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## Contents

**From the Editor's Desk**

# Why do children keep on asking "why"?

That was in the 1960s. I, an enthusiast of, and an ardent believer in, the doctrines of Structural Approach (SA) and Direct Method (DM), was struggling hard, but happily to do utmost justice to the chosen-cum-imposed SA and DM, without using a single word of the mother tongue while teaching English to the primary class, that too in a remote village. SA and DM had banned the use of mother tongue in the classroom. A terrible job I did, for I was young—hardly eighteen, straight to the classroom, after the two year pre-service teacher training certificate course. Adherence to the doctrine was hard in me. For instance, the meaning of a concrete object was taught showing the object itself (if 'fetchable' or manageable), or a model, or a picture. Mind you, it was in the 1960s, and in a remote village where newspapers were a luxury. Car, bus, train, house, tree –such stuff I managed with my non-enviable artistic talent with the help of a rough, stubborn, unrelenting piece of chalk (of course, a government supply) on the rather whitish blackboard. From guava to jackfruit were procured and produced before the class through the joint efforts of teacher-student-parent partnership. But oranges were nowhere in the vicinity, so were apples, too. Going to the town and buying a pair of specimens at least (I had to teach the plurals of both the elitist fruits) was out of question; for that would upset the budget, where the income, in my case the monthly salary, was rather reluctant to cross the borders of double digits into three digits. Getting the pictures too was not easy. Clay modeling which I was initiated in my pre-service training days solved the problem of oranges and apples.

Anyway, the teaching of vocabulary somehow went on without much difficulty. Children (7 to 9 year olds) were also happy because of the unpredictable appearances and reappearances of all kinds of fruits and vegetables in the class in their original 'avatar' and the rest in proxy forms such as models, pictures, and my own blackboard drawings.

But, when it came to teaching of structures or sentence patterns (as they were known those days, thanks to A.S. Hornby's classic works), teaching English exclusively through English, by totally dispensing with the use of mother tongue was rather difficult, if not impossible to the five-year olds.

One afternoon, as planned, prepared and rehearsed, I was introducing the auxiliary verbs, beginning with 'can' to denote ability. By lifting the table and moving it to the corner I taught the class that "I can lift the table"; when one of the learners tried the same and failed, I taught "Leena cannot lift the table" and so on. By performing such various activities my class was in progress towards the end—of course, without using a single word in the mother tongue. Finally, the 'situational teaching' reached a point in which I tried to touch the low, tiled roof of the hall (no ceiling) and declared "I cannot touch the roof." The class nodded in agreement. Then I stepped on the chair and tried, repeated the same statement. And finally, I stepped on the table (I mean, I took the risk of it, since that piece of furniture, too was government supply, and very old too— the existence of its fourth leg was rather questionable This time I was able to touch the roof and the class came to a victorious end (at least, I thought so) by saying "Look, now I can touch the roof." Satisfied, I went back to the staffroom, collecting all my 'arms and ammunition'.

I heard footsteps behind me on the verandah. A boy was following me. I turned back, looking

**Guest's Column**

# How do we learn?

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I am discussing a topic that is as old as the hills. Several views have been expressed in the matter since ages (Aristotle not to be ignored) and most of these have appeared valid with the arguments put forth by the proponents.

Aristotle held that all learning was largely a matter of imitation.  He was right for the knowledge available in those days was restricted and many more things had to be discovered.  The learning was focused and perhaps imitation did work efficiently.  Surprising though, it was during this age we had the best of creative writers who produced marvelous works – Homer, Sophocles, Aristophanes, Euripides, Euclid, Bhasa, Kalidasa, Bhaskaracharya, Vyasa, Valmiki to name just a few.  Credit needs to be given to Aristotle, for the schooling system was unique in that each teacher was an institution in himself.  He gathered a few students (who also lived with him on the same premises) and taught them what he knew. He had his own syllabus and most of the learning was oral and a faithful reproduction of what was taught was the ultimate sign of good learning. This proves the point that learning was imitation. Strangely this type of schooling and learning system was similar both in European and Asian civilizations.

Much water flowed under the bridge before any further research took place and people differed in their views from what was given before Christ. People thought there was a need to establish a purpose for learning.  This happened after the modern conventional universities were established in Europe.  Oxford and Cambridge proposed that a learner has to have a focus and make a contribution to the existing knowledge. This was genuine learning.  This thought was prompted with major revolutions we had in Science with the appearance of people like Galileo, Newton, Copernicus, Watt, Stephenson and others.  The growth of science led to Industrial Revolution which brought about a major change in our thinking and the need for learning. Research became an important feature of all branches of education with a premium on thinking.

