of the post-war super market'. His pessimistic approach is deeply rooted in the isolation, alienation, and predicament of human life that he saw around him. He does not describe directly the massacre and destruction of the Second World War, which played

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havoc with human beings, but he crafts his poems in such a way that the pain, suffering and helplessness of a man can be felt in the face of these destructive forces. Larkin has been at his best with this single theme of death, which he considers the ultimate destruction for all classes of society, regardless of age, race, sex, color, and religion.

### ***Nothing to be Said***

Larkin's poem 'Nothing to be Said' implies that life at all levels and for every single person is ultimately the same, because all life inevitably ends in death. "From this point of view, the lives of 'cobble-close families in mill-towns' are really not different from the lives of the 'nomads among stones' or from those of 'small-saturated tribes'". (Chapter 2, Page 13) The stubborn and straight fact of death seems to darken every aspect of human life and activities. 'Dockery and Son' is written in the context of the same idea, where Larkin compares his bachelor life with his friend's married life, who has to die even he is married and has a son. Hence, it doesn't matter whether a person is a bachelor or is married, since both are destined to die in the long run.

### **Impossibility of Escaping from Disease: *Ambulances***

In the 'Ambulances' the impossibility of escaping from disease and death has been captured with great sensitivity. With his utterly non-sentimental approach, Larkin has a great capacity to touch on the sensitive issues of human life. He emphasizes the omnipresence of death in the gloomy line, 'All streets in time are visited'.

Another poem 'Aubade' conveys the same thought and proves that nothing in the world is permanent except death; therefore, nothing can defeat and mitigate the horror or permanence of death. Larkin's melancholic approach towards life is very well understood, when he talks about death that is inseparable to man. He is perfectly realistic in creating an atmosphere of pathos by rendering vivid pictures in his death-obsessed poems. It seems that Larkin is able to arrive at the comprehensive conclusion that all efforts of human beings to live life better and to make life better end in fiasco, especially with the inexorable approach of death. By applying his

pragmatic approach throughout his poetry, Larkin constructs a clear-cut paradigm of human life; where death does not distinguish between the haves and have nots.

### **Larkin's Attitude in his Love Poems**

Again we see that Larkin's unromantic and non-sentimental attitude gives a unique quality to his love poems. He is realistic at heart and he wants to see things clearly and truthfully. Intentionally and deliberately, he does avoid deceptions and through his perceptions, he presents the facts as they actually exist. Even his love poems describe an utterly unromantic view of human life in the backdrop of the sexual act, which is generally believed to bring about fulfillment and sexual relief.

### **Sexual Act – A Deception: “*Places, Loved Ones,*” “*If, My Darling*”**

In Larkin's poems, the sexual act is altogether a deception and a sense of dissatisfaction and hopelessness seems to penetrate everything with a feeling of emptiness. “In the poem, ‘Places, Loved Ones’, for instance, the speaker admits with a mixture of disappointment and futility that he has never met that special person, who could claim everything he owns”. (Chapter 2, Page 10)

Similarly, the speaker in the poem, ‘If, My Darling’, insists upon his own realistic judgment of life's deficiencies and any idealization of womanhood is carefully avoided. Larkin's so-called love poetry, devoid of any romantic passions and emotions by focusing on the peripheral issues of human life reveals tragic aspects and tragedies that have been inseparable to man, since time immemorial. This has been Larkin's approach that altogether shuns superficial treatment of human suffering and presents pathetic, realistic pictures of human life.

### **Focus on Free Sex**

One notable thing is the selection of words by Larkin in his sexual poems that indicates his attitude towards free sex. He dares to show his thinking through the use of such apt words whenever he wants. For instance, in the poem ‘Annus Mirabilis’, he asserts,

Sexual Intercourse began  
In nineteen sixty-three  
(Which was rather late for me)  
Between the end of the Chatterley ban  
And the Beatles first L.P

Larkin’s choice of words in this poem is also the mirror of the society of England, where sexual freedom had started in 60’s and had not remained a taboo any longer.

### ***Marriages***

In his poem ‘Marriages’ his manner of dealing with the topic is somewhat cynical but realistic as he says that marriage in most of the cases is a matter of accepting an undesirable and unwanted partner. In this case, he attributes marriage to the loss of one’s freedom and as a result a man gets nothing but boredom and feels like a failure. It can be said that Larkin’s love poetry threatens the independence of the individual.

Larkin’s cynical and realistic point of view does not let him idealize relationship, marriage, sex, and sexual satisfaction; rather, he creates an atmosphere of disappointment and disillusionment.

In Larkin’s opinion, sexual fulfillment and erotic passion are mere deception and nothing else. Sexual desire is also the subject of the poem ‘Dry Point’. Here the physical experience is a struggle that is presented accompanied by fear and panic, and the aftermath is one of disappointment and disillusionment. In a nutshell, an element of disenchantment escorts his love poetry all the way to the final destination and that destination is nothing but a mirage.

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# Factors Responsible for Code-Switching in Gulgulia

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## Abstract

This paper briefly discusses the factors which contribute in code-switching in Gulgulia language which is the mother tongue of the Gulgulia community. The Gulgulias are a nomadic community, widely distributed in the states of Jharkhand, Bihar and Bengal who live by arranging shows of monkeys and bears, begging and even petty thieving.

While exploring the ethno-linguistic vitality of Gulgulia, a research-worthy aspect was detected where Gulgulia exhibits a consistent pattern of multilingualism, such as in situational code-switching where domains determine the language of choice. The members cease using Gulgulia and adhere to Hindi/ Khortha etc. during social domains like religious practices and in other festive celebrations. This is an interesting phenomenon that there is somewhat different language use in some specific domains and it is very likely that this phenomenon will become a threat to the existence of Gulgulia in the future.

Combining the general description of the Gulgulia people, Gulgulia language and its use in society with the pattern of code-switching in Gulgulia under certain domains, this paper delves widely into the factors that contribute in such code-switching thereby channelizing our concentration towards the influence of this code-switching upon the existence of Gulgulia language in the future.

## The Gulgulia Community

The Gulgulias are a nomadic community, often found on the outskirts of villages, near railway stations or forests. They are chiefly distributed in the states of Bihar, Jharkhand and Bengal. They speak Gulgulia which is the mother-tongue of the community reported in the paper, 'Mother Tongues of India according to the 1961 Census' by B. Mallikarjun. Since they are nomadic people, they have picked up other languages being used in the region and show traits of multilingualism.

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The Gulgulias are divided into a number of exogamous patrilineal *gotras* like Sonarkheli, Kungera, Maldahia, etc. The community is aware of the *Varna* system. They consider themselves at the lowest rung of the *Varna* hierarchy. Their families are nuclear. They are nomadic people; therefore they have no immovable property. The movable property is inherited by the sons. The eldest son succeeds to the social offices, held by father.

Gulgulias are a landless community. Traditionally, they earned money by arranging shows of animals but these days they beg or work as daily labourers in tea stalls or shops. Sometimes they collect honey from the jungle and sell it in the local *hat* (market).

They have no traditional caste council or a panchayat. They are Hindus. They worship Lakshmi, Sitala, Durga, Jagadmai Devi, etc. They make an altar below a tree to worship their Gods. They celebrate Durgapuja, Kalipuja, the Holi festival and participate in the annual festival of Karama.

They are illiterate. Their children do not go to school due to poverty and their nomadic lifestyle. However, in Patherdih area of Dhanbad (Jharkhand) there are three children having recently joined the school.

### **Code- Switching and Code-Mixing**

Code- switching stands as a linguistic behaviour which takes place when languages come into contact. However, it stays distinct from other language contact phenomena such as bilingualism, borrowings, pidgins, creoles, calques and language interference. According to Rosamina Lowi “Code-switching is viewed as bilingual/ multilingual practice that is used not only as a conversational tool, but also as a way to establish, maintain and delineate ethnic boundaries and identities”.

Code-switching is also referred as code mixing, code-shifting or code-changing and has been defined as the act of “alternation of two languages within a single discourse, sentence or constituent” (Poplack 1980:583). It is the tendency of the speakers to practice code-switching generally, when they are competent in two languages simultaneously.

Code-switching and Code-mixing have been considered as two separate concepts. On the one hand where Code-switching refers to the alternate use of sentences from two languages in a single discourse, code-mixing refers to the alternate use of constituents from

two languages within a sentence (Obiamalu and Mbagwu). This paper is interested in both types but we shall use code-switching to refer to both.

### Major Types of Code-Switching

**Intersentential switching** occurs outside the sentence or the clause level (i.e. at sentence or clause boundaries). It is sometimes called "extrasentential" switching.

**Intra-sentential switching** occurs within a sentence or a clause.

**Tag-switching** is the switching of either a tag phrase or a word, or both, from language-B to language-A, (common intra-sentential switches).

**Intra-word switching** occurs within a word, itself, such as at a morpheme boundary.

### The Data

We present here sample of Gulguia-Hindi-Khorta code-switched/ mixed utterances from our corpus of data. The first sentence shows the code switched/mixed utterance and the second sentence shows the complete Gulguia form. Gulguia is written in plain, Hindi is underlined and Khorta is italicized. The gloss in English is written below each utterance.

1) həmar *sər le* ðərð bhəigəl.

həmar mundə ʈe ðərð bhəigəl

(My head is aching.)

2) həmar ðəvə a:ni ðe.

həmar kəngi a:ni ðe.

(Bring my medicine.)

3) a:dʒ ʈŪm kaməʃ pəre gəe tfe ?

a:dʒ ʈŪm kaməʃ pəre gəigər ?

(Did you go on work today?)

4) dəb bəðʒər le gɦŪri ke a:sbi, ʈəkɦən ek kedʒi: a:m lete a:na.

dʒkɦən haʃ le gɦŪri ke a:sbi, ʈəkɦən ek kedʒi: a:m ni:e a: n.

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(While returning from the market, bring 1 kilo of mangoes.)

5) a:dʒ həmar kam *bhālo nā bhāigo*.

a:dʒ həmar kam bauḍhi nā bhāigəl.

(Today my work has not been good.)

6) *dʒəldi kore tel ni:e a:n*, tʌb ma:ʃho ranbo.

bhō tel a:ni ðe, tʌb ma:ʃho ranbo.

(Bring me the oil quickly, then I will fry the fish.)

7) a:dʒkl, dʒharkhənde nəksəli: səmi:sa ʃrəm pər bhāigəl.

əkhən, dʒharkhənde nəksəli: səmi:sa ʃrəm pər bhāigəl.

(These days, the naxal problem in Jharkhand is at its extreme.)

8) Iḥ ʃhoṛija bi:ha *həvek he ki na?*

Iḥ ʃhoṛija bi:ha bhəl ki nai?

(Is this girl married?)

9) həmə *nəhane va:ste* pokhira dʒaiʃhi:.

həmə nəhāija: le pokhira dʒaiʃhi:.

(I am going to the pond for bathing.)

10) həmə ʃangi nie: *dʒa: rəhe he*, gaʃhi kaṭbo.

həmə ʃangi nie: dʒai ʃhi:s, gaʃhi kaṭbo.

(I am taking the axe to cut the tree.)

## Methodology

The recordings used for this study were recorded at multiple locations and at different situations on about 20 Gulgulia people over a period of 1 week.

The recordings were mainly in the form of paper jottings. Since the researcher never intentionally set out to go looking for instances of Code- Switching, but rather noted them down as they randomly occurred in the spontaneous speech of different individuals on different occasions, thus there was no audio-cassette recording.

### **Domains of Code-Switching in the Gulgulia Context**

There is a shift in language behaviour from one domain to another. It is the tendency of individuals to adapt to different varieties, codes and styles and keep switching over from one code to another depending upon the domain. Language behaviour gets influenced by an individual's social intimacy, social relationship, social distance and the situation of the speaker and the hearer. The speaker doesn't initiate his way or style of language use, rather it is the context which determines the varieties according to the situations.

#### **1. CODE-SWITCHING IN THE HOME DOMAIN**

Members use a type of code with their family-members which is more informal, casual and simple. They speak Gulgulia among themselves. However, during their informal talk, they show traits of code-switching particularly at the lexical level. When the reason was asked for such a lexical shift, they told the investigator that they are the nomadic community roaming from one place to another, in search of food and shelter. In their course of migration, they pick words from other regional dominant languages and make them an integral part of their mother-tongue. Sometimes, the members are away from their community for about six months and are very much prone to acquire this trait of code-switching.

#### **2. CODE-SWITCHING IN THE SOCIAL DOMAIN**

Members use Gulgulia with minor traits of lexical code-switching in the social domain involving their own community members. The community considers themselves at the lowest rung of the Varna hierarchy and generally keep their community get-togethers restricted among its own community members. Thus on such occasions, Gulgulia language is the means of communication among the members. However, during occasions like some campaigns or processions, they largely proclaim their needs and demands in the dominant language of the region so that their voice could reach the maximum.

Amidst these social domains, Gulgulias show a peculiar behaviour of code-switching during religious ceremonies. Although they themselves conduct their religious rituals with the

oldest members of the community conducting the rituals without inviting any priest, yet they conduct the proceedings in either, Hindi, Bengali, Khortha, etc. When enquired why they exclude their vernacular for religious purposes, they stated that they don't have their own festivals, so for conduction of festivals which are inherited from other communities, they employ the language of the community to which the festival is related to.

### **3. CODE-SWITCHING IN THE OUTSIDE DOMAIN**

Members generally switch their codes from Gulgulia to other regional languages during earning their livelihood i.e. while begging or presenting animal shows etc. Sometimes or often they switch over from one language to another in order to address and attract more and more public and thus they happen to learn different language in different contexts. However, they make use of argot when they want to prevent others from understanding what they say.

#### **Factors Responsible for Code-Switching in Gulgulia**

In Gulgulia, excluding the religious domain when the members deliberately switch their codes to the language to which the festival is related to, the investigator found four factors that contribute most in Gulgulia language shifting.

Language attitude

Language status

Subconscious linguistic behaviour

Lexical gap

#### **A) Language attitude**

Though the members of the Gulgulia community exhibit a very positive attitude towards their language and wish to see it promoted, yet the members mostly need to revert to the use of dominant languages for earning their livelihood as communication in dominant languages fetch them more profit as more and more public could be reached.

At times, there is even conscious display of knowledge of Hindi, Bengali, Khortha extensively and English too, at minor lexical levels. The more they bring words from

dominant languages in their communication, the more admiration they earn from their peer group.

## **B) Language status**

Under Landweer's (2008) four point scale of language status namely as follows:-

- The language in question is a prestigious, nationally recognised lingua franca.
- The language in question is a regionally recognised lingua franca.
- The language in question is a locally recognised variety with neutral status.
- The language in question is a locally disparaged variety,

Gulgulia can be classed as a locally disparaged variety. In the words of Landweer,(2008) "A descending scale of relative prestige could be as follows with a nationally recognized language having the greatest prestige and thus a greater potential for use in the foreseeable future, and locally disparaged varieties having the least potential for continued use in the future (assuming other supports are also absent)."

When a language fails to attain any kind of recognition, then its survival is hardly achieved. Gulgulia is confined just within their own community having negligible prestige in the society. Al-though it is widely spoken by the community members in informal situation, is always a second choice in the formal situation. When a language stands as a second choice in most of the situation, then its survival gradually gets difficult. That is to say that the language is used less and less and finally language shift gets unavoidable. Moreover, severe illiteracy within the community shows that the documentation and preservation of the language is impossible by their own community people.

## **C) Subconscious linguistic behaviour**

Gulgulia speakers exhibit patterns of code-switching out of habit and subconsciously switch codes with another Gulgulia speaker. Such situations could be found in their informal interactions and formal community discussions etc. It is subconscious because most people are unaware that they have switched and amazingly, none are capable to make even ten sentences without bringing in one or two Hindi, Bengali, at times English (extremely basic words like time, voter-card etc.) words or expressions.