Analyzing the process of thinking is the job of psychologists and they put forth a variety of views.  Two major views that we come across in the recent past are those of Behaviourists and Cognitivists.  Behaviourists hold the view that learning is a matter of habit formation.  All our actions are triggered by a stimulus and the appropriateness of response helps in either forming or discarding it.  Several examples can be provided to support this theory.  A simple illustration is: we drink water when we are thirsty and feel satisfied. In this case, thirst is the stimulus and the response is drinking water.   Drinking water gives us satisfaction.    We have never resorted to eating snacks that are salty or savoury when thirsty.  That we know makes us feel more uncomfortable.  Therefore we have formed the habit of drinking water whenever we are thirsty and reject salty food.  This can be extended to include several other activities that we are involved in everyday such as eating food, change of clothes, reading a book, talking to someone etc.  Learning through a process of habit formation is called 'conditioning'. Skinner, Pavlov,

Kafka and others conducted several experiments with animals such as rats, dogs and chimpanzees to prove that all learning is a matter of conditioning. This can be contested, but let us leave it at that.

Cognitivists on the other hand put forth a view that learning is a matter of generalizations. We observe things around us, look for features that are common among them, classify them into categories and give them a label. Take for example an object like *table*. In our lives we have seen hundreds of tables of different sizes, shapes, colours and materials. But we recognize each one of them as a table, for all these objects have certain features that go with the table or the concept of table. This type of conceptualization can be extended to include more objects, abstract feelings such as love, hate, hunger, tiredness etc, activities such as jumping, running, climbing, eating, drinking etc and relationships such as father, mother, brother, friend, stranger etc. To generalize we need data. The data has to be analyzed with a hypothesis which is subject to verification. For example, 'A table can be used to keep things on it. It should be steady. It should facilitate a few daily actions such as eating, cutting vegetables, pressing clothes, facilitate in reading or writing etc.' When the data we have is used to verify our assumptions, we may find the object we have fulfils and sometimes may perform more functions. In that case, we gather more data, revise our hypothesis to reconfirm it. Learning thus becomes a process of movement from one generalization to another.

Having looked at these two propositions, do we see any bearing they may have on language learning? Let us look at Behaviourism first. Are there certain aspects of language that can be learnt more as a matter of habit? At least some aspects such as spellings, learning to write neatly, reciting a poem, delivering a prepared talk are all matters of conditioning. These may not take us far, but we certainly can say that certain aspects of language can be learnt in this manner, but such learning will largely remain incomplete. What about cognitivism? We learn most of our grammar as a matter of generalization. We frame our own rules, revise them and become better users of language with further exposure to language. We learn to read and understand texts, write our own letters, paragraphs and summarize stories, articles, and essays for others. These are certain other aspects of language which are of slightly higher order compared to what we said with Behaviourism. But this also does not account for all learning that happens with us.

Is there anything better than these two? Yes, we believe that all learning is a product of the brain that is endowed within our body. Brain can perform many functions including that of language learning. We are born with a brain that has a capacity to help us learn language in general. It is not language specific. The brain is in some ways programmed to help us learn *a language*. It is associated with our development in the early years. We learn all the language that we essentially require by the time we attain an age of 5 years. During this process, we learn to turn on our belly, sit down, stand up, run and walk with and without support, hold things, throw them around randomly and then properly. We also attempt to become free from our parents and attempt to eat our own food, walk without holding their hands, try to comb our hair, button our shirts, tie our shoe laces (though not often with success). All these activities account for learning. Language learning which happens in definite stages is associated with each of the activities that we have mentioned above, and by the time we attain the age of 5 years we have learnt to express all our needs using language without having to resort to crying. This is how we learn language when our focus is not on language itself. The language we learn thus keeps growing and stands by us for life.

If this is how we learn language, can we also teach language in a similar way. Perhaps the answer is 'yes'. Make the child engage in a variety of activities, and take away the focus from the obvious learning. Learning languages and learning at large become more effective and enjoyable.

**Notes from an Educator's Diary**

# Receptivity, Production and Thinking: A Problematization of Proficiency

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**Introduction**

If any one of us were asked to evaluate a person's language proficiency with a clear yes or a no, chances are we would have problems, for we'd probably like to reply with a 'she is proficient, but…' This is because proficiency is a cline and most people would fall somewhere in the middle. This does not imply, however, that they are not users of the language under consideration.

My problematization of proficiency, however, is not about this kind of judgment/evaluation but about the nature of proficiency itself. Language capability in one sense can be seen as the ability to understand a language, respond to what is said, and being able to think in and about that language. Very often, however, one or more of these aspects is not included in our 'construal' of proficiency. Three case studies that capture some of these problematic 'capabilities' are presented and discussed below.

**The Three Case Studies**

Mohammed is a Yemeni who works in the Ministry of Commerce in his country; his English proficiency levels were very low. I taught him basic vocabulary as part of a proficiency course that is run at EFL-University for foreign nationals. One day I was teaching these students how to fill in forms, (age, marital status, occupation, that kind of thing); when we came to marital status, I used it as an opportunity to provide some interesting language input. I spoke about monogamy and polygamy and asked my students (from 11 different countries) whether polygamic rules in their country applied to men and women equally. With the limited language resources they had, an interesting discussion ensued and I questioned the unfairness of a law that was biased towards the male. I asked them why the same rules could not apply to women. They said nothing about the law but seemed clear about the 'fairness' of the unfairness. I probed a bit more, and at this point, Mohammed got up and asked if he could answer my question: He said, "I tell you why, but I draw answer on board." I was intrigued by this 'draw answer' and agreed; he quickly drew a stick figure of a woman and 5 lines radiating to the right from that stick figure. Each of these lines had a male stick figure added to them. Then he drew a line to the left of the woman, and at the end of it, a smaller stick figure to represent a child. Next to it, he just drew a question mark. Then he just smiled, for his drawings had said it all! I did not want to give him marks for his very chauvinistic perspective, but thought that for communication (non-verbal) and more importantly, language comprehension, he should get a perfect 10!

Miaou is a Chinese student who came to do his Masters in English at EFL-University. Only after he was given admission did we realize that although he is a teacher of Chinese in his own country, as far as English is concerned, he could hardly speak 5 words, and had brought an interpreter with him to help him communicate. Within a semester, his 'understanding' of

everyday communication improved by leaps and bounds for he was in a rich English-speaking environment. We asked him to do basic courses in reading and writing, which he desperately needed. His comprehension task responses were a problem but also a marvel. Supply-type answers were all over the place, but multiple-choice answers he could answer very easily (initially he was given level appropriate texts). Soon, the level of texts was upped, but with only MCQs (Multiple-Choice Questions). How did he fare on those tasks/tests? 'Tick, tick tick he would go and soon be done' was the way his teacher who did a course on Academic Reading described it. As a teacher, his cognitive capability was high and inferring, linking part to the whole etc., were part of his underlying proficiency. His problems were with production of language.

Wirote, better known as Oat, was a Buddhist monk from Thailand who also came to do his Masters in TESL at EFL University. He was studying through English for the first time, but was planning to go back to Thailand and become an English teacher. He did a course in testing with me. In one of my assignments I had given my students a text and asked them to create reading comprehension questions, some supply and some MCQs. He met me outside class and said: "Ma'am, very difficult for me. I cannot make questions." I knew that Oat was more than capable of this cognitively, so told him: 'True, Oat. Making questions in English is very difficult for you, but what about in Thai?" He thought about it and his face brightened. So I suggested: "Imagine that you need to make questions in Thai for this text. Is that possible and would that be easy for you?" I asked. Pat came the reply, accompanied by a wide smile: "Very easy." "Okay", I said; First identify the testing points in the text (all possible places in the text where questions can be asked), think of the kinds of questions you would make in Thai, and then, without actually creating the questions in Thai, make them in English. He thought about this for a while and simply said: "Okay, Ma'am, but I will need a little more time for I must think in Thai and then find English words." I agreed and told him to submit not in 24 but 48 hours. He went away with a broad smile and came back two days later with questions that not only captured good testing points but also had very good distractors. He got an 'A' grade from me for his assignment.

**Reflection/Introspection**

If I had given Mohammed a text on polygamy and asked him to answer comprehension questions on it, he may not have been able to answer them. But a class discussion, with scaffolding, explanations etc. he was able to understand with ease even though the words used were not very simple ones. Very often, we give our beginner students (adults) very simple texts (cognitively simple) to make it language level appropriate. We forget that texts also have to be age appropriate. Also, if we could take a leaf out of Mohammed's book and 'allow' non-verbal responses, many more themes and texts would become available.

The Chinese student's profile is unique but applicable to language courses offered to English teachers with low proficiency. They teach language and so, will have many language learning and using strategies in place. As their teachers we have to find ways to tap and exploit this 'capability.'

Oat, my Thai student is representative of many Indian students as well; their language of thinking is not English but their mother tongue. This is something that we not only should not be ashamed of as individuals but should also be able to factor into our courses as teachers and teacher educators.

For any bi/multilingual there are parts of language capability which are common across languages; these could be just comprehension, strategies, or even the higher order cognitive domains of the Bloom Taxonomy (analyzing, applying, evaluating and creating). As language teachers we need to see these as parts of the unseen bits of the Cumminsean iceberg (Common Underlying Proficiency) and use it to enable language proficiency so that our learners become users of languages that are not their mother tongues.