## **D) Lexical gap**

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There are several expressions that do not have readily available equivalents in Gulgulia. Gulgulia speakers in this kind of situation do not have any other choice than to switch to expressions available in other dominant languages.

Amidst 500-600 total population of the community, three children go to school which presents the picture of severe illiteracy within the community. Thus, there is no extensive attempt carried out by the members themselves to develop terminologies for Gulgulia.

### **The Impact of Code-Switching to the Existence of Gulgulia Language in the Future**

Gulgulia community showing traits of Code- Switching is basically a linguistic phenomenon. This phenomenon is actually prevalent in all multilingual societies. It facilitates the need to communicate with other people who speak different languages. If this phenomenon exists temporarily, the language which is undergoing the shift isn't in a position to be endangered. However, if this shifting takes place continuously or permanently, then this may be threatening for the host language.

If we apply the above stated criteria in the Gulgulia context, where we see that code-switching is not just invading in the outside social domain but is also creeping in the home and particularly religious domains which declares negative impact on the Gulgulia existence. If the next generation adapt themselves of not using Gulgulia in majority walks of life and domains, this would pose danger to the Gulgulia (language) existence. If no preventive and proper action is taken to check this to happen, it is quite relevant to say that the Gulgulia language will vanish.

### **Conclusion**

We could undoubtedly conclude that code-switching has become an integral part of the Gulgulia life and several factors are responsible for this. It is necessary for the linguists and lexicographers to work in a co-ordinated fashion to develop Gulgulia terminologies in order to combat the issue of lexical gap. This would enable the developed terminologies to become household terms. The government should take initiatives with regard to language planning, new policy initiatives, public awareness, technical and financial support for the promotion and preservation of Gulgulia status and language. This would thereby help reduce the incidence of code-switching among the Gulgulia as well as help in the uplift of the community and preservation of the language.

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Factors Responsible for Code-Switching in Gulgulia

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## Gender and the Challenges for Equal Property Rights – A Study of Cuddalore District, Tamilnadu

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### Abstract

This paper critically examines gender and the challenges it faces relating to property rights. Women's lack of property rights has been increasingly linked to other development-related problems including low-levels of education, hunger and poor health.

Women in every religion and legal system are now discriminated to inherit the property only on the basis of sex. When only men have rights of inheritance or family succession, women have little opportunity to improve their status or living conditions within the family and community. Equal rights to both men and women, equal share of property etc. are discussed every day in public life, newspaper and television. But the reality which bites is that these issues are still "unresolved". The issue of lack of property rights of women is raised in public forum; it is usually understood as being the lack of legal rights. However, for poor women in rural India, customary rights may also be as important as legal rights.

Under the Hindu Succession Act of 1956, daughters were given equal rights as sons in their father's self-earned property if the father died intestate. They, however, had no rights to ancestral property. The Rajya Sabha on August 16, 2005, passed the Hindu (Amendment) Act 2005, which is now a law and it says that any woman, irrespective of the marital status, has full right to inherit ancestral property just like a son of the family. However, as a result of certain inherent conditions which have remained in the legal system, developed out of the socio-religious-cultural norms which dictate the behaviour of men and women in society, these laws do not tend to be operative in practice. Moreover in many families' implementation property rights with gender equality is still in discourse. Of course, Daughters, being sensitive to family traditions, do not want to make an issue of this right in their families. Sons may not be so

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generous in distributing the property to their sisters. In some families parents having traditional set up in their mind, do not want to share their property with girl child on par with male child. In this paper, the researchers make an attempt to examine property rights of gender in the present situation and in the context described above.

### **Introduction and Statement of the Problem**

‘Gender’ is the social construct of sex. Unlike sexual identity, which results from the differing physiological makeup of men and women, gender identity results from the norms of behaviour imposed on men and women by culture and religion. Hence, at the start of the twenty-first century traditionalist culture and religion remain bastions of patriarchal values and practices, and both the culture defense claims and the claim of religious freedom are employed in an attempt to stem the tide of women’s equality (Bonny Ibhawoh, 2001).

Land and housing assets represent a large share of the total value of assets held by households across the world. In developing countries the corresponding numbers are often much higher at 45% of urban wealth in China, 80% of rural wealth in China, 78% of urban wealth in India, and 87% of rural wealth in India (Shing-Yi Wang, 2012).

This paper demonstrates that property rights affect household decision making, including the investments, labour market choices and residential decisions (Field & Evica 2005, Galiani and Schargrodsky 2010). However, the economics literature on property rights has generally focused on the household as a single agent.

### **Gender and Property Rights**

Women are deprived of many human rights, often as a matter of tradition. In rural areas women are generally not perceived to have any meaningful income generation capacity, and hence, they are relegated mainly to household duties and cheap labour. Gender inequality exists in different forms but the most harmful one is in the field of property rights. In most Indian families, women do not own any property in their own names and do not get a share of parental property. The women in every religion and legal system are now discriminated to inherit the property only on the basis of sex. There are numerous cultural, racial, political and legal factors

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that influence women's lack of property and inheritance rights and specific patterns of ownership and disenfranchisement that vary widely (Besley & Timothy 1995)

The Hindu personal laws of mid-1950s (applied to Hindus, Buddhists, Sikhs and Jains) gave women rights to inheritance. However, the sons had an independent share in the ancestral property, while the daughters' shares were based on the share received by their father. Hence, a father could effectively disinherit a daughter by renouncing his share of the ancestral property, but the son will continue to have a share in his own right. Additionally, married daughters, even those facing marital harassment, had no residential rights in the ancestral home. After amendment of Hindu laws in 2005, now women have been provided the same status similar to that of son.

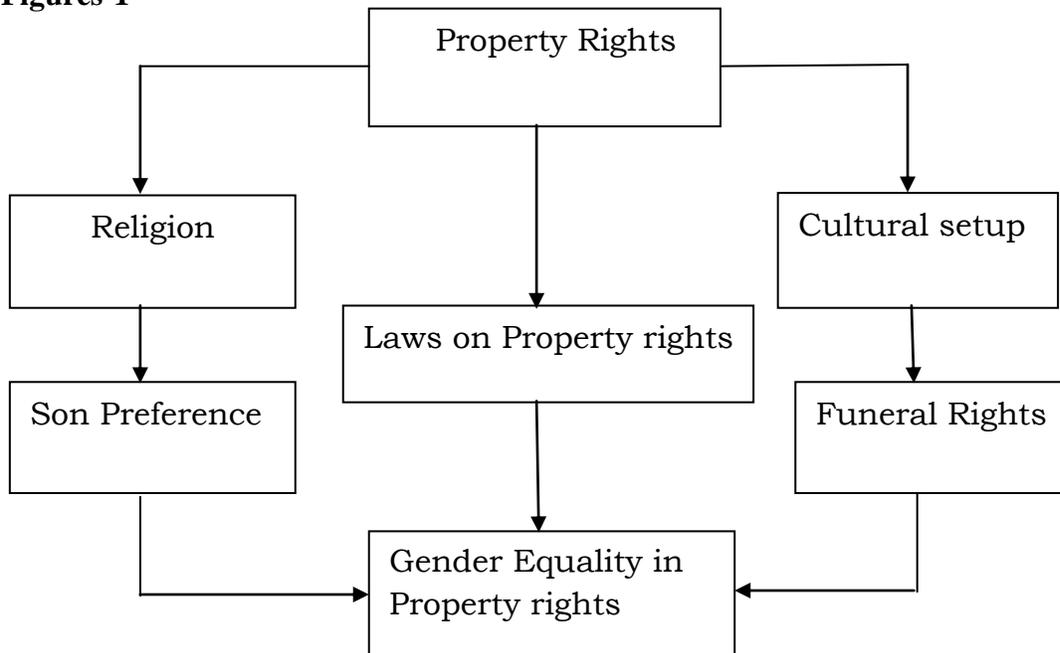
Development-related problems faced across the globe have been increasingly linked to women's lack of property and inheritance rights, especially in regards to land and property ownership, encompassing areas such as low levels of education, hunger and poor health. Thus land and property rights, through their impact on patterns of production, distribution of wealth as well as market development, have evolved as one of the prerequisites of economic growth and poverty reduction for women. The social and economic condition of rural women could become better if they own or control land, individually or jointly, and have the benefit of legally recognized use and inheritance rights (Wang 2011).

While globally there has been a push for women's property and inheritance rights following the UN Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), commitment to equal access to land and other property in 1979, progress has been slow. In most of south Asia, women do have legal rights guaranteed by the Constitutions of these nations, yet such rights are not enforced usually (Nitya Rao, 2005).

The challenges of gender equality in property rights is depicted in a flowchart as below.

## The challenges of gender equality in property rights

Figures-1



Source: Researchers

### Focal Theme

The focal theme of the paper is to explore the challenges in implementing property rights of rural women.

### Hypothesis

Funeral rights excel over the level of literacy in determining gender equality in property rights.

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## **Methodology**

This study is mainly based on primary data. Secondary data have been used for the selection of Districts, Blocks and villages in Tamilnadu. Sex ratio is one of the instruments for assessing women's status. According to 2011 census report, sex ratio in Cuddalore District is low (984 per 1000). Its position has been shifted from 14<sup>th</sup> place (2001) to 27<sup>th</sup> place (2011) in Tamil Nadu. Its GDI value (0.643) is also less than the state average (0.654). In this context, Cuddalore District has been selected for the study.

Cuddalore Block, which has the lowest sex ratio, has been selected. One Block in Cuddalore District, three (Arisi Periyar Kuppam, Maruthadu, Periyakanganan kuppam) villages have been selected according to the lower sex ratio. On the whole, 250 sample respondents have been interviewed.

## **Concepts**

### ***Property Rights***

Property rights include the legal rights to acquire, own, sell, physical & financial assets and how individuals can control, benefit from and transfer property.

### ***Gender***

"Gender" refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities, and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for men and women.

## **Results and Discussion**

The challenges of gender and property rights have been discussed with reference to the effect of education on property rights, awareness on property rights, bargaining power of females in the family and funeral rights in the family.

### **Effect of Education on Property Rights of Women**

Education plays an important role in bringing about awareness on women's rights. Educated women could have awareness on property rights. An increase in female inheritance rights may provide parents with direct incentives to invest more in the education of their daughters, due to the existence of complementarity between education and female inheritance rights in relation to able management of household property that directly affects their future

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household income. In patriarchal and virilocal societies, sons are typically expected to take in and care for parents in old age (Levine and Kevane, 2003). According to National Human Development Report (2001), if women don't have access to education, their job opportunities and their economic contribution are also constrained, reinforcing the concept of the male breadwinner and women dependency.

It is surprising to note that (Table 1) 73.6% of respondents from village I (Arisi Periyankuppam) said that education is not the main criterion to develop awareness of property rights of rural women among rural women and that 61.1% of the respondents from village II (Maruthadu) also said that education is not the significant factor for the development of the awareness of the property rights of rural women. Moreover, 53.3% of the respondents from village III (Periyakanganankuppam) also said that education is not related to the development of the awareness of the property rights of rural women. On the whole, 65.2% of the respondents from the villages (I, II, and III) (Arisi Periyankuppam, Maruthadu, Periyakanganankuppam) are against the views that the education will help develop the awareness of property rights for rural women. Remaining 34.8% of the respondents alone accepted that the education is the significant factor to help develop the awareness of property rights of rural women.

**Table 1: Effect of Education on Property Rights of Women**

Villages	Education		Total
	No	Yes	
Arisi Periyankuppam	81 (73.6)	29 (26.4)	110 (100)
Maruthadu	58 (61.1)	37 (38.9)	95 (100)
Periyakanganankuppam	24 (53.3)	21 (46.7)	45 (100)
<b>Total</b>	163 (65.2)	87 (34.8)	250 (100)

Source: Computed from primary data

Note: Figures in brackets show percentage to row total

### **Awareness on Property Rights**

Women are often not aware of their legal rights to own and inherit land due to a general lack of awareness of existing programmes, often related to limited literacy (India 1997<sub>a</sub>). “Women are both psychologically insecure and physically distressed with house, land mortgaging arrangements and being residents on other’s land. With no land or house, men and women find it difficult to borrow capital which is scarce expensive and not provided on easy terms”. Table 2 shows that 49.1% of respondents from village 1 (Arisi Periyankuppam) have

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awareness of property rights and 56.8% of the respondents from village II (Maruthadu) have awareness of property rights. Moreover, 57.6% of the respondents from village III (Periyakanganankuppam) have awareness of property rights. 57.6% of the respondents from the villages (I, II, III) (Arisi Periyankuppam, Maruthadu, Periyakanganankuppam) have awareness of property rights. Remaining 42.4% of the respondents never have awareness towards property rights of rural women.

**Table 2: Awareness on Property Rights**

Villages	Awareness on Property Rights		Total
	No	Yes	
Arisi Periyankuppam	56 (50.9)	54 (49.1)	110 (100)
Maruthadu	41 (43.2)	54 (56.8)	95 (100)
Periyakanganankuppam	9 (20.0)	36 (80.0)	45 (100)
<b>Total</b>	106 (42.4)	144 (57.6)	250 (100)

Source: Computed from primary data

Note: Figures in brackets shows percentage to row total

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### **Bargaining Power of Females in the Family**

The outcomes of bargaining weakening a person's fallback position could affect the outcomes of bargaining at a later point in time. For instance, assets accumulated in one round of bargaining would affect the treat point and therefore, outcomes in the next round. Such 'iterative' bargaining could be between the same parties, or between different parties (e.g., a property settlement favouring a widow or divorce in one marriage could strengthen her bargaining power in a subsequent marriage); and it could apply to both the short and the long term (Sen, 1990).

Table 3 depicts that relation between bargaining power of the family and property rights of rural women. It is interesting to note that 76.4% of respondents from village I (Arisi Periyankuppam) replied that bargaining power of females in the family is not the main criterion for determining property rights of rural women and 88.4% of the respondents from village II (Maruthadu) also replied that bargaining power of females in the family is not the significant factor on the property rights of rural women. Moreover, 88.9% of the respondents from village III (Periyakanganankuppam) also replied that bargaining power of females in the family is not the significant factor on the property rights of rural women.

**Table 3: Bargaining Power of Females in the Family**

Villages	Bargaining Power of Females in the Family		Total
	No	Yes	
Arisi Periyankuppam	84 (76.4)	26 (23.6)	110 (100)
Maruthadu	84 (88.4)	11 (11.6)	95 (100)
Periyakanganankuppam	40 (88.9)	5 (11.1)	45 (100)
<b>Total</b>	208 (83.2)	42 (16.8)	250 (100)

Source: Computed from primary data

Note: Figures in brackets show percentage to row total

Overall, 83.2% of the respondents from the villages (I, II, III) (Arisi Periyankuppam, Maruthadu, Periyakanganankuppam) are against the view that the bargaining power of females in the family is the criterion for determining property rights of rural women. Remaining 16.8% of the respondents alone accepted that the bargaining power of females in the family is the significant factor for determining property rights of rural women.

### **Equal share of Property for Both Son & Daughters**

The social acquisition of existing traditional ideas about the values and place of women in their societies does not generally help women. The notion that women are entitled to, and only deserve unequal share of resources, as well as other forms of discrimination are learnt from

childhood, and perpetuated as women themselves accept this valuation of themselves and their contribution to a family and their position in the family (Papanek, 1990).

Table 4 shows that 71.8% of respondents from village I (Arisi Periyankuppam) accept the position that equal share of their property be given to both male & female children in the family and 90.5% of respondents from village II (Maruthadu) also accept the position that equal share of their property be given to both male & female children in the family. Moreover, 82.2% of the respondents from village III (Periyakanganankuppam) also accept the position that equal share of their property be given to both male & female children in the family. On the whole, 80.8% of the respondents from the villages (I, II, and III) (Arisi Periyankuppam, Maruthadu, Periyakanganankuppam) alone accept the position that equal share of their property be given to both male & female children in the family. Remaining 19.2% of the respondents rejected the position that equal share of their property be given to both male & female children in the family.