# Transmission of Meaning: Interpreting Semiotic Codes in Alan Paton's *Cry, the Beloved Country*

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## Introduction

The importance of signs and signification has been recognised since the inception of languages. Philosophers like Plato and Aristotle have explored the relationship between signs and the world, and Augustine considered the nature of the sign within a conventional system. Hence, it has its roots in antiquity. To look at the etymology, the word 'sign' is derived from the Latin word *signum*. Many philosophers have speculated the role of signs in nature and in human affairs, and it has evolved during scholasticism in the Middle Ages when its close relation to logic and cognition was recognised. A Sign can be anything and include words, gestures, images, sounds, and objects.

The creation of meaning in a language code emerges through a complex interplay of codes and conventions. It is here that the discipline of semiotics enters, which studies the world of signs, making one familiar with the intervening role signs play in constructing social realities. Daniel Chandler (2002), also argues this point in his book, *Semiotics, the Basics,* wherein he asserts that there is no external reality beyond sign systems. He further shares his opinion that "through investigating semiotic perspectives, one may come to know that meaning is not transmitted to us and it is not contained in the word or in books, but we actually create it through our signification and interpretation of signs". (10-11)

It is pertinent to mention here that meaning through signs does not emerge in isolation. Signs occur in groups. Therefore, in order to interpret a text properly, the sign receiver has to read signs with reference to appropriate codes which are determined by various contextual cues provided, in which they operate. Besides, each code is historically as well as socio-culturally situated. Therefore, the interpretation of a text is likely to change, as interpretive codes evolve. This is the reason why the interpretation of the same text may differ from culture to culture. Consequently, a major objective of semiotic study is to seek to identify the code within which the production and interpretation of meaning in any text is achieved.

## I
## Semiotics - The World of Signs/Codes

Semiotics is generally defined as the study of signs. This theory is germinated by two important contributors—Ferdinand de Saussure and Charles Sanders Peirce. Ferdinand de Saussure presents a dyadic (two-part) model of a sign saying that a sign is not a single entity. It is a

relation between the signifier (the form that the sign takes) and the signified (the concept to which it refers). He designated this relational aspect as signification. Charles Sanders Peirce offers a triadic (three-part) model of the sign. He defines the sign as consisting of the *representamen* (the form which the sign takes), the *interpretant* (the sense made of the sign) and the *object* (to which the sign refers). The interaction between them is referred as 'Semiosis'. He also offers the typology for signs**:** the symbolic sign (the relationship between the signifier and the signified has to be learned), the iconic sign (represents its object mainly by its similarity) and the indexical sign (the signifier is directly connected to the signified).

The development in semiotics has different phases and it has been multidimensional. Semiotics has been developed in countries like France, Russia, Britain and America. In the development of semiotics as a distinct discipline, Roland Barthes may be considered as one of the pioneers. He is a French literary theorist, whose ideas explore a diverse range of fields, has also influenced the development of schools like structuralism, semiotics, anthropology and post-structuralism. Barthes, in his *Mythologies,* interrogates specific cultural materials in order to expose 'bourgeois cultural myths'. He also finds 'semiotics' useful in these interrogations, saying that these bourgeois cultural myths are 'second-order signs' or 'connotations'. After the influence of post-structuralism and after his best known work *The Death of the Author*, he concludes that since meaning cannot come from the author, it must be actively created by the reader through a process of textual analysis and also with the help of various signs and codes. However, he also applies semiotic analysis to the study of advertisements. This is used to describe and promote women's fashions.

**Levels of Analysis of Semiotic Codes**
For textual analysis, levels or codes as illustrated by Roland Barthes in his analysis of a French novelette, "Sarrasine" in his *S/Z* (1970/1974 in English) have been adopted. Barthes talks about

five codes viz. the Hermeneutic Code, the Semic Code, the Symbolic Code, the Proairetic or the Narrative Code, and the Cultural Code. He argues that in the Hermeneutic Code, one should list various terms by which "an enigma can be distinguished, suggested, formulated, held in suspense, and finally disclosed". Barthes has also called it the "Voice of Truth". The "Voice of Person" is coded in the semes which, either link them to a character, a place, or an object arranging themselves, forming a single thematic group. Instability, dispersion, characteristic of motes of dust, and flickers of meaning are admitted in the Semic Code. This code also talks about connotations. The symbolic grouping which provides the platform of multivalence and reversibility providing the depth of the problem at hand is covered under the Symbolic Code which Barthes terms as the "Voice of Symbol". This code deals with binary oppositions or themes. Various sequences of action which Barthes argues, are the "result of an artifice" of reading which can be amassed under some genetical titles are called as the Proairetic or the Narrative Code. They are more empirical than rational. Besides, such code can take over the text and become one of the voices in which a text is dominantly woven which Barthes terms as the "Voice of the Empirics". Barthes defines that the Cultural Code is a reference to the science or a body of knowledge which indicate not only the type of knowledge physical, physiological, psychological, literary etc., but also represent the cultural construct they express. Barthes names such code as the "Voice of Science". (19-21)

**II**
**A Semiotic Analysis of cry, the beloved country**
*Cry, the Beloved Country* was published in 1948 by Alan Paton. Its story unfolds the journey of Pastor Kumalo, from his rural village Ndotsheni to Johannesburg and back again, that brings him personal tragedy and contacts with the wide range of black and white South Africans. In 1913, Native Land Act limited the amount of

land available to black South Africans. The resulting overcrowding led many blacks to migrate to Johannesburg to work in the mines and poverty among them led many young blacks to crime. As in the novel, these are the circumstances under which the protagonist leaves his impoverished rural village to search for his son Absalom, who was engaged in crime and his sister Gertrude, who was engaged in prostitution. Kumalo's desire to try and protect his family from the path of destruction runs through this story. Although apartheid, South Africa's infamous system of enforced racial segregation, was not instituted until after the novel's publication, the South Africa of *Cry, the Beloved Country* was nevertheless suffering from the effects of racial segregation, enforced inequality and prejudice.

Since, this novel contains three books, in total 36 chapters and runs into 236 pages. So, a code wise analysis of *Cry, the Beloved Country* is taken up for semiotic investigation with some appropriate examples. The meaning that the text carries, or promises to carry, can be assessed by the Semiotic Codes as enunciated in the framework by Barthes. What does Paton construct, in his novel, with specific reference to Apartheid, shall be enunciated through implementing Barthes' principles of semiotics.

**The Hermeneutic Code:**
The Hermeneutic Code has also been treated very well in this novel, because Kumalo, the protagonist, in his ripe old age after passing through a lot of suffering, witnesses only the beginning of the construction of a dam by Jarvis and other whites, but he does not know whether his dream would come true. Thus the ending of the story is inconclusive and ends on a note of suspense though optimistic. Further, the Hermeneutic code dominates in this novel also in the form of Kumalo's long quest for his lost son. For instance, in book 1, chapter1. Rev. Stephen Kumalo the black parson of the village of Ndotsheni receives a letter. The characters as well the reader is intrigued to know the content of the letter sent to him by an unknown man,

named Theophilus Msimangu from Johannesburg, the capital city which Kumalo or his wife has never visited. Gradually the puzzle is resolved. Here the letter is the chief archetype. Therefore, the Hermeneutic Code, in Barthean terms is the suspense about the source and contents of the letter and their revelation. Here, the Kumalo's quest for his son and his sister serves as an *Icon* of the various people in the rural villages, during apartheid, whose sons, daughters, sisters and brothers have gone to the cities and never returned back. In the novel, thus the puzzle of his quest is finally resolved by the death of his son.

**The Semic Code:**
The very first chapter presents two opposite Semic codes, the richness of one geographical area followed by another area which is dry, barren and drought-struck. Consider the following passage from the novel:
THERE is a lovely road that runs from Ixopo into the hills. These hills are grass-covered and rolling, and they are lovely beyond singing of it. The road climbs seven miles into them, to Carisbrooke; and from there, if there is no mist, you look down on one of the fairest valleys of Africa.
….Down in the valleys women scratch the soil that is left, and the maize hardly reaches the height of a man. They are the valleys of old men and old women, of mothers and children. The men are away, the young men and the girls are away. The soil cannot keep them anymore. (7-8)
Symbolically, the two Semic codes respectively represent as an *Icon* of the prosperity of the white rulers and the starving black masses of South Africa. **Semic Code 1:** The account of a lovely road from Ixopo into the hills, etc. These hills and Carisbrooke after seven miles, the fairest valley; the river, and the rich matted grass– all are the archetypes and signifiers which recurrently prove that these valleys are rich and fertile (signified). **Semic Code 2:** Now the code changes and presents a dry and barren area. There is no rain, women scratches the soil and

the maize hardly reaches the height of a man. This second Semic Code is made up of archetypes and signifiers which symbolise the dryness of the land and the poverty of the local people (signified). These archetypes help one to trace the juxtaposition of two opposite Semic Codes which symbolically stands for the prosperity of the white rulers and the starving black masses of South Africa. Therefore, this chapter serves as a very appropriate introduction to the tale narrated in the novel.