**Table 4: Equal share for both sons and Daughters**

Villages	Equal share for both sons and Daughters		Total
	No	Yes	
Arisi Periyankuppam	31 (29.2)	79 (71.8)	110 (100)
Maruthadu	9 (9.5)	86 (90.5)	95 (100)
Periyakanganankuppam	8 (17.8)	37 (82.2)	45 (100)
<b>Total</b>	48 (19.2)	202 (80.8)	250 (100)

Source: Computed from primary data

Note: Figures in brackets show percentage to row total

## Testing of Hypothesis

*Funeral right excels over the level of literacy in determining gender equality in property rights.*

**Table 5: Logit Model for determining factors of gender equality in property rights**

Variables	$\beta$	Std. error	Z	P. value
Funeral right	-0.768106	0.300177	-2.559	0.0105**
Illiteracy	0.515642	0.370733	1.391	0.1643

Source: Computed from primary data

### The Model- Logit Model

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + e$$

$\beta_0$  = constant parameter

$\beta_1, \beta_2$  = Slope parameters

Y = Gender Equality in Property Rights (dependent variable)

### Explanatory variables

$X_1$  = Funeral Right

$X_2$  = Illiteracy of women

Y = 0.626456\*\* - 0.768106 $X_1$ \* + 0.515642 $X_2$

Note: \* Indicates significant at 5% level of significance

\*\* Indicates significant at 1% level of significance

The result shows that the funeral right plays an important role in not adopting gender equality in property rights. The level of literacy does not have significant influence on gender equality in property rights. One can observe that funeral right of men dominate the society and act as a constraint in getting gender equality in property rights.

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## Suggestions

- The Governmental policies, plans, projects and programmes must focus on the expansion empowerment of women in all areas to ensure better quality of life.
- Equal rights to both men and women, equal share of property, etc., are discussed every day in public life, newspaper and television. But the reality is that these issues are still “unresolved”.
- Traditional mindset of the parents should be changed through awareness camps for parents.

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## Catharsis and Its Reward The Story of Job

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### Focus of the Book of Job

The story of Job, as presented in the Book of Job in the Bible, presents the human dilemma in several aspects. When a righteous human is inflicted with suffering beyond measure, who does he or she blame? Is blaming another person or God for the affliction justified? Should he or she look inward and patiently suffer for no fault of his or her? Is there no limit to human endurance and probity? In the Book of Job, God's power, wisdom and sovereignty in the world are presented from the Judeo-Christian perspective. It teaches how the righteous should endure suffering; how man should comfort the suffering, accept the fact that man can never fully comprehend God's ways in his life and/or in the world.

The Book of Job deals with a wealthy and righteous nobleman named Job. He has a large family, extensive flocks and many servants. He is a blameless and upright man always, careful not to do evil. The scene is shifted to Heaven where God praises Job for his righteous character. Satan challenges God to let him afflict Job to see whether his devotion to God is genuine or not and whether his devotion will last through his suffering. God accepts the challenge with a condition that Job's life should not be touched in the process. Thus Job loses his wealth and his ten children overnight and finally Job is affected with loathsome sores from the top of his head to the bottom of his feet.

Job's four friends Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar and Elihu visit to comfort him. On the seventh day, Job begins his conversation, in which each one shares his thoughts. Eliphaz believes that his sufferings are due to Job's sins and he urges Job to seek God's favor. Bildad and Zophar also agree that Job must have committed evil. Zophar states that for all the evil done by Job he deserves even greater punishments. Job tries to defend himself and laments for his suffering. To make the situation worse, Elihu remarks that God is trying to teach Job something if he would

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only stop defending himself. Commenting on Job, Brown states (1), “He is misunderstood, unanswered, and--as his friends' frustration grows--even abused”. Finally God interrupts through the whirlwind and claims his power over all evil as supreme God. Job confesses his unworthiness, lack of understanding and weakness. Job also does a noble thing. He asks the Lord to forgive his friends for all the things they said about him, and God is pleased with him. He restores Job’s health, gives him twice the material possessions he had earlier enjoyed and blesses him with children. The book ends describing Job’s happy in his old age.

### **Job’s Trial**

The major problem Job faces during his trial is that he is not able to glorify God in his sufferings. His sufferings and the critical comments hurled at him by his wife and friends, forbid him from praising God. His lamentation is so intense that he is unconsciously deprived of the power of adoration. He loses the good opinion he earns through his deeds. He is titled ‘righteous’ by the people of his country when he is in prosperity. But later, when he loses everything and is walking through terrible suffering, he becomes a byword and a laughing stock for the people. They make a proverb of him like ‘As poor as Job’. This is in tune with the current scenario. This is a true indication of the fickle mind of human beings. Men praise others endowed with wealth and power. But the moment they lose everything, they are no more recognized by the world; no one seems to care whether the poor lives or dies.

### **Mystery of Suffering**

The book speaks about the mystery of suffering. It also answers the question why the godly suffer? According to Charkravarthi (2), the book of Job is regarded by many critics of eminence as:

a moral and religious apologue, designed to show that God’s government of the world is inexplicable, on the theory that men’s temporal blessings and afflictions are proportioned to their goodness and wickedness respectively. It enforces the duty of obedience and submission to the will of God. (19)

Job also raises the unanswered question ‘why does God allow the righteous to suffer?’ In a deeper sense, the book teaches how the righteous should handle suffering with patience, endure without cursing God. Wayne Jackson states that,

The book defends the absolute glory and perfection of God- It sets forth the theme echoed in Ps18:3 (“I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised”). God deserves our praise simply on the basis of who He is, apart from the blessings He bestows... The question of suffering is addressed- Why do we suffer? Who or what causes it? Why doesn’t God do something? Not all questions are answered, but some important points are made. Man is unable to subject the painful experiences of human existence to a meaningful analysis. God’s workings are beyond man’s ability to fathom. Man simply cannot tie all the “loose ends” of the Lord’s purposes together. We must learn to trust in God, no matter the circumstances. (Mark)

### **Sustaining Positive Attitude**

The positive attitude of Job sustains his moral strength and keeps him unruffled. Distressing situations crops up to subdue his faith through various agents like his wife and friends. His mind sways between the discouraging criticisms of his companions and a firm faith in his Maker. With such negative forces around him, his steadfast faith keeps him going. He continues to believe that God will deliver him. Testing and suffering become inevitable to prove his worth, and needless to say that it is his perseverance and faith that keep him strong through his travail. In the views of Wayne Jackson (Mark 4),

Suffering is not always the result of personal sin. The erroneous conclusion drawn by Job’s friends is that suffering is always a consequence of sin. Job proves this is not the case. Suffering is allowed as a compliment to one’s spirituality. God allowed Job to suffer to prove to satan what kind of man he really was... The book paints a beautiful picture of patience... From the “patience of Job”, we learn that it means to maintain fidelity to God, even under great trials in which one does not understand what is happening (Mark).

“Suffering had become an expansive, faith-demonstrating opportunity for Job.” (Grace Communion 3). The Book of Job is based on the Judeo-Christian belief that the issue and consequence of Job’s sufferings is for a good cause. Though God wounds man, his hands make him whole in due time and supports them by making their life easy under afflictions and opens a way for them to escape. He also comforts them according to the time wherein he is afflicted.

The love and concern of God for man is portrayed in this book. To quote, “For he maketh sore, and bindeth up: he woundeth, and his hands make whole.” (Job 5:18) “In famine he shall redeem thee from death; and in war from the power of the sword.” (Job 5:20) He keepeth back his soul from the pit, And his life from perishing by the sword.” (Job 30: 18) “He delivereth the poor in his affliction, And openeth their ears in oppression.” (Job 36:15). “what troubled Job was that he was in a condition of life which (as he conceived) hindered the main end of his life , which was the glorifying of God” (Mathew, 51).

### **A Dynamic Portrayal of Innocent Suffering**

The sufferings of Job in this story represent all innocent suffering in the world. The problem of innocent suffering, which puzzles Job, puzzles all humankind. In other words, Job’s problem is a widespread problem. The solution to this problem, as implied through God’s oration, is a solution which suggests that no effort should be made to understand this problem because God’s ways are mysterious and inscrutable.

The lament of the suffering Job is indeed the release of his repressed emotions. The ‘I’ of Job’s self expresses the different phases of his experiences, namely, the ‘I’ of prosperity, the ‘I’ of innocence and the ‘I’ of adversity. The self of Job is totally annihilated after his encounter with God when he exclaims “Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer You? I lay my hand over my mouth” (Job 40:4).

### **Why the Good and Righteous People Suffer?**

Behind every single righteous suffering, there is reward as per the story of Job. If everyman feels that his sufferings will be rewarded doubly, the question of why do the righteous suffer, will not arise. But this has not been the attitude we adopt. The unanswered question as to

why the good and the righteous people suffer is a never-ending question raised by scholars, philosophers and, of course, by every individual. Though Job has strong faith in God, he too asks the same question at one point of time when he is suffering, “know then that God has wronged me, and has surrounded me with His net. ... If I cry out concerning wrong, I am not heard. If I cry aloud, there is no justice” (Job 19:6, 7). However, the question remains still unanswered.

People have been contributing innumerable reasons to answer this question. It is certainly surprising to know Job withstands his suffering without cursing God. The answer perhaps lies in the fact that the greatness of mind can be proved by the way one handles the inevitable suffering in every human’s life.

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# The Unique Literary Form of the Book of Job

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The Book of Job has a unique literary form since it includes poetry and prose with different features of drama, epic and law suit. It forms a genre by itself. It is one of the most ancient books of the entire Bible. It is considered as one of the classics of Judeo-Christian heritage. The entire book revolves around the relationship between God and man.

## A Narrative of Job's Suffering and the Lessons

Job is a wise, wealthy and a righteous man in the land of Uz. Suddenly one day he loses all his wealth, his cattle, servants and his ten children. Finally on the same day, he falls sick and sits in ashes with the painful skin disease. Job did not know the reason why all these happened to him, that too in a single day. He was unaware of what went on with God and His adversary Satan. In other words, Job was caught in a mysterious context, totally ignorant as to the reason for all this tragedy. Thus begins this absorbing story of Job.

Job's three friends come to visit with him in his death bed, and try to explain that his sufferings are due to his sins and that God is punishing him. They also do not know what went on between God and His adversary Satan. In other words, all these humans had to depend on what was reality on hand and to rationalize why these things had happened. Job's friends went with the traditional notion of God's sovereign power to do or undo every aspect of human kind. Perhaps they used the belief widely prevalent that if a human suffers he or she is responsible for it through their sinful work and disobedience. Job tries to defend himself, but it is all in vain. He is discouraged by the accusation of his friends and becomes frustrated. Yet he still believes in God and never utters a word against the Almighty.

The book, ending with the speeches of God answering Job in a whirl-wind, reveals his omnipotence to Job and reminds him that humans can never fully grasp the meaning of God's

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work. God expresses His anger against Job's friends for misinterpreting Him. Job confesses his unworthiness, lack of understanding and weakness and says, "I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye sees You. Therefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." (Job 42:5, 6)

### **Unflinching Trust**

Job realizes that man must put his full trust in God irrespective of whatever happens in his life. Finally, God restores Job's health and his fortunes by giving him twice the material possessions he had enjoyed before and blesses him with a new set of children. The book ends describing Job's happy, peace-filled old age.

### **A Combination of Prose and Poetry**

The book of Job is a combination of poetry and prose. The first and the final part of the book are in prose while the middle part is in poetry. The Prologue and Epilogue are in prose and the main part is made up of three cycles of dialogue in poetry. The book as a whole is set in a prose narrative framework within a poetic core in the middle. The prose framework narrates the background and the life of Job including the tragic part.

### **Poetic Delicacy**

According to Tennyson the book of Job is the greatest poem of the ancient and modern times. "It has a worthy place beside the great tragedies of history from Greek to modern times" (Guthrie, 421).

The theological heart of the book is in the poetic form that includes the three cycles of dialogues of Job and his friends and the appearance of Yahweh (God) himself. G von Rad argues that the form of a long didactic poem features four times in Job in the speeches of Job's three friends. (Google.books)

It is amazing that the writer of the Book of Job chose to present the dialogues or conversations in poetic form. Perhaps in those days, conversational pieces were presented in singing format just as we have in musicals. And for this poetic form might have been chosen.

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## As an Epic

As an epic, one of the significant features of the book of Job is the use of speeches. It has many affinities to an Epic. It is a long narrative poem of Job's trial and his sufferings. Like the hero in the epic, the hero of the book of Job is one of the noblest figures in the Bible. He represents the sufferings of an innocent man in whom one can find no blame. Even God testifies to his integrity. And the Lord said to Satan, "Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?"(1:3).

## Cosmic Context and Background

The theme of the book of Job deals with the cosmic, for the incidents take place between earth and heaven. God and Satan, who are supernatural powers, get involved in this situation - which is like a challenge from Satan. Satan's ultimate aim is to make Job curse God during the time of his suffering.

The book is set in the format of a drama. Here is the initial piece of the drama:

And the LORD said to Satan, "From where do you come?" So Satan answered the LORD and said, "From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it."

Then the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job, that *there* is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil?"

So Satan answered the LORD and said, "Does Job fear God for nothing?"

"Have You not made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land.

"But now, stretch out Your hand and touch all that he has, and he will surely curse You to Your face!"

So the LORD said to Satan, “Behold, all that he has is in your power, only do not lay a hand on his person.” Then Satan went out from the presence of the LORD. (Job 1:7-12)

### **A Distinct Style**

The book has a peculiar style. The book takes on the style of argumentation in most of the chapters. The speech is, not a conversation but a debate. Towards the end of the book, God himself appears before Job for his reconciliation.

### **Like an Epic and Drama**

Keeping step with an important aspect of epic, the book of Job begins with a Prologue (chapters 1&2), followed by the debate between Job and his friends (chapters 4-27). The reader becomes interested after the fourth chapter when Job is put on trial. E.S. Bates commenting on this literary book remarks,

The Book of Job is the nearest approach to a form of drama in The Bible. It exhibits the genius of the Hebrew people in a style nowhere else to be found in the Scriptures. From the hand of one of the world’s greatest poets we have a series of impassioned dialogues culminating in the speech of the Lord out of the whirlwind. As Satan is the hero of Paradise Lost, so Jehovah is the hero of The Book of Job (Tilak, 40)

The book of Job resembles drama with the Prologue as the introduction stating Job’s wealthy, prosperous and righteous life and the Epilogue which is the climax that ends with the speeches of Yahweh. On further analysis, the structure of the book of Job seems like a dramatized lament.

### **A Law Suit Model**

Hartley states,

Legal language is incorporated into the lament in order to develop Job’s complaints and his accusations against God. The friends’ speeches are designed as words of consolation, but disputation intrudes into their speeches as they feel

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compelled to persuade Job of the orthodox position. The Yahweh speeches are also a disputation. .. The book is both an epic and a wisdom disputation. In order to probe deeply into the issue of the suffering, righteousness and its attendant issue of theodicy, the author has drawn on numerous genres in the composition of the speeches... At this point an overview of the component parts of the speeches is given to show their interrelatedness and to show how they contribute to the nuance of the message. (P.37)

And again

Richter identifies it as a lawsuit. The various sections of the book correspond to different stages of a lawsuit. The first section is the procedure to reach a settlement through a pre-trial hearing. (chapters 4-14) Since this attempt fails, a formal trial follows. (chapters 15-31) The friends' silence after Job's oath of innocence means that they have conceded their case and Job has won. Deeply disturbed by this state of affairs, Elihu enters and appeals the decision. (ch. 32-37) Finally, God appears as litigant (chapters 38-40). Under his questioning, the defendant Job withdraws his complaint so that reconciliation between God and himself is achieved". (Ch. 42:1-6), (P. 37, 38)

Thus he draws on the language of a lawsuit to confront God. Thinking of litigation against God, he affirms his own innocence. Also, out of faith he states his trust in God as the one who will prove his innocence. It is most befitting to conclude with the views of Carlyle:

one of the grandest things ever written with pen; grand in its sincerity, in its simplicity, in its epic melody and repose of reconciliation; one perceives in it 'the seeing eye, the mildly understanding heart, true eyesight and vision for all things; sublime sorrow and sublime reconciliation; oldest choral melody as of the heart of mankind; so soft and great as the summer midnight, as the world with its seas and stars'; the whole giving evidence "of a literary merit unsurpassed by anything written in the Bible or out of it; not a Jew's book merely, but all men's book". (Chakravarthi, 7)

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# Poetical Discourse Analysis of a Tamil Song *Ovvoru PuukkaLumee*

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## Abstract

This study is an attempt to analyze the Tamil movie song ‘**Ovvoru PuukkaLumee**’ meaning ‘**every flower**’ from the Tamil movie ‘**Autograph**’. This song is one of the popular songs of P. Vijay, a Tamil lyricist. The texture discourse of this song will be analyzed in terms of grammatical and lexical usages found by making use of discourse analysis.

**Keywords:** discourse, texture, grammatical, lexical, cohesion, coherence

## Introduction

Discourse analysis forms part of the description of a language. The term *discourse analysis* was first used by Zellig S. Harris in 1952. Later on, in the western countries, the tradition of linguistic discourse continued to grow and got the attention of linguists to develop a variety of theories and research methods in this field.

In Malaysia, discourse analysis grew in the 80s and onwards (Idris Aman, 2006a). Currently it is taught as one of the subjects within the linguistics discipline to encourage students to explore poetic discourse further and understand the content and intent of poems better. However, in Malaysia until 2011, linguistic studies undertaken in the field of discourse focused at the graduate level only. Therefore, this research initiates an exploratory study in the concerned area in a small way.

## Problem Statement

Idris Aman (2010) states that language fragments contain more than one sentence are accepted as discourse. According to him, in a discourse there are certain linguistic features that can be identified as contributing elements in the formation of a discourse in order to express an intended communication also add that the text or discourse is something that has features that are relevant and quite needed. This kind of view and explanation given to discourse motivated us to analyze the Tamil movie song to identify the aspects of **cohesion** and **coherence** as reflected in the Tamil poetical discourse.

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## Methodology Review

The approach used to analyze the song ‘**Ovvoru PuukkaLumee**’ is a textual one. Textual analysis in discourse is that which looks internally for reviewing the text link (cohesion) focused in it. According to Halliday and Hasan (1976), there are grammatical and lexical devices that help to link the **form** and **meaning** in a given discourse. Theoretical framework used in this study is the theory of cohesion put forward by Halliday and Hasan in the book *Cohesion in English* (1976).

The song entitled "Ovvoru PuukkaLumee’ has been numbered in rows to facilitate the text analysis conducted here. This song is also written in the roman (phonetic script) to facilitate the understanding of the reader.

## Objectives of the Study

This study has two main objectives:

- a. To identify the linking aspects of the grammatical features and lexical features reflected in *Ovvoru PuukkaLumee*
- b. To analyze the type of linking features that are identified as relevant ones for achieving the needed ‘cohesion’ and ‘coherence’.

## Research Questions

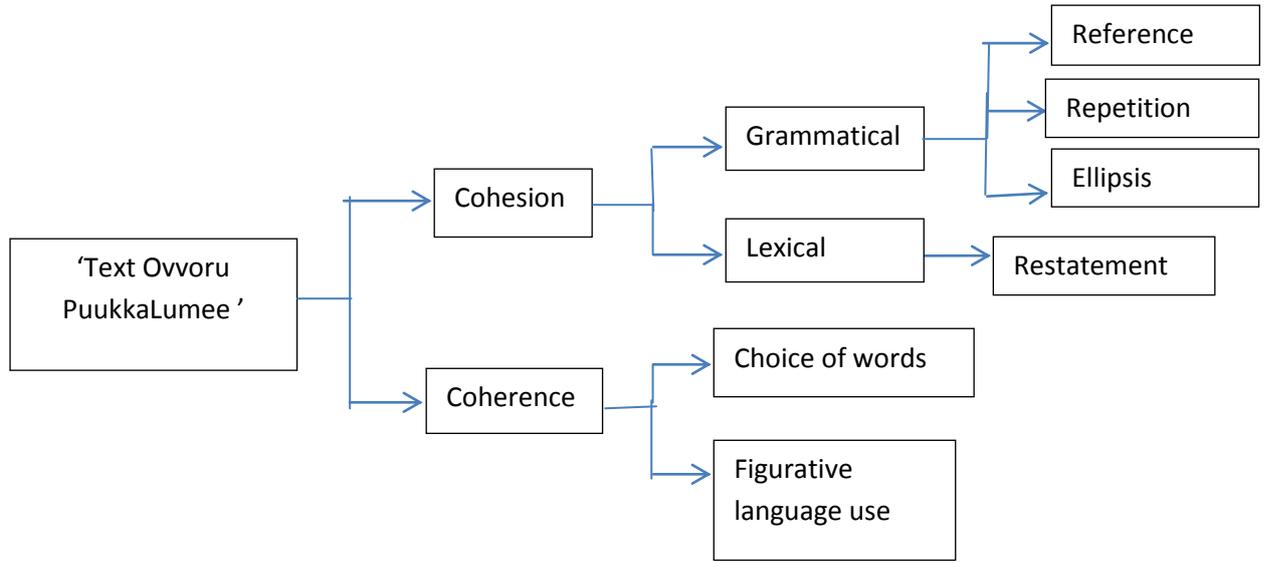
- a. What are the various grammatical and lexical features used as linking devices?
- b. How are these features used in the text to achieve cohesion and coherence in the expression of thoughts (intended meaning)?

## Rationale

P. Vijay is a young popular lyric writer in Tamil movie from the beginning of this century. He was awarded the ‘best lyric writer’ title in 2001, 2002 and 2003. The song *Ovvoru PuukkaLumee* was particularly selected for the poetical discourse analysis based on the theme and the in-depth meaning conveyed. Eventually, Vijay was awarded as the best lyric writer national award in the year 2004. This song became a trigger motivation and was always played in most of the Tamil schools during recess to inspire motivation among the students. Texture analysis of ‘*Ovvoru PuukkaLumee*’ includes grammatical elements such as **reference, removal, replacement, and lexical aspect** covers the use of words and synonyms.

## Analytical Framework

Below is the analytical frame work adapted from Halliday and Hasan Theory.



### a. Reference

Reference is the relationship that exists between the meanings of a word or phrase that serves as a reference element to those words or phrases, or clause referred to in a text. Cohesion exists when there is appropriate linkage between meaning of elements with an entity, a process or an entirely new matter said or written (Zamri Salleh, 2009).

The function of the reference can be divided into two based on a situation and eksofora (natured references) which refers to things that are identified in the context of human relations. It refers to something outside of the text. References which are of eksophora type associate language with situational context, but do not contribute for the production of fused sentences resulting in a text. Therefore, eksophora natured references do not function as a means of cohesion.

Cohesion tool references are the elements before or after, the relationship of meanings. References to elements that occur before are named as anaphora type reference, while references to elements after are called cataphora.

In Tamil language reference is divided into four groups, namely conjunctions (connectors) as /aakavee/ (ஆகவே), /atanaal/ (அதனால்), /aanaal/ (ஆனால்), /appaTiyenRaal/ (அப்படியென்றால்), /atuvum/ (அதுவும்), atumaTTumallaamal (அதுமட்டுமல்லாமல்), pronouns first, second and third, particles as inku (இங்கு), /aṅku/ (அங்கு), /itu/ (இது), /atu/ (அது), /inkee/ (இங்கே), /aṅkee/ (அங்கே), /ivai/ (இவை), /avai/ (அவை), noun adjective (adjectival nouns) and particles like /mika/ (மிக), /paTu / (படு), etc. In the song 'ovvoru puukkaLumee' reference pronouns (pronouns), demonstrative adverbial forms and adjectives nouns, repetitions and parables are frequently used (Karunakaran, 2009).

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## b. Pronoun Reference

In this song, self-pronoun reference is made by using first and second person pronouns.  
Example:

{7} நம்பிக்கை என்பது வேண்டும் நம் வாழ்வில்,  
/nampikkai enpatu veeNTum nam vaalvil/  
We should have confidence in our life.

{9} மனமே ஓ! மனமே! நீ மாறிவிடு!  
/manamee oo manamee nii maaRiviTu/  
Mind, oh mind you get transformed (change your mind).

{38} உன்னை வெல்ல யாரும் இல்லை  
/unnai vella yaarum illai/  
There is no one to defeat you.

{40} மனிதா! உன் மனதைக் கீறி  
/manithaa un manatai kiiRi/  
Oh man!, tear your heart.

{45} துக்கம் என்ன என் தோழா!  
/tukkam enna en tooLaa/  
Oh my friend!, Why are you so sad?

நீ /nii/ as used in the lines {7}, {9}, {28} refers to the second person singular pronoun. All the second person pronouns are used as anaphora because they refer to the previous line in the text which is a reference to personal referrals. Next, lines {40} and {38} words உன் /un/ (you) உன்னை/unnai/ also refer to the second person pronoun that means belonging to you. Second person pronouns also exist independently and function as anafora. உன் pronouns (you belong) forms உன் and உன்னை /unnai/ (you) also refer to those who are outside the text as listeners of the song. Words found in line {45} என் /en/, (my) and line {7} நம் /nam/, 'us' refer to the first person pronouns (in possessive case form) என்/en/ (my) line {40}.

Interrogative pronouns also find place in this song.

{13} என்ன இந்த வாழ்க்கை என்ற  
/enna inṭa vaalkai enRa/  
One should not feel frustrated and start thinking that 'what this life is'.

{15} எந்த மனிதன் நெஞ்சுக்குள்  
/ɛnta manitan nenjucukkuL/  
in whose mind

/enna/ (என்ன-what) and /ɛnta/ (எந்த, which) are the words normally used to ask questions (வினாச் சொற்கள்). But this lyric writer has used these words in different form. Although the words /enna/ (என்ன-what) and /ɛnta/ (எந்த, which) in lines 13 and line 15, are interrogative form and the lyricist does not use it for the purpose of asking questions instead he has used them to convey a message namely everyone is bound to have sorrow in their life in some form or other. Next in line {25}, {26}, {46}, {47}, and {48} the following:

{25} ஒரு கனவு கண்டால்  
/oru kanavu kaNTaal/  
if you aspire/dream of.....

{26} அதை தினம் முயன்றால்  
/atai tinam muyanRaal/  
and if (one) goes on trying/making due effort

{46} ஒரு முடிவிருந்தால்  
/oru muTiviruntaal /  
if you have the determination

{47} அதில் தெளிவிருந்தால்  
/atil teliviruntaal/  
and if we are clear about it

அதை /atai/ in line {26} and {47} அதில் /atil/ in line {47} refer to the previous sentence கனவு கண்டால் (if you dream of ... ), "ஒரு முடிவிருந்தால்" (decision). While the word அந்த /aɪnta/ (that) refers to the word that lays behind the word itself which means the sky. All pronouns show linking to or serve as a means of cohesion and refer to an entity other than the person.

### c. Repetition

Repetition refers to the language style used and it consists of repetition of sounds, words, phrases, sentences and also functions. In a poem or song recurrence phenomenon is found to be common because through the process of repetition a writer can focus on three things: firstly, to create rhythm or musical ambience, especially when a song is played. Secondly it stresses the particular purpose as the central question for the song writer. Finally, it draws the focus of attention. Repetition works to raise particular beauty to achieve intensity (Nur Fatiha Fadila, 2012). In this song, there are phrases repeated more than once. A study of meaning of

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these lines will make us realize that all those sentences repeated carry heavy meanings that we want the audience to focus on. Here are some of the lines that are always repeated in this song.

{1} ஒவ்வொரு பூக்களுமே சொல்கிறதே      repetition of the line - {3}, {30}, {51}  
/ovvoru puukkaLumee colkiRatee/  
every flower says (something),

{2} வாழ்வென்றால் போராடும் போர்க்களமே!      Repetition row - {4}, {31}, {52}  
/vaalvenRaal pooraaTum poorkkaLamee/  
life is a battle ground of struggles

{9} மனமே ஓ! மனமே! நீ மாறிவிடு!      Repetition row - {28}, {4}, {57}  
/manamee oo manamee nii maaRiviTu/  
mind, Oh Mind you get transtformed (change your thoughts)

{10} மலையோ! அது பனியோ! நீ மோதிவிடு! Repetition row - {29}, {50}, {58}  
/ malaiyoo! atu paniyoo! nii mootiviTu/  
whether it's rainy or snowy! you should face it boldly!

Considering this as a song-oriented motivation, all the lines are repeated to emphasize the meaning of the lyric in depth so that the listeners can really appreciate and understand the intended meaning. According to Fatiha Fadila (2012), usually in terms of the occurrence of usage like repetition of words and phrases in a song can occur at the beginning, middle and end and also at the beginning and end of the lines of the song. Repetition at the beginning of the lines is called **anaphora** and repetition at the end of each row is called **epiphora**. In each line of this song anaphora style elements can be seen in lines {1} and {3} where the word 'ஒவ்வொரு' is repeated several times. Anaphora repetition in the lyric gives emphasis to the question of natural elements such as florescence and morning phenomenon that marks a new beginning. Use of anaphora in a song also can serve to add rhythm to it

#### d. Ellipsis

In a discourse, removal is the process of sentence transformation that results in aborting certain elements of the sentence construction (Idris Aman, 2010). Despite the ellipsis found at the surface level, the internal structure of the sentence still has all the elements of a complete sentence. Despite the abortion or omission, the original meaning is still clear in the sentences. This is because the elements have been dropped in the sentence concerned do not need to be restated. In the lyric, although we find redundancy in several places but only a few instances are explained as given below. All the redundant elements (forms) are marked by using the symbol ( ).

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{27} ஒரு நாளில் (கனவு) நிஜமாகும்!  
/ oruNaaLil (kanavu) nijamaakum/  
you will get there one day!

{35} (நம்) மூச்சு போல சுவாசிப்போம்!  
/(nam) muuccu poola cuvaacippoom!/  
'let us consider it as our (normal) breath'

{39} (நீ) உறுதியோடு போராடு!  
/ (nii) uRutiyooTu pooraaTu/  
so with confidence, you struggle/fight

{41} (அதில்) விதை போடு மரமாகும்  
/ (atil) vitai pooTu maramaakum/  
and if you seed, it will grow as a tree

{43} (அவை) எல்லாமே உரமாகும்!  
/avai/ ellaamee uramaakum  
(it) will be a source of success

When we examine the content of the lyrics that are aborted, we are able to understand the exact meaning of the lyrics without any ambiguity. Poets usually use abortion to the language used in their compositions to make these more economical and rhythmic. Abortion process is a mechanism that not only produces more concise sentences, but also increases the sentence variability characteristics of a language. Thus, a writer can manipulate various structures and sentences of a language to produce a more interesting song (poetical discourse).

#### e. Lexical Cohesion

Lexical Cohesion is an important feature used as a link builder that would carry the issue or main idea in a discourse. Lexical cohesion involves restatements and lexical collocations (Idris Aman, 2010). The restatement occurs in three ways - firstly, the use of the same words or similar word (word repetition) secondly, the use of synonyms or similar words and finally, superordinate (word) usages. In the text of this song there are only synonyms found. In this song the use of /*man am*/ (மனம்) is repeated several times.

The phrase lines {1}, {2}, {9} and {10} are also repeated three times. Considering this song as a motivational one and if the words and phrases were not repeated, perhaps there would not have been the expected cohesion and coherency in poetical discourse.