**The Symbolic Code:**
Language works as a tool for oppression against the blacks in the hands of the whites. The sign boards also work as an *Index* as given by Peirce. During apartheid, whites always took help of various sign boards in order to spread a system of racial oppression. Various sign boards like "**Whites Only**", "**Whites Only Beaches**", "**Whites Only Buses**", "**European Only**," "**Non-European Only**" etc. are seen in the novel also. These sign boards work as signifiers that signifies racial hatred between the blacks and the whites. And all these sign boards and verbal remarks given by the whites are needed to be understood within the socio-cultural framework. Consider the passage from the text: He put the paper into his wallet, and together they watched the train. As all country trains in South Arica are, it was full of black travelers. On his train indeed there were not many others, for the **Europeans** of this district all have their cars, and hardly travel by train anymore.

Kumalo climbed into the carriage for **non-Europeans**, already full of the humbler people of his race…(14)

From the above instances, it is clear that these sign boards under the symbolic code record the racial segregation and the implicit and explicit rivalry between the blacks and the whites.

**The Narrative Code:**
In terms of the Narrative Code, *Cry, the Beloved Country* is simple and uncomplicated narrative mostly following the chronological thread of the story except for a few flashbacks or recollections of the past. In the narrative technique, one can find that in *Cry, the Beloved Country* the technique of Third person point of view of narration is used. This code also shows chronological and topological progression of events and also juxtaposes the present and the past in the novel.

**The Cultural Code:**
In terms of the Cultural Code, this novel is very rich in their treatment of the cultural elements during the era of Apartheid. In *Cry, the Beloved Country,* the poor living conditions of the black people in Ndotsheni and Johannesburg are depicted through several archetypes which serve as an *Icon*, among the trichotomy given by Peirce, of the whole black community in South Africa during the apartheid years. Consider an instance from book 1, chapter 2: the rudimentary communication system, as the letter is brought by a small black girl from the store at the behest of a white man; the girl being hungry, Kumalo's wife giving her some food, the girl's thanks, the dirty condition of the letter, Kumalo's sister Gertrude's, son, Absalom in Johannesburg, the coming of the letter a long time after their departure, Kumalo's preparation to go the Johannesburg and their meager resources – all are archetypes which indicate the poverty and humble behavior of the blacks at Ndotsheni. The sixth chapter is also replete with the instances of cultural code through the description of the town. Therefore, the code is as follows**:** Sophiatown, Claremont are dirty places – the latter is a garbage heap of the proud city. There are several such poor suburbs of the city inhabited by blacks; *the Bantia Press,* newspaper, the dirty and shabby Claremont – John Kumalo's indifference – a rich black women liquor – seller the permissive and drunken atmosphere in Gertrude's dwelling place, her small son, her willingness to accompany her brother leaving this place her apologetic remorse and his keeling down – Kumalo's bringing her and her things in a lorry – Mrs. Lithebe's kind accommodation –

# Emergence of Modern African Literature
# – A Return of Celebration

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**Abstract**

Chinua Achebe demonstrates his preoccupation with folklore, not simply as a communicative device, but as a total cultural experience. Through the use of anecdotes and proverbs, the writer tries to express the wealth of philosophy; wisdom and perception of life as they affect and control their communities. This wisdom and rich philosophical views were handed over to them from their ancestors and the use of them is a continuation and linkage between the past which brought the present to them and will in the long run determine the future. It is characterized as a means by which simple people encode their observations of life. Achebe places the anecdotes and proverbs in well-ordered places throughout the novel. Achebe uses the traditional tales with their stupid large animals and small trickster animals to describe the cultural values of the village and how even the natural world they see around them is implanted with their own values and traditions. The use of proverbs by the characters and the narrator suggest the commonality of the verbal tool. Proverbs are wise sayings which are acquired and learnt from listening to the elders' talk. Elders are repository of communal or primordial wisdom and they are the ones who know how to impregnate short expressions with vast meanings, implicating the proverb. Achebe documents folklore in order to preserve Igbo language and culture and also to enhance the understanding of his readers and preservation of their culture for future generation. Achebe through his anecdotes and proverbs illuminate community values in both the content and the form of the storytelling. They create the atmosphere to strengthen traditional life.

Achebe has invested his style with great richness and this contributes to the total beauty and effect of his novels. His characteristic mode of writing fulfills his own idea that"English of the African will have to be a new English, still in communion with its ancestral home but altered to suit its new African surroundings." His language as a major component of his artistic strategy, not only enriches the English language but also gives the reader the experience of a whole culture.

Achebe emphasizes that indigenous languages should not be neglected. Besides trying to instill pride and self-respect among his fellow Africans, Achebe's novels also provide the world a way of perceiving Black Aesthetics. To Achebe, emergence of modern African literature is a return of celebration to put people back into Africa. The new literatures in Africa is aware of the possibilities available to it for celebrating humanity in Africa.

Achebe makes use of devices like folkloric anecdotes, proverbs, short stories and religious tenets conveyed through prayer, speeches and song sequences. Anecdotes and proverbs are similar in their general thematic and aesthetic functions and sometimes in their content, though they are different in form. Narrators who use anecdotes are greeted with the title 'story vendor' while the orator who employs proverbs abundantly in his speech is saluted with the title "owner of words."Anecdotes are usually associated with story-telling while proverbs are usually associated with speech making.

In the article "African Literature as Restoration of Celebration" Achebe narrates a story to foster the status quo in a class society. This short story is a Hausa tale from Nigeria. The Hausa who made this story are a monarchical people and the ethos of the story accords with the ruling values of their political system. This a miniature masterpiece of the story as a two-edged sword:

The Snake was once riding his horse curled up, as was his fashion, in the saddle. As he passed the Toad who was walking, on the road said: 'Excuse me sir, but that is not how to ride a horse.'

'It's not?' asked the Snake. 'Can you show me then how it's done?'

'With pleasure,' said the Toad.

The Snake slid out of the saddle down the side of the horse in the ground.

The Toad jumped into the saddle, sat bold upright and galloped most elegantly up and down the road. 'That's how to ride a horse,' he said.

'Very good,' said the snake. 'Very good indeed. Please descend.'

The Toad jumped down and the snake slid up the side of the horse back into the saddle and coiled himself up as before. Then looking down at the Toad on the roadside he said: 'To know is very good, but to have is better. What good can superb horsemanship do to a man without a horse?' And he rode away. (9)

The Snake is an aristocrat and the Toad a commoner. The Snake owns a horse but the Toad acquired horsemanship, through years of struggle and practice, availing nothing in this hierarchical society. The story concealed with voluminous folds of laughter holds the hint and the glint of iron. In the fullness of time the same story will stand ready to serve a revolutionary purpose using what was always there: an unattractive, incompetent and complacent aristocracy, exposing it not to laughter but to severe stricture.

In *Things Fall Apart*,through the locust gathering episode(54-55), the stories of the albino(117), the leper and the white man on an iron horse(115-116), Achebe gives a clear indication of culture becoming anarchy. Achebe's use of the descent of the locusts on Umuofia symbolized the advent of the white man. The white men are like locusts because they spread destruction over a people's harvest of tradition and order.

In *Things Fall Apart*, Achebe's use of anecdote becomes a serious social comment indicting as it reveals the havoc committed by the thieves who "Can steal your cloth from off your waist in that market" (97). The story of the man whose goat was stolen in the market was narrated by Obierika in the festive occasion and in a conversational situation. "There was once a man who went to sell a goat. He led it on a thick rope which he tied round his waist. But as he walked through the market he realized that people were pointing at him as they do to a madman. He could not understand it until he looked back and saw that what he led at the end of the tether was not a goat but a heavy log of wood" (97). The humour it generates is suitable to the occasion but also constitutes a warning that can make people more careful than they might have been, especially when they go to the market of Umuike. The conversation scene is one in which people feel relaxed and free to expose their minds to one another without fear of betrayal. The close understanding, togetherness and rapport between interlocutors is presented by the author.

The tales are used by the novelist to pass moral judgment on their characters. The story telling is also a domestic setting of the novel *Things Fall Apart*. As that of the story of vulture who was asked to go to the sky to ask for rain (53).The author uses this story to castigate Okonkwo. The mother tells stories to the children. The

narrative sequence of the story of the trickster tale "The Tortoise and the Birds"
Birds are invited to a feast in the sky …

That is why the Tortoise's shell is not smooth.

The story "The Tortoise and the Birds" (86-87) serves numerous purposes in the novel. The reason why this tale is included as the subtext is the moral it teaches. It dramatizes the evil of extreme ego centrism. The fate of the Tortoise, the egoist and a trickster prefigures Okonkwo's fall. The trickster is an individualist, who in pursuit of individualistically determined obsessions comes into conflict with society. Okonkwo shares the tendency towards an overwhelming sense of the ego which brings him into conflict with his clan as well as others. Okonkwo offends his society numerous times and is seriously punished on every occasion. Analogously, just as the Tortoise fall to pieces at the end of the story, Okonkwo commits suicide in his moment of defeat. He cannot impose his will on the clan. It also questions as to how much Okonkwo's action stems from inner personal drives and how much he strives to restore his place in the clan. Though Okonkwo is an achiever, he cannot be "All-of-You" and cannot fill the place of the Umoufia clan. But his role of "All-of-You" alienates him from a world he so passionately attempts to sustain.