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Besides, this kind of repetition of the same word or phrase in the lyrics, the poet makes use of another technic namely the use of synonyms for the expression of the same meaning. Use of synonyms such as மனம் /manam/ (heart), உள்ளம் /uLLam/ (heart/mind) துக்கம் /tukkam/ (sorrow), சோகம் /cookam/ (sadness) demonstrates this kind of occurrence. Use of such repetition is not easy because the diction chosen should be expressed and explained in the text according to the theme such as exposition of contents or performance. Use of synonyms can avoid repetition in the text and monotony in listening. In addition, use of synonyms reflects the writers' language competency in order to capture the attention of the audience.

#### f. The Choice of Diction

There are words deliberately chosen by the lyricist for expressing deep meanings so that the listeners (including fans) are able to appreciate the actual or sometimes the inner meaning delivered. Words or diction chosen sometimes give different meanings (contextual, social etc.) against those given in the dictionary or lexical/grammatical meaning. It is normal for the author to associate with the emotional elements with nature to realize the actual theme of a song. The table given below shows some of the dictions used in this song meaning different from the meaning given in the dictionary (lexical meaning).

Words	Meaning in the dictionary	Meaning Conveyed
வானம் /vaanam/	(Sky) which appears blue	success
இரவு /iravu/	(night)	the tribulation day
பகல் /pakal/	day time	brightness
உரம் /uram/	(fertile) materials for teaching	encouragement
காயங்கள் /kaayangkaL/	hurt/wound	grief
உடைந்து /uTaintu/	rupture- divided into small pieces	give up

#### g. Figurative Language

Besides paying attention to vocabulary, song writers also focus on networking elements such as speech prosody and figurative language in the lyrics of their songs. Awang Hashim (1987) explains that the figurative language is a language that is evolved from the analogy of the comparison between two things or different things but could indeed show the availability of some features or similarities. In short, figurative language is the language used to refer to a thing or comparing it with other things. *Hall Dictionary* (1996: 676) defines allegory as the consideration of a matter by comparing (similarity) with other matters, such as allegory, satire, teaching or example and symbol, the hidden meaning.

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Sandhya Nayak (2002: 58) has listed sixteen types of figurative language in his study of Tamil language. Examples: **simile, metaphor, personification, hyperbola, lilies, antithesis, oxymoron, metonymy, interrogation, climax, duplication, repetition, onomatopoeia and idiomatic** usages.

In this song, however, there are similes and idioms only. Apart from emphasizing, figurative language is used to create effects that can be a compelling beauty of figurative language. The two aspects of language are used to create additional image and increased feelings of well-meaning focused by the writer or lyricist. In short, these two aspects of language aim to attract and keep the in-depth meaning in the memory of the listener. Aspects of prosody and figurative language are widely used in the lyrics of this song. For example, lines {19}, {20}, {21} and {22} present the following:

{19} உளி தாங்கும் கற்கள் தானே  
/uLi thaankum kaRkaL taanee/  
Only those stones which were carved  
(which are strong enough for carving)

{20} மண் மீது சிலையாகும்,  
/maN miitu cilaiyaakum/  
(They) only become statues erected

{21} வலி தாங்கும் உள்ளம் தானே  
/vali taankum uLLam taanee/  
Only the mind that could bear the sufferings and hardships

{22} நிலையான சுகம் காணும்!  
/nilaiyaana cukam kaaNum!/  
Find everlasting joy

Parable lines {19, 20, 21, 22} explain that only those stones that could withstand the art of sculpting will become statues as well as perseverance to face future trials will enjoy the pleasure and that pleasure will be permanent. Lines {19} and {20} of the Tamil song explain the figurative meaning for the purpose of motivation. The song writer relates rock with the human heart. The hard rock can be carved. The choice of this parable brings out the expertise of the song writers in selecting this type of motivational songs.

Hyperbolic language is also used in the song so that the message can be communicated effectively and it can touch the hearts of the listeners. Hyperbolic language is normally used by the lyricist for exaggerating the elements or existing things. For example in lines {33}, {34}, {35} and {41} we find this.

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{33} வானம் அளவு யோசிப்போம்  
/vaanam aLavU yoocippoom/  
Let us think high.

{34} முயற்சி என்ற ஒன்றை மட்டும்  
/muyarci enRa onRai maTTum/  
Try your best/make effort to achieve.

{35} மூச்சு போல சுவாசிப்போம்!  
/muucu poola cuvaacippoom/  
as our breath

{41} விதை போடு மரமாகும்  
/vitai pooTu maramaakum/  
Plant the seed and it will grow as a tree.

Lines {33}, {34}, {40} and {41} consist of stylistic hyperbole. The purpose of all the highlighted lyrics which reflect the extremes of the common man. Song writers use hyperbolic language style to show deep focus on the message to be conveyed. Both of these lines 'Hi, Human! Scratch your heart and infuse seeds, seedlings would definitely be a tree,' ask us we must make every effort and continue with our trial so that we will succeed one day. Structure {40} and {41} are considered stylistic hyperbole because we are not able to plant seeds in our hearts. To focus on the efforts of song writers one should use comparative language style reflecting the extravagance of things and situations. In effect, to make a song more mesmerizing, earnest expressions in hyperbolic language are needed.

## h. Conclusion

In conclusion one can say that the lyric of *Ovvoru PuukkaLumee* poetical discourse has a well formatted texture. This is because the song has the linguistic features that contribute to the formation of an idea or meaning. In addition, all these lines have cohesion in terms of grammatical or lexical features, structures and relating links with one another in sequences.

A lyricist has to be sensitive towards the selection of elements to maintain either grammatical or lexical cohesion that produces a text with the intended idea and meaning to attract readers. In this case, the lyricist P. Vijay attracts the audience because of the elements that form the text help to achieve coherence. Thus, with these features and the motivational content, the song has become one of the popular motivational songs. In addition, all phrases are also structured well so that the rhythm of the song is not affected as the writer has chosen more appropriate vocabulary and grammatical forms in order to capture the attention of his listeners or readers. All the chosen lexical items and the use of such forms and phrases (lines) have added advantages which make this song quite popular not only among the masses

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(Tamil community) but also used in the Tamil schools in Malaysia in order to motivate young students, as the theme of the song has a constructive and positive motivation.

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## Appendix 1

### Song Lyrics (Tamil / English)

- {1} ஒவ்வொரு பூக்களுமே சொல்கிறதே  
ovvoru puukkalumee colkiRatee  
Each flower saying
- {2} வாழ்வென்றால் போராடும் போர்க்களமே!  
vaalvenTraal pooraaTum Poorkkalamee!  
life means a battle field
- {3} ஒவ்வொரு பூக்களுமே சொல்கிறதே  
ovvoru pookkalumee colkiRathee  
Each flower saying,
- {4} வாழ்வென்றால் போராடும் போர்க்களமே!  
vaalvenRaal poraaTum poorkkalamee  
life means a battle field
- {5} ஒவ்வொரு விடியலுமே சொல்கிறதே  
ovvoru viTiyalumee colkiRathee  
Every morning That said,
- {6} இரவானால் பகலொன்று வந்திடுமே!  
iravaanal pakalonRu vanthiTumee  
Day will be followed by dinner
- {7} நம்பிக்கை என்பது வேண்டும் நம் வாழ்வில்,  
nampikkai enpathu veeNTum nam vaaLvil  
We should have confidence in our
- {8} இலட்சியம் நிச்சயம் வெல்லும் ஒரு நாளில்!  
vellum nichayam lachiyam oru naalil  
We will succeed one day

{9} மனமே ஓ! மனமே! நீ மாறிவிடு!  
manamee manamee nii MaaRiviTu  
Mind, Oh Mind you transforme

{10} மலையோ! அது பனியோ! நீ மோதிவிடு!  
athu malaiyoo paniyoo nii motiviTu  
Whether it's rainy or snowy! You should

{11} உள்ளம் என்பது எப்போதும்  
ullam enthu eppotum  
your heart always

{12} உடைந்து போகக்கூடாது,  
uTaintu pookak kuuTaatu  
cannot give up

{13} என்ன இந்த வாழ்க்கை என்ற  
enna inta vaaLkai enRa  
We should not have tangapan

{14} எண்ணம் தோன்றக்கூடாது!  
eNNam thoonRa kkuuTaatu  
"What is this life?"

{15} எந்த மனிதன் நெஞ்சுக்குள்  
entha manitan nenjukkul  
Tell me, in the human heart does

{16} காயமில்லை சொல்லுங்கள்!  
kaayamilai collungkal  
not have scars / disappointed

{17} காலப் போக்கில் காயமெல்லாம்  
kaalap pokkil kaayamellaam  
the injury will

{18} மறைந்து போகும் மாயங்கள்!  
maRainthu pookum maayangkal  
be lost in the passage of time

{19} உளி தாங்கும் கற்கள் தானே  
uLi thaangkum kaRkal thaanee  
The bear just a stone chisel

{20} மண் மீது சிலையாகும்,  
maN miithu cilaiyaakum  
be carved in the earth ..

{21} வலி தாங்கும் உள்ளம் தானே  
vali thaangkum ullam thaanee  
Heart to bear the pain alone

{22} நிலையான சுகம் காணும்!  
nilaiyaana cukam kaaNum!  
Find lasting joy

{23} யாருக்கில்லைப் போராட்டம்!  
yaarukkillaiip pooraaTTam  
Who does not have a fight

{24} கண்ணில் என்ன நீரோட்டம்!  
kannil enna niirooTTam  
Why the tears flow!

{25} ஒரு கனவு கண்டால்  
oru kanavu kanTaal.  
if you aspire

{26} அதை தினம் முயன்றால்  
athai tinam muyanRaal  
and if the day-to-day efforts

{27} ஒரு நாளில் நிஜமாகும்!  
oru naalil nijamaakum  
you will get there one day!

{28} மனமே ஓ! மனமே! நீ மாறிவிடு!  
manamee oo manamee nii maaRiviTu!  
Mind, Oh Mind you transform (change your mind) ..

{29} மலையோ! அது பனியோ! நீ மோதிவிடு!  
malaiyoo! athu paniyoo nii moothiviTu  
Whether it's rainy or snowy! You should transforme

- {30} ஒவ்வொரு பூக்களுமே சொல்கிறதே  
ovvoru pookkalumee colkiRathee  
Each flower said,
- {31} வாழ்வென்றால் போராடும் போர்க்களமே!  
vaaLvenRaal pooraaTum Porkkalamee!  
life means a battle field
- {32} வாழ்க்கைக் கவிதை வாசிப்போம்  
vaaLkai kavithai vaasippom  
Let us all read the poem life
- {33} வானம் அளவு யோசிப்போம்  
vaanam alavu yoosippoom  
Thinking skies
- {34} முயற்சி என்ற ஒன்றை மட்டும்  
muyarci enRa onRai maTTum  
Let's assume joint
- {35} மூச்சு போல சுவாசிப்போம்!  
muucu poola cuvaacippoom  
as our breath
- {36} இலட்சம் கனவு கண்ணோடு  
ilacam kanavu kaNNoTu  
Have a dream in the eyes
- {37} இலட்சியங்கள் நெஞ்சோடு,  
ilaTciyangkal nenjcooTu  
Hearts dream
- {38} உன்னை வெல்ல யாரும் இல்லை  
unnai vella yaarum illai  
There is no one to compete with you
- {39} உறுதியோடு போராடு!  
Urutiyoda Poraadu  
so with confidence
- {40} மனிதா! உன் மனதைக் கீறி  
manithaa un manathai kiiRi

Oh man!, Tear your heart.

{41} விதை போடு மரமாகும்  
vithai pooTu maramaakum  
and plant the seed and it will be a tree

{42} அவமானம் படு தோல்வி  
avamaanam paTuthoolvi  
Humiliation and defeat.

{43} எல்லாமே உரமாகும்!  
ellamee uravaakum  
will be a source of success

{44} தோல்வியின்றி வரலாறா!  
toolvi inRi varalaaRaa.  
Is there a history without defeat?

{45} துக்கம் என்ன என் தோழா!  
tukkam enna en tooLaa  
Oh my friend!, Why are you sad?

{46} ஒரு முடிவிருந்தால்  
oru mudiviruntaal ..  
If you have a decision (determination)

{47} அதில் தெளிவிருந்தால்  
atil teliviruntaal  
and if it is clear,

{48} அந்த வானம் வசமாகும்!  
anta vaanam vasamaakum!  
Then heaven will be yours.

{49} மனமே! ஓ! மனமே! நீ மாறிவிடு!  
manamee oo manamee nee maariviTu  
Mind, Oh Mind you transform (change your mind) ..

{50} மலையோ அது பனியோ நீ மோதிவிடு!  
malaiyoo athu paniyoo nee mothiviTu  
Whether it's rainy or snowy! You should face it

- {51} ஒவ்வொரு பூக்களுமே சொல்கிறதே  
ovvoru puukkalumee colkiRathee  
Each flower said,
- {52} வாழ்வென்றால் போராடும் போர்க்களமே!  
vaalvenRaal pooraaTum pooorkkalamee  
Life means a battle field
- {53} ஒவ்வொரு விடியலுமே சொல்கிறதே  
ovvoru viTiyalumee colkiRathee  
Every morning That said,
- {54} இரவானால் பகலொன்று வந்திடுமே!  
iravaanaal pakalonRu vanthiTumee!  
Day will be followed by dinner
- {55} நம்பிக்கை என்பது வேண்டும் நம் வாழ்வில்  
nambikkai enpatu veenTum ... nam vaalvil  
We should have confidence in our
- {56} இலட்சியம் நிச்சயம் வெல்லும் ஒரு நாளில்!  
laciya nicaya vellum oru naalil  
We will succeed one day
- {57} மனமே ஓ! மனமே! நீ மாறிவிடு!  
manamee manamee nee maaRiviTu.  
Mind, Oh Mind you transform (change your mind) ..
- {58} மலையோ அது பனியோ? நீ மோதிவிடு!  
malaiyoo athu paniyoo nee mootiviTu  
Whether it's rainy or snowy! You should face it

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Thanalachime Perumal, Paramasivam Muthusamy and K. Karunakaran  
Poetical Discourse Analysis of a Tamil Song *Ovvoru PuukkaLumee*

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<415-432>

# A Parallel Study on Amitav Ghosh's *The Shadow Lines* and Chetan Bhagat's *The Three Mistakes of My Life*

Dr. G. Baskaran and P. Indu

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## Abstract

An attempt is made in this article to compare the two eminent contemporary novelists, Amitav Ghosh and Chetan Bhagat, who have taken India to the global scene through their narrative skills. The study is made to read their perceptions of reality, myth, history, politics, characters and some selected themes. The riots that broke the peace of the nation India at the time of partition of British India are taken for narration. How the riots were dealt with by Ghosh and Bhagat in their respective novels is the major focus of this study.



Chetan Bhagat

## Importance of Parallel Study

Parallel study paves the way to examine the similarities and the dissimilarities of a work of art by two different authors of the same country. M.M. Enani defines "Parallel Study" in the book *Theories of Comparative Literature*: "Any study of parallelism claims that there are affinities between the literatures of different peoples whose social evolution

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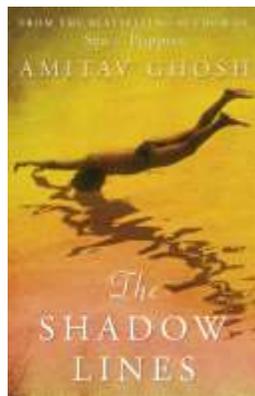
A Parallel Study on Amitav Ghosh's *The Shadow Lines* and Chetan Bhagat's  
*The Three Mistakes of My Life*

is similar, regardless of whether or not there is any mutual influence or direct relation between them” (42). The two works of art may contain the same theme but the narration or the tone of characterization may differ.

### **Amtav Ghosh and Chetan Bhagat**

The two authors taken for the parallel study are Indian English Writers Amitav Ghosh, a novelist, columnist, environmentalist, essayist and a travelogue writer and Chetan Bhagat whose works have become immensely popular in recent years. Chetan’s six novels have won critical praise and prestigious literary awards. His novel *The Five Point Someone* has also been adapted into a film and has brought more fame and glory to the writer. *The Three Mistakes of My Life* is his fifth novel that was written in 2008 and has found a place in bestselling lists across the world.

Amitav Ghosh, in an interview says, “I also liked Chetan Bhagat's first book -- I think he has a lot of talent and I hope that the urge to write bestsellers doesn't interfere with it” (n.p). Ghosh’s *The Shadow Lines* is a novel written in the year 1990. There are many similarities between these two writers. Both contribute a lot to Indian Writing in English literature and both write about the Indians and for the Indians. Their novels are written out of their own experiences and there is a blend of historical incidents that happened in our country.



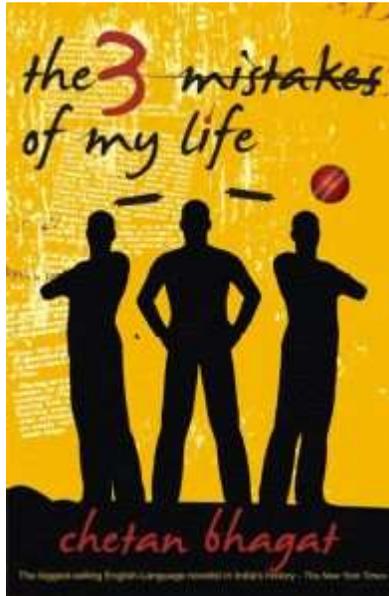
The novels taken for comparison are Ghosh’s *The Shadow Lines* and Chetan’s *The Three Mistakes of My Life*. Both the novels give importance to friendship and deal

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with the religious riot that took place in our country at various situations. These two novels are real stories of mission, obsession and sacrifice.



#### **A Nameless Narrator – A Memory Novel**

Ghosh's *The Shadow Lines* is narrated by a nameless narrator and is also a memory novel. He focuses on the political events and the religious riot which took place during the war of 1962 and 1964. The story is about the families of Mr. Justice Chandrashekhara Datta Chaudhary and Lionel Tresawson. Though they belong to different religions and regions, they are tied with the band of friendship. Tridib is the friend of the narrator, and also his philosopher and guide. Thamma the grandmother of the narrator is a widowed school teacher who hates the moderns and the youngsters and she considers Tridib as a “loafer and a wastrel lives off his father's money” (TSL 04).

#### **Social Problems and Politicization of Religion**

Social problems like Hindu-Muslim riot or political issues like the politicization of religion are the burning themes discussed in both the novels. These problems are seen through the eyes of Govind, Ishan and Omi in the novel *The Three Mistakes of My Life* and through the eyes of Tridib, the narrator and Thamma in the novel *The Shadow Lines*.

#### ***The Three Mistakes of My Life***

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Chetan's *The Three Mistakes of My Life* is also based on the real events of the sectarian riot that took place in Gujarat in 2002. It is set on the backdrop of communal disharmony of Gujarat. It tells the story of three friends, namely, Ishan, Omi and Govind, who grew up in the same boarding school and are drawn into a romantic triangle. Their destinies are predetermined and yet the three of them are unable to get past the traps of love and betrayal of life. They yearn and dream for a future to be one but they become the figures of revulsion in later years. This not only sets the perspective for the intimate and ultimately tragic relationship they build with each other, but also provide an interpretation of the human society.

This novel is also about the three friends and their part in rescuing the life of an innocent Muslim boy Ali. Ishan, one among the three friends, aims to become a cricketer. Like Thamma in the novel *The Shadow Lines* considering Tridib as a loafer, here Ishan is considered as a loafer by his father. His dad sarcastically comments "cut a cake today to celebrate one year of your uselessness" (TML 03). Ishan's father paints him as a loafer to his neighbors. He says "He and his loafer friends hanging around the house all day along" (5).

### **Youth in the Sight of Elders, But There is Redemption**

Here both the novelists point the mistaken sense of the elders about the youngsters. Tridib is doing Ph.D. in Archeology and is considered as a loafer. Ishan's interest in cricket makes him a loafer in the eyes of his father. Later he drifts into the life of an ordinary cricket coach. He sees a great potential in the Muslim boy Ali and he decides to support him because as a lover of cricket he did not like Ali's talent to go waste. He did not like a repetition of misfortune. So he is magnanimous in helping the boy. Somewhere in his psyche, the boy becomes a prop, a substitute for his lost self and he again hopes to re-live his own unfulfilled child hood dream.

Through Ishan, Chetan allows the readers to understand the struggle and obstacle faced by a sports person and enables the reader to see the real person behind the mask of superstar.

### **Love of One's Own City**

Govind in *The Three Mistakes of My Life* is very much attached to his own city Ahmedabad. He says, "Ahmedabad is my city. It is strange, but if you have had happy times in a city for a long time, you consider it the best city in the world. I feel the same about Ahmedabad" (TML 06). Like Govind, Tridib is very much attached to his native city. Though his parents live in abroad, he lives in his grandmother's house in Calcutta. He roams around the Gol Park with his wandering friends.

### **Obsession with Western Culture**

The lasses of this generation want to be free from the tangles of their parents and are obsessed with western culture. This kind of attachment degrades their temperament among the elders who are rooted in old values. In *The Shadow Lines*, Thamma condemns Ila who wants to be free in her own way. She is obsessed with foreign culture and wishes to dance with the strangers in the pub. She says in anguish, "I've chosen to live in London . . . because I want to be free of your bloody culture and free of all of you" (TSL 98). Ghosh shows the decline of our culture among the youngsters living abroad.

### **Craze for Modernism**

Like Ila, there is a character in Chethan's *The Three Mistakes of My Life* that is Vidya. She aspires to be a PR and wants to be free and live her life king-size. Her room itself portrays her passion for western culture. "Her [Vidya] room was filled with postures of west life, Backstreet boy." (TML 49). She takes everything light and easy in life. She says "life's best gifts are free" (TML 182).

### **No Love for Own City**

Both Ila and Vidya have no attachment towards their native town. Vidya says “I want to get out of Ahmedabad” (TML 47). She is crazy about the foreign land. When Govind brings sand from the Australian beach, she gleefully says, “Wow an Australian beach in my hands” (TML 182). These two Ila and Vidya are of modern and are free of commitments of relationship, of duties and everything. Their motto is to live for one’s own self. They do not bother about anything or care for others. They both have a growing interest in metropolitan culture in which there is no place for emotions and feelings.

### **Harm Caused by Communal Prejudice**

Both Ghosh and Chetan have brought out the harm caused by the communal prejudice in their novels. Valuable lives are lost due to prejudice. Novy Kapadia in his article “Imagination and Politics in Amitav Ghosh’s *The Shadow Lines*” rightly points out “Amitav Ghosh’s greatest triumph is that the depiction of communal strife in Calcutta and erstwhile East Pakistan, and its continuation in contemporary India, is very controlled and taut” (208).

### **Communal Riots**

In *The Shadow Lines*, the religious riot was caused due to the theft of the relic. The disappearance of the sacred relic known as the Mui-i-Mubarak - sacred hair of the Prophet Mohammed from the Hazratbal Mosque led to the communal riot which began in Kashmir and spread to Pakistan, Bangladesh and Calcutta.

In the novel *The Three Mistakes of My Life* the author brings out the communal riot that happened in Gujarat when the Sabarmati train was attacked. People are marginalized on the basis of ability, economic status and of religion.

Omi’s roots are in Hindu culture, it is infused in his blood yet, later he is considered an atheist and rebel. Here the religious politician Bitto Mama is responsible for the tragedy. He is a very staunch believer and supporter of his religion and regards

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others who practice other religions as his foe. He incites violence against the Muslims whoever he sees them in the street. He teaches the devotees of his religion to “keep bearing pain...Our scriptures tell not to harm others. They teach us patience” (TML 42). But he is the first person who does not follow the words.

### **In Support of Equality**

Ghosh conveys equality through the words of Thamma in the novel *The Shadow Lines* “Once that happens people forget that they were born this or that, Muslim or Hindu, Bengali or Punjabi: they become a family born of the same pool of blood. That is what you have to achieve for India, don’t you see?”(TSL 77-78).

The sacrifice of Omi is the climax of the novel *The Three Mistakes of My Life* and the sacrifice of Tridib in rescuing Jethamoshai in the riot is the climax of the novel *The Shadow Lines*. Both Omi and Tridib understand the value of human life and the harm caused by religious disharmony. Amidst the world of violence, through these two peaceful figures the authors remind the need for us to lead a harmonious life. Ghosh and Chetan pay their tributes and condolences to the martyrs who lost their lives in the riots.

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# Role of Rote Learning as an ESL Learning Strategy

D. Sankary, M.A., M.Phil., B.Ed., P.G.D.T.E., Ph.D.

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## Abstract

Hundreds of thousands of graduates of both professional and non-professional courses are churned out every year by the universities and colleges in India. Unfortunately, a majority of them often find themselves in the status of perennial job-seekers running from one establishment to another. Ultimately, most of them reconcile themselves to the fate of being rejected by the job market as “unemployable”, in spite of their score cards bearing the stamp of a ‘first-class’ or ‘super-first class’. What causes this anomaly?

This article attempts to probe some of the reasons behind the malady, from the perspective of ESL (English as Second Language) proficiency. The investigation is done with the help of a random survey carried out among a group of ESL learners at the point of their entry into various undergraduate courses in South India. Nevertheless, the findings of this study would be representative of the status of the ESL proficiency of a vast majority of the Indian student community.

## Background of the Study

A study carried out among 32,000 school children from 142 schools across five metropolitan cities in India, viz., Chennai, Bangalore, Mumbai, Kolkata and New Delhi jointly by Educational Initiatives (EI), a research organization and WIPRO, a leading Indian software company, has come out with some alarming findings. A few of them are

- a. Students fare well in rote questions, but trip up on those needing interpretation and analysis.
- b. Language is being learnt less as something integral and useful, and more as a subject for a test.
- c. Learning is rote-based and does not focus on real knowledge. (*India Today*,

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November 27, 2006).

Against the backdrop of this survey carried out among students from leading schools situated in the metropolitan cities in India, the present study tries to analyse how well and how far can these findings be relevant to students passing out from state funded schools who constitute the largest chunk of student population in India.

### **Behaviourist Theory of Language Learning**

Learning is “conditioned behaviour”, which is ‘observable’ believe the behaviourists. To them, the human being is an organism capable of a wide repertoire of behaviours, and the occurrence of these behaviours is dependent upon three crucial elements in learning, viz., a ‘stimulus’ which serves to elicit behaviour; the ‘response’ triggered by a stimulus; and ‘reinforcement’, which serves to acknowledge the response as being appropriate / inappropriate and encourages the repetition / suppression of the response in the future (Skinner, 1957; Brown, 1980). Thus, according to this theory, learning is the outcome of manipulation, and the learner is a mere instrument manipulated by an external agency to produce the desired behaviour. And, the agency outside the learner is a teacher in the case of language learning. In this process of learning, practice and use play a very vital role. No wonder, imitation, memorization and pattern drilling are the tools used widely to achieve the desired verbal behaviour.

### **Cognitive Theory of Learning**

Learning, in the view of the cognitivists, is a mental process of induction. According to them, it is the faculty which permits the learner to ‘monitor’ and evaluate the different ‘stimuli’ being received, to co-ordinate and regulate them, to ‘reject’ some of them, and to develop appropriate responses to those stimuli which are ‘accepted’. Therefore, it depends on perception and insight formation. And, all the learning is in the nature of problem-solving. In language learning, the stimuli received are the ‘input’, which is the sample of language data. The learner processes this data using the ‘data-processing mechanism present in him. The input is not just a number of sentences (to be

memorized and imitated/reproduced), but a whole range of language data, and the output is, again, not just a number of ‘sentences’, but a system of rules, which allows the learner to produce innumerable sentences. Therefore, even a limited exposure to language can result in an almost unlimited output, revealed in the human child’s capacity to produce sentences which are new (Chomsky, 1966).

Thus, the behaviourist theory differs rather widely from the cognitivist views. While the former emphasizes the importance of practice leading to the formation of automatic habits of verbal behavior, the latter stresses the role of insight, hypothesis formation and learning through discovery in language learning. However, both of them converge on the common point that, learning takes place through exposure to experience.

### **Language Propensity**

A relatively recent theory is the one which hinges on the element of innateness in the process of language learning. This view is supported by studies carried out by great psycholinguists like Noam Chomsky, who consider themselves to be cognitivists. According to their theory of ‘innateness’ in learning, every human child possesses, at birth, a biological apparatus, viz., the Language Acquisition Device (LAD) which pre-disposes him/her to the learning of a language. In other words, a child’s brain is biologically ‘programmed’ for the learning of language. This accounts for the potential of a child to learn languages effortlessly and become readily an ambilingual.

All these theories of language learning play their own role in the process of learning a second language. But, when one theory is stretched beyond the limits of desirability leaving behind the other, there arises the problem.

### **ELT Scenario in Indian Classrooms**

“Though it is clear that a mechanical process of teaching and learning-by-rote is dysfunctional, it continues to pervade almost all of India’s class rooms”, laments one of

the leading employers of software professionals in India, Azim H. Premji (*India Today*, November 27, 2006).

And, an ESL classroom in any part of the country is no exception to this trend. Following the concept that language is “conditioned verbal behaviour”, which can be produced by continuous exposure to the desired language output, the learners are constantly subjected to an overdose of repetition and pattern drilling right from the primary level. In the name of practice, pattern drilling is followed with the pious conviction that it results in the learner’s internalization of the features of sentence construction, which in turn, leads to successful language learning.

### **Goal: Performative Communicative Acts**

But experience makes one understand that the overuse of certain patterns *ad nauseum* without cognitive understanding does not lead to the effective use of ESL in real life situations. For, mindless parroting of information which is arbitrary and verbatim does not lead to real understanding. Hence, what is imperative in ESL pedagogy is, as Widdowson rightly points out, that language teaching should “effect the transfer from grammatical competence, a knowledge of sentences, to what has been called communicative competence, a knowledge of how sentences are used in the performance of communicative acts of different kinds” (Widdowson, 1978).

But, in the Indian context, school administrators seem to appreciate one feature of the ‘mim-mem’ and pattern drill methods: a feature which has undoubtedly contributed to the widespread adoption of this method (Tarinaya, 1992). For, these teaching methods do not require the teacher to be either competent in the skills or conversant in the language that he teaches - at least, not when he is teaching at the elementary level of instruction. Perhaps, that is why, the educational system adopted by many states in India has entrusted the job of teaching the English language to teachers of any subject up to the secondary level.

## **Value of Memorization and Pattern Drilling**

Indeed, no one can discount the positive role played by the mimicry, memorization and pattern drilling method in the teaching of pronunciation. But in the other aspects of language learning like grammar and vocabulary the memorization method has its own limitations, because, after all, “to know by memory an ample stock of ready-made sentences in a language is not the same as to know that language” (de Saussure, 1929). Incidentally, in real life situations, except for purposes of quotation, people rarely use sentences used by others. Moreover, it is humanly impossible to store a large number of sentences in one’s head. Therefore, what a language learner needs is not a stockpile of sentences memorized verbatim, but the rules for creating and understanding these sentences. This was proved by the experiment conducted by Saussure and others which found out that the linguistic skills “such as reading, writing, speaking and understanding were achieved in greater proportion and in less time when the learning technique involved a maximum amount of conscious learning (de Saussure 1959).

## **Execution of the project**

The study was carried out among a sample group of 381 students entering various degree courses at A.P.C. Mahalakshmi College for Women, Tuticorin affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli located in South India.

The target skill chosen for assessment was free writing. Therefore, two tasks viz., a) framing own sentences (using the given words viz., ‘books’, ‘examination’, ‘temple’, ‘cinema’, and ‘chair’); b) writing a free paragraph on a given topic viz., ‘Market’ were administered to the study group. These tasks were evaluated against a maximum score of 10 marks each, amounting to a total of 20 marks. The sub-skills considered for the assessment included i) structure, ii) content, iii) grammar and iv) vocabulary with respect to the first task, and i) content, ii) organization, iii) vocabulary, iv) language use, v) mechanics with regard to the second task. All these skills were assessed on an equal footing within the total marks allotted for each of the tasks.

## Results and Findings

The assessment of the study group's performance in the two given tasks yielded the following results.

### Sentence Making

Sub skills assessed	Performance Score	
	≥ 50%	< 50
Structure	30%	70%
Content	81%	19%
Language use	9%	91%
Vocabulary	56%	44%
Overall	51%	49%

### Paragraph Writing

Sub skills assessed	Performance Score	
	≥ 50%	< 50%
Content	69%	31%
Organization	40%	60%
Vocabulary	53%	47%
Language Use	36%	64%
Mechanics	62%	37%
Overall	33%	67%

The tables given above reveal a wide gap between the study group's performance

in task I and task II. Indeed, their skill of writing a free paragraph seems to be poorer than that of writing individual sentences.

In an attempt to find out the reason behind this anomaly, an analysis of the learning strategy used by the study group to acquire the skill of writing was made. It brought out the following findings.

Learning Strategy Used	Performance Score	
	≥ 50%	< 50%
Cognitive Understanding	54%	46%
Rote Learning	0%	100%

The table given above indicates that among the learners who used cognitive understanding as their main learning strategy, 54% of them have scored  $\geq 50\%$  marks, while among those who used rote memorization, no one has scored  $\geq 50\%$  marks.

Indeed, this trend indicates the fact that while cognitive understanding has benefitted the learners in the skill of text generation, learning by rote does not seem to have facilitated it much.

A further analysis of the study group's answers reveals the repetition of a particular syntactic structure, and the use of a limited range of vocabulary by a majority of the participants. Incidentally, the syntax patterns which are found to be repeated indiscriminately in both the tasks happen to be S+V (be) + C and SVA.

For examples, see appendix.

## Conclusion

Indeed, the examples cited in the appendix seem to indicate that learning by rote has resulted only in the learners' reproduction of the range of syntax and vocabulary which they have been frequently exposed to in their classroom instruction. Unfortunately,

it has neither led to their use of varied syntactic structures nor the use of appropriate vocabulary. Therefore, the learners have failed to acquire the skill of free writing which requires not only the knowledge and the use of a wide variety of syntactic structures but also the ability to generate new text and achieve learner autonomy. Perhaps, rote learning as a learning strategy in this case does not seem to have helped the ESL learners acquire the desired language behaviour and become proficient users of the target language.

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### APPENDIX

- 1. pat dia - ✓
- 2. Sh - x
- 3. Sh vas - x
- 4. 10000 - x
- 5. 20000 - x
- 6. 30000 - x

not include

1/2

C - 1/2  
S - 0  
V - 0  
G - 0

TASK - II

Frame sentences of your own using the words given below : (Sentence need not exceed 10 words)

1. book

Tamil book and English book and History book and Economic book and Account book is very enjoyed

2. examination

The English test is very useful. It brain to very usefully the examination.

3. temple

The temple is excited to use fully.  
The players is very use fully temple.

4. cinema

The cinemas, dramas, cartoons of venter  
The television is one of the wonders of science

5. chair

The Chair is siting to use fully.  
The chairs is very use ful.

pattern drill → same pattern → SVA  
SVO

C - 2 1/2  
S - 1 1/2

**TASK - II** 6/10

Frame sentences of your own using the words given below : (Sentence need not exceed 10 words)

1. book

I like books very much. So every time I read books.

2. examination

I wrote the public examination in the 12th standard in 2003.

3. temple

I went to the temple of every week with my family and friends.

4. cinema

Every Sunday I saw the cinema in Sun TV.

5. chair

I came to the furniture room and I saw (lots of chairs.)

pattern drilling

**TASK - II**

8/2/10

C-2 1/2  
S-2 1/2  
V-2  
G-12

Frame sentences of your own using the words given below : (Sentence need not exceed 10 words)

1. book

2

I read a book. ✓

2. examination

12

I have passed the 12<sup>th</sup> examination. ✓

3. temple

12 ✓

I go to the temple on every Friday. ✓

4. cinema

12 ✓

I saw a cinema last week. ✓

5. chair

2

The book is on the chair. ✓

pat-drill - ✓

## TASK - II

Frame sentences of your own using the words given below : (Sentences need not exceed 10 words)

1. book

12  
Book is very useful in general  
knowledge. It is very helpful in reading habit.

2. examination

12  
Examination is very tough in  
school days.

3. temple

12  
Temple is a very beautiful place.  
I am going to temple daily.

4. cinema

12  
Cinema is used for entertainment.  
Because today's cinema is not comfortable.

5. chair

12  
Chair is very helpful for sitting.  
It is a science magic.

TASK - I

NAME : K. Athista Lakshmi

CLASS : B.A Tamil lit.

TIME TAKEN : 25 min

Write a paragraph in about 100 words on the topic 'Market'.

Market.

Market is the very nice place. It is

a very big place. Some other varieties,

of the market, fish market, ~~and~~ fruits market,

& flower market. At the flower market is

Very nice small,

sales market is very

sound place. Public's ~~business~~ take

the vegetables to the good rate

at the market. Sunday at the market

TASK - 1

NAME : L. Sangeetha

CLASS : I.B.A History

24/5

TIME TAKEN : 25 mls

Write a paragraph in about 100 words on the topic 'Market'.

Market is very useful. <sup>w/o</sup> then

Market is many market, Fruit market, flower market, <sup>C; s/p, w/o</sup> vegetables market, Fishmarket than <sup>w/o</sup> onion, carrot, <sup>w/o</sup> more than

vegetables <sup>w/o</sup> is very important. <sup>w/o</sup> than more

people going to the market, than fruit, <sup>w/o</sup> vegetables purchased. Madurai market

is very big. Market is today <sup>w/o</sup> enormous

first. <sup>w/o</sup> than market is very important <sup>w/o</sup> many people like market. more things

purchased. <sup>w/o</sup> flower is very fresh. <sup>w/o</sup> women's is very like flower. <sup>w/o</sup> fruit is health strength, good food.

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# Use of Markers Observed in the Spoken Language Lexical Corpora of Children in Kannada Language

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## Abstract

Research in the area of child language thrives on the availability of naturalistic language data. However, Indian endeavours are meagre and confined to the language data acquired by the Speech - Language Pathologists which is limited to the purview of their study. The present study is part of a post-doctoral work carried out at All India Institute of Speech and Hearing (AIISH).

The study established a spoken language lexical corpus of children between the ages of 6 and 8 in Kannada language. The language data of 240 children, living in the city of Mysore was collected through description of standardised pictures, story narration and narration of daily activities of the child. The present paper looks into the use of markers by children while highlighting the need to encourage further research in the field of child language.

**Keywords:** spoken language corpus, language acquisition, markers,

## Introduction

Endeavour towards establishing a corpora in India is meagre and has been restricted to the pioneering work in the 1980's that saw the creation of the Kolhapur Corpus of Indian English (KCIE) by Shastri. It was created based on the guidelines of the Brown Corpus. In the 1990s the Department of Electronics, Government of India initiated the scheme of Technology Development for Indian Languages (TDIL) to establish electronic corpora in Indian languages which led to a compilation of around three million words from different disciplines representing English, Hindi, Punjabi, Tamil, Malayalam, Telugu, Kannada, Marathi, Guajarati, Oriya, Bangla, Assamese, Sanskrit, Urdu, Sindhi and Kashmiri languages. The project was undertaken by various agencies such as the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Delhi, Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL), Mysore, Deccan College, Pune, Indian Institute of Applied Language

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Science, Bhubaneshwar, Sampurnanada Sanskrit University, Varanasi, and Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh. However, the project was discontinued and later revived in the 2003. (See Dash, 2005)

The corpora generated in different languages and presently available are listed by the Open Language Archives Community (OLAC), which lists corpora that are available to the public as well as corpora that is specialised with its use restricted to certain agencies. OLAC lists the available corpora such as the corpora to study language development such as CHILDES, ESL/EFL learner corpora such as International Corpus of Learner English (ICLE), etc., monolingual corpora such as Modern Chinese Language Corpus (MCLC) and comparative corpora such as COMPARA and many others.

### **Sporadic Child Language Corporuses in Indian Languages**

Child language corporuses that exist are created using reports by parents, audio and video recording of child speech. The major corpus in the area of language acquisition is CHILDES and has been expanded to document the intricate processes of language acquisition by children in different language settings such as Hebrew, Japanese, French, etc.

However, in the Indian scenario endeavours in the area of child language acquisition have been sporadic and is largely restricted to the purview of conducted studies such as a study of the different stages of acquisition or the lacunae that might occur during the process of language acquisition like the Tamil audio recording by R. Narasimhan (Tata Institute of Fundamental Research) and R. Vaidyanathan (Audiology and Speech Therapy School, Nair Hospital, Mumbai) which led to CHILDES database in 1984.

The audio recordings are interactions of a child with her parents in unstructured care-taking situation in her home from the age of 9 months to the age of 33 months. The interactions were recorded over a period of 24 months with biweekly intervals.

Although, various agencies in India such as AIISH have begun to collate and establish a corpus of child language, there still exists a dearth of normative data of language acquisition that can be of use in the area of speech - language pathology.

### **Present Project**

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The present project is a beginning in the gargantuan endeavour of documenting and describing the language use seen in typically developing children in various contexts such as spontaneous speech settings, picture elicitation, picture description, etc. The project's primary endeavour is to establish a lexical corpus of spoken language (Kannada) of children between the ages of six to eight years.

### Previous Studies

Table 1.1 gives a brief overview of the studies in the area of child language acquisition in India.

**Table 1.1**

*Studies in Language Acquisition in Children in India*

Sailaja (1994)	Investigated the role of syntax in the acquisition of Telugu.
Shukla & Mohanty (1995)	Studied the influence of maternal speech styles on language acquisition showed a significant correlation between the two.
Devaki (1995)	Studied the development of past tense in Kannada children
Khokle (1995)	Studied the acquisition of aspirated /g/ segment in Marathi
Lakshmi Bai & Vasanta (1995)	Contributed extensively to the study of language acquisition in children by studying the acquisition of different classed phonemes of Tamil and Telugu languages in different positions. Her observation of language acquisition in children supported the view that “the development of phonology cannot be studied meaningfully without considering the lexical items that contain the speech segments, which are affected by the phonological process operating at particular stages of development” (Misra, 2009).
Vasanta, Sastry & Maruth (1995, as cited in Misra,	Studied the development of metalinguistic ability in children, awareness of metalinguistic skills in Telugu speaking children

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2009)	between the ages of 4.5 to 8.5 years concluded that metalinguistic ability improved with age. Children between the ages of 6.5 to 8.5 years were able to perform well in tasks such as sentence correction.
Prakash & Mohanty (1995)	Studied the development of metalinguistic ability and its effect of children from grades 1 to 5 and concluded that phonemic awareness does not play a crucial role in learning to read
Prema (1979)	Reported a gradual improvement in the performance of Kannada speaking children on phonological tasks (rhyme identification, phoneme oddity, phoneme segmentation, phoneme identification), which reached a ceiling level by grade V.
Narasimhan (1998)	Studied language acquisition in children and concluded that acquisition of language is based on pragmatic consideration of language use.
Nayak (2002)	Reported on the comparative study of developmental patterns in the acquisition of phonological awareness in Marathi speaking children with normal and impaired hearing studying in junior kindergarten and concluded that children in both groups obtained lower scores on phonological awareness tasks than children in grade I.
Shyamala & Devi (2003)	Reported the developmental milestones of language acquisition in Kannada and Hindi, which revealed that children acquired Kannada and Hindi languages in almost similar manner with a few differences in the acquisition of verb inflections in Kannada speaking children, was attained at (42-48 months). Hindi speaking children attained the same at the age of 24-30 months and they inflected nouns, pronouns, and adjectives for plurality in Hindi by children at the age of 36-42 months while Kannada speaking children had yet to attain the

	<p>aspirated and non- aspirated contrasts by the age of 54-60 months. The study also reiterated the fact that children learning two languages simultaneously attempt to build a unitary lexical system that draws from both the languages. The study also indexed the two stage of acquisition of phonology in children i.e. stage one being the process wherein the word is paid attention to, in an undifferentiated manner and in stage two the child sorts the articulatory differences that make up the word.</p>
Kumudavalli (1973)	<p>Investigated the relationship between articulation and discrimination of Kannada speech sounds in terms of distinctive features in children between the ages of four and eight years. The study discovered that there was a definite pattern in the development of discrimination. Features of voicing and nasality were distinguished at an earlier stage. Children acquired all the distinctions by the age of 8 years.</p>
Sreedevi (1976)	<p>Studied the aspects of acquisition of Kannada by 2+ years old children found that the additions of /-illa/, /be:da/ are acquired earlier than other type of negative markers with modal auxiliaries.</p>
Tasneem (1977)	<p>Investigated the acquisition of Kannada phonemes in one hundred and eighty typically developing schoolchildren in the age range of 3 to 6.6 years in the city of Mysore. The results indicated that there was a statistically significant difference in articulation score for different age groups and between genders in the same age group. The study also found a definite pattern in the acquisition of articulation and showed that the socioeconomic status affected the acquisition of phonology. There was a gradual change from age to age and the fricative /h/ was not acquired by the age of 6:6.</p>
Subramanya (1978)	<p>Studied the development of some morphological categories in children Kannada: A study of children 6-8 years age range indicated</p>

	<p>the use of morphosyntactic markers by children and discovered that Morphological markers are used to indicate changes in number, gender and tense. The plural marker /galu/ was predominantly used but, /aru/ and /andiru/ was not acquired. Order of acquisition was /galu/, /aru/ and /andiru/.</p> <p>Gender allomorph /-i/ and /alu/ was acquired. The children had difficulty using /-e/ and used it less frequently. The children had not acquired /-gitti/. The order of acquisition was /-i/, /alu/, /-e/ and /-gitti/.</p> <p>The children showed the ability to use future and past tense.</p> <p>The tense allomorph was more difficult to use than gender and plural.</p>
Roopa (1980)	<p>Studied some syntactic development in 4-5 years old Hindi speaking children. The study looked into the spontaneous speech, storytelling, description of a picture book, describing view master slides, playing with toy animals, etc. of four children living in the city of Mysore. The study reported that sentence structures of children are similar to that of the adults though certain sentences showed a lack of noun and verb agreement. Word negations were not seen in the samples obtained. The children used both affirmative and imperative sentences in their speech. The 5-year-old children used almost all the structures used by the 4 year old. Differences between boys and girls in the same age group are evident only in structure used rarely by the children.</p>
Venugopal (1981)	<p>Studied the production of certain syntactic elements like negation, interrogation, imperative, coordination, pronominalisation and relativization in Tamil speaking children between the ages of five and six. The study reports that the syntax structure of children is similar to that of adults. 6-year-old boys and 5-year-old girls rarely</p>

	showed disagreement between noun and verb, pronoun and verb in their sentences. Consistent use of negative affixes /-aad/ was not observed. Transformational rules for deriving interrogatives sentences have been acquired by the children.
Vijayalakshmi (1981)	Developed a test for acquisition of syntax in Kannada speaking children up to five years of age. The performance of eighty-five children on TASK has led to the following conclusions that the process of acquisition of syntax shows systematic development in acquiring more and more lexical structures and sentences types of age progresses. Comprehension of language is better than expression when children begin to speak and this difference exists until the children are around 3-6 years of age. Comprehension of language starts early and develops faster than expression until the age of about 3-6 years. The expressive ability picks up faster and competes closely with that of comprehension after the age of 3-6 years. Girls perform better than boys in the age range between 2.0 to 3.0 years. From 3.0 years onwards, boys pick up faster. Around the age of 5 years both, perform similarly. There is universality in the process of syntax acquisition, as seen from the general agreement with the report of other language.
Madhuri (1982)	Studied some aspects of syntactic development in Marathi speaking children aged 2 1/2 to 3 years. The study reported that the sentences structure of the children were similar to that of the adult. The children did not consistently maintain concord between gender, number of the noun and the verb in their sentences. Three-year-old children used more abstract nouns, case endings, than two and half-year olds. Coordinated speech samples were present in the speech samples while pronominalization within sentences was not observed.

	A 6-8 months difference in age caused considerable difference in the sentence structures of the children.
Prakshan (1999)	Developed a Picture Speech Identification Test for Children in Tamil between the ages of 3-6.6 years. It reported that an age related difference in the performance in the speech identification score with a significant statistical difference between 3-3.11 and oldest 6-6.11.
Lahl Mangaihi (2009)	Worked on development and standardisation of spondees and phonetically balanced word list in Mizo that can be used to measure the Speech Recognition Test and Speech Identification Score for native speakers of Mizo. The list was created using familiar bisyllabic and monosyllabic randomly selected words from different sources like newspapers, books and telephonic conversations of individuals fluent in the language.

The above studies have examined the various aspects of language acquisition in typically developing children along with children exhibiting deficiency in language acquisition from the age of two years onwards. However, by the age of six years, children start going to school and their process of language acquisition sees an accelerated growth due to various factors such as interaction with peer group, and so on. The studies also lack normative data on the lexical acquisition of children from the age of 6 years.

### **Method**

A total of two hundred and forty typically developing normal children's speech ability, was ascertained by administering the WHO ten-Question disability screening checklist (Singhi, Kumar, Malhi & Kumar, 2007), as well as using the teacher's report. The selected participants' mother tongue was Kannada; they lived in predominantly Kannada speaking areas, and attended state run Kannada medium schools. The age group of the participants was between the ages of six and eight years with a mean difference in their ages of about six months. The participants were

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divided into two groups of thirty each according to gender and were assigned to the four age groups namely 6-6.5, 6.6-7.00, 7.1-7.5 and 7.6-8.00 (30 Boys ; 30 Girls) in each group.

Table 1.2

*Participants*

Age	Boys	Girls
6-6.5	30	30
6.6-7.00	30	30
7.1-7.5	30	30
7.6-8.00	30	30
<b>Total</b>		<b>240</b>

Spoken language samples were elicited from the participants through *spontaneous utterances* obtained during the narration of daily activities and *elicited utterances* to standard pictures as well as picture description and story-telling. Each participant was seen individually in a library or in a quiet classroom. The child was made comfortable with a few general questions to build rapport as well as to familiarise the child with recording equipment. Instructions were given to the child to describe the pictures that were shown to him/her. Tasks were administered in the following order:

- The first task administered was Story-telling (Standardised pictures, Nagapoornima, 1990). In this task, the participant was shown a series of pictures and asked to describe the picture by making a story from the sequential pictures presented. The responses were recorded on a digital recorder that was later orthographically transcribed and analysed using SALT software.
- The second task was narration of experiences in their daily routine activities as a part of spontaneous language sample. The responses were recorded on a digital recorder that was later orthographically transcribed, fed into SALT software for analysis.

- The third task was picture description in which Computerized linguistic protocol for screening - CliPS (Anitha & Prema, 2004) was administered. This was administered using a laptop on which a series of line drawing were presented and the participant was asked to name/point to each picture as instructed.

The recorded data was transferred on to a computer, transcribed and each linguistic unit was tagged according to the conventions of SALT keeping the rules of Kannada language.

## Results and Discussion

The data was subjected to Univariate Analyses of Variance to examine associations between age group, gender and lexical categories. The results show that with the children of the age group of eight years, the mean percent frequency of lexical categories uttered by the participants is in the following order, the highest being PNG Markers (72.36), Adjectives (59.20), Nativised words (55.86), Verb (53.19), Nouns, (53.07), Numbers (51.00), Negatives (49.16), Comparatives (48.20), Dialectal Varieties (43.71), Prepositions (42.11), Code switches (39.45), Pronouns (39.96), Error words (32.32), Non words (29.50), New words (26.55), Question tags (16.25) and the least being Standard words (12.49). The mean percent frequency for overall developmental pattern was greater (53.23) at eight years compared to other age groups.

The present paper is concentrating on the usage of Markers by the participants and hence concentrates only on that section

Kannada is an agglutinative language wherein the root takes the markers that represent the markers for person, number and gender. The following table represents the Mean and S.D Scores obtained for PNG Markers.

Table 1.3

### *Mean and S.D of Markers*

Age group	Boys		Girls	
	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D

6.0-6.5	74.07	4.74	72.09	4.99
6.6-6.7	73.16	5.01	71.05	8.38
7.1-7.5	73.19	4.75	73.15	8.09
7.6-8.0	71.54	4.94	70.70	8.10

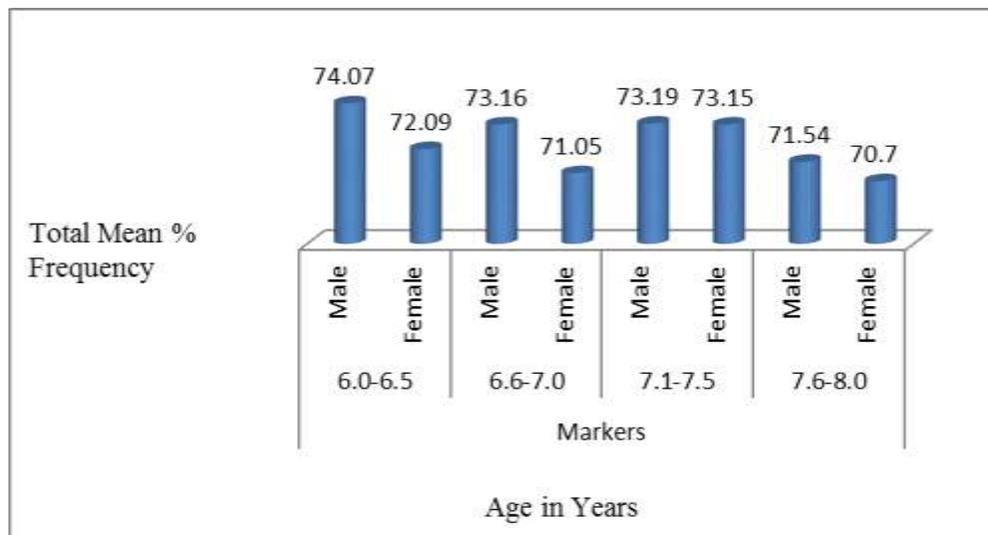


Figure 1.3: *Performance of Participants across Gender, Age and Lexical Category of PNG Markers*

The mean scores for PNG markers are specified in Table 3.1.12, which illustrated the usage of PNG markers across age group and gender. It can be concluded from Table 3.1.12 and Figure 3.1.12 in the age group of 6.0-6.5 the utterances of boys with a mean of 74.07 (S.D=4.74) contained a higher number of PNG markers than the utterances of girls with a mean of 72.09 (S.D=4.99). In the age group of 6.6-7.0 it was observed that the utterances of boys with a mean of 73.16 (5.01) contained a higher number of PNG markers than girls with a mean of 71.05 (S.D =8.38). In the age group 7.1-7.5 utterances of boys with a mean of 73.19 (S.D=4.75) contained an almost equal number of PNG markers with the utterances of girls with a mean of 73.15 (S.D= 8.09). In the age group of 7.6-8.0 it was observed that the PNG markers contained in the utterances of boys subject with a mean of 71.54 (S.D =4.94) was higher than the PNG markers

contained in the utterances of girls with a mean of 70.70 (S.D = 8.10). The data of age with four categories and gender for verbs were analysed using univariate ANOVA. The results of the study revealed significant difference in the interaction effect [F (1, 232) = 0.36, p < 0.78]. Further there was a significant difference in the age [F (1, 232) = 1.38, p < 0.24]. Duncan's post hoc analysis revealed no significant difference in the age groups.

A sloping trend is observed in the utterances of PNG markers from the age group of 6.0-6.5 to 7.6-8.0. The highest number of PNG markers being uttered by boys in the age group of 6.0-6.5 and the lowest being uttered by boys in the age group of 7.6-8.0. The utterances of PNG markers observed in the expression of boys in the age groups of 6.0-7.0 and 7.6-8.0 was higher than the PNG markers observed in the utterances of girls. However, in the age group of 7.1-7.5 boys uttered approximately the same number of PNG markers as girls. Due to the lack of significant difference in the category of PNG markers, it may be assumed that participants in the age group of 6.0-8.0 have already acquired the PNG markers.

### **PNG Markers as Indicators of Socio-Economic Status**

The socio-economic conditions of the participants were calculated using the scale given by (N.I.M.H., 1999). The five-point scale considers the parameters of occupation, highest education score, annual family income, property and per capita income per annum. Analyses of the demographic data revealed that as most of the parents of the participants were unskilled workers, illiterate or have studied less than SSC (Secondary School Certificate), per capita income is below Rs. 15,000, the pecuniary income of the family per year is below Rs. 1 lakh and they possess no property; they are classified as 'SES ONE' or participants belonging to the lower socio-economic strata. However, out of the 240 participants, 33 participants belonged to 'SES TWO' category.

Table 1.4

*Indicators of Lower Socio-Economic Conditions as Shown by use of PNG Markers*

SES SCALE	Mean	SD	Mann Whitney U Test		Pearson's Test	Spearman's Test
			Z	P	p	p

1	52.60	32.69	0.26	0.79.	0.52	0.79
2	56.05	30.54				
Total	53.24	32.27				

Mann Whitney U-test was done to check the significance of difference in total developmental pattern between Group I and Group II. The results show that significant difference does not exist between the two groups  $|Z|=0.26$ ,  $p > 0.79$ .

An evaluation was made of the linear relationship between socio economic scale and total developmental pattern using Pearson's correlation. An analysis of Pearsons correlation coefficient indicates a statistically insignificant ( $p > 0.52$ ) linear relationship between socio-economic scale and total developmental pattern. The mean and S.D of group I and group II is given in Table 3.11. The mean and S.D of group I is 52.06 and 32.69. The mean and S.D of group II of SES is 56.04 and 30.54. From the results it can be interpreted that group II has a higher TDP than group I. To determine the dependence between socioeconomic scale and total developmental pattern Spearman's correlation co-efficient was calculated. The results revealed statistically insignificant dependence ( $p > 0.79$ ) between socioeconomic scale and total developmental pattern as given by Figure 1.4.

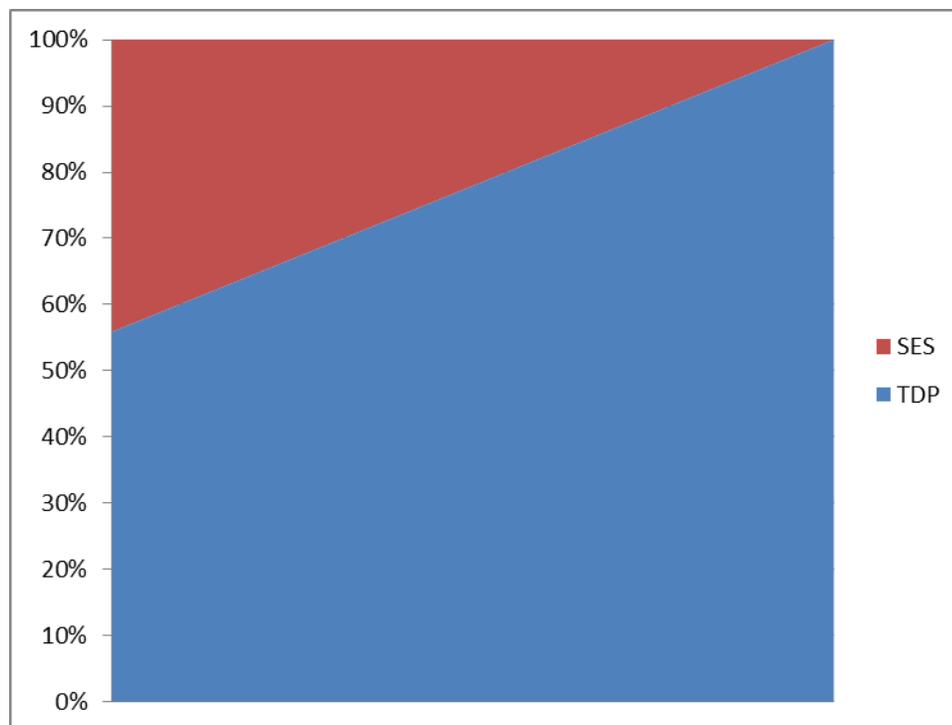


Figure 1.4: *Spearman's correlation co-efficient between SES and TDP*

As the participants in the present study belonged to the lower socio-economic strata, there was rampant use of inconsistent markers in their speech. An over extension as well as under extension of meaning of words were also observed. For example, during administration of CLIPS participants used the word /huDuga/ to depict /magu/ 'child', /huDuga/ 'boy' and /yuvaka/ 'youth'.

Sociological constraints on the use of gender markers indicate that the use of PNG markers created certain limitation while tagging the data. Usage of neutral markers [aite] for PNG markers by the lower socio-economic strata in place of gender markers.

Examples:

1. /huDuga/ /ball/ /aDtaitē/ ('boy playing ball').
2. /appa// malgaite/ ('father sleeping').

In the above examples /huDuga/ which means 'boy' and /appa/ which means 'father' respectively should be followed by the gender marker /iddane//ne/ as the gender marker.

However majority of the subjects (as shown in the statistical analysis) have used the neutral

nonhuman marker /aite/ in the colloquial sense rather than the standard /ide/ instead of the human gender marker.

3. /amma/ /aDige/ /maDtaite/ ('mother is cooking').

In the above example /amma/ which means mother should be followed by the gender marker /iddale//le/ as the gender marker. However majority of the subjects (as shown in the statistical analysis) have used the neutral nonhuman marker /aite/ in the colloquial sense rather than the standard /ide/ instead of the human gender marker.

4. /bekku/ /haal/ /kuDitaite/ ('cat milk drinking'/ 'cat is drinking milk').

5. /na:yi/ /jump/ /hoDitaite/ ('dog jumping'/ 'dog is jumping').

In the above examples /bekku/ which means 'cat' and /na:yi/ which means 'dog' respectively should be followed by the nonhuman marker /ide/ majority of the subjects (as shown in the statistical analysis) have used the neutral nonhuman marker /aite/ in the colloquial sense rather than the standard /ide/.

It has been observed that in a particular, irrespective of gender the neuter gender marker [aite] was used to describe both animate and inanimate [human and non human verb form]. While in some schools it was observed that neuter gender marker along with male gender marker was used for animate, inanimate [human and non human forms] wherein the marker for female gender and non human verbs has been replaced by neuter gender [aite] while retaining the male gender marker for human, male [human verbs].

## Conclusion

The present paper is a report of the partial results that have been arrived at as part of the Indian endeavour to establish spoken language lexical corpora of children between the ages of 6-8 years living in the city of Mysore. The language samples of two hundred and forty children were elicited using spontaneous and picture narration. It can be inferred from the results that Markers play a very important role in depicting the stages of acquisition as well as its relation to socio – economic variables. However, the present study may be considered as a mere drop in the ocean that is corpus studies. The study of markers highlights or brings out the relevance of corpus studies and language acquisition which need further investigation into the phenomenon.

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