Folklorists tend to classify tortoise tales from Africa as 'why tales,' stories told to explain the past. Achebe version of the tortoise's cracked shell, tales in which the identities of Tortoise, Parrot and the birds respond to historical exigencies, explain the past as part of an elaboration of possibilities for the future.

Some anecdotes are employed for mitigating the intensity of gloom in a sorrowful situation besides being used to add essence to the conversation. In No Longer at Ease, Achebe tells us a story of how tortoise goes on a long journey and asks his people not to send for him until something unusual happens(307). This anecdote is narrated by Nathaniel in the midst of a general chat by the members of the Umuofia Progressive Union when they are paying a condolence visit to Obi over the death of his mother. The conversation is generally geared towards diverting the mind from the sad incident. The story is about a Tortoise who before he went on a "long journey to a distant clan", told his people not to send for him unless "something new under the sun happened." Shortly after his departure, however his mother died. As the death of his mother was "nothing new" his people, in sending for him told that "his father's palm tree had borne a fruit at the end of its leaf." When the tortoise heard this, he rushed back home to bear the burden of his mother's funeral, which he was cleverly trying to evade. This story assumes a serious satirical function. It caused members of the Union embarrassment since Obi, the protagonist of *No Longer at Ease* did not visit his home in the village to witness his mother's funeral. Though he sent money home, he should have gone home in person to pay last respects to his mother. He is made to feel bad over his own irresponsibility. Anecdotes demonstrate the verbal abundance, eliminates boredom and which impresses the readers with the stock of stories in the writer's repertoire. The use of anecdotes makes the novel comprehendible for Western readers by which African culture is revitalized.

African proverbs are repositories of communal wisdom, mnemonic devices for effective communication and educational tools. Proverbs are full of statements like "Odi be ndi adiro be ibe fa" meaning "What there is among one people is not among another." Igbo culture reminds one of the complexity of life. The collected wisdom of the clan is expressed in proverb which show the flexibility of the system.

Achebe in spite of having difficulty in translating Igbo proverbs used it as a functional means of communication. To him proverbs are utilitarian and little vignettes of art. R. N. Egudu in the article "Achebe and the Igbo Narrative Tradition" quotes the proverb by Achebe in *Things Fall Apart* that "Proverbs are the palm oil with which words are eaten (20). Proverbs fall prey as they

are eaten up by English words of the European narratives but the 'palm oil' that aids digesting, is considered as a discursive lubricant. It is also an implication that palm oil is the substance of tradition and its transmission has become part of West Africa's integration into an international market economy. Palm oil by the end of the nineteenth century and particularly with the end of the slave trade, had become a major West African export. It is a transition from slave to oil exporting, which produced much social and political changes. These same changes are manifest in the Igbo village of Umuofia where the white man had brought a new religion, but also built a trading store for the first time when palm oil and kernel became things of great price and much money flowed into Umuofia.

In *Things Fall Apart*, the cluster of proverbs is formed by the 'chi' and 'solidarity' proverbs. The society of Umuofia holds achievement and success in high regard. This attitude is well expressed in many passages in Things Fall Apart, such as those that tell the reader: "You can tell a ripe corn by its look" (31), and "If a child washed his hands, he could eat with kings" (21).It is inferred that if a person does the right thing at the right time, as the proverb entails, good fortune, honor, reverence, esteem and credit will be his, just like eating together with kings.

Okonkwo fame rests on personal achievements. Ibo society unlike the majority of traditional African societies was not chiefly directed but was acephalous, achievement oriented: a man could not inherit title and rank from his family, but rather, had to achieve these by his own abilities. There is a proverb which applies directly to Okonkwo's father, Unoka who tells his guest that he cannot repay the loan, he says ironically and characterizes himself "our elders say that the sun will shine on those who stand before it shines on those who kneel under them. I shall pay my debts first"(20).The proverb makes reference to a cosmic body, the sun, claiming that those who strive and work (by remaining standing)will benefit from the fruit of their work before those who depend on them (by kneeling or deriving succor from them) but Unoka is the kind of person who borrows from everyone, without respect to age and tradition.

Achebe also uses proverbs and sayings to describe his characters especially Okonkwo. He is described by an old man thus: "Looking at a king's mouth one would think he never sucked at his mother's breast" (34). Such a proverbial descriptor defines Okonkwo as being proud as a king but also very self-supporting and having a quick rise to fame and fortune. The proverb makes his character so much more vivid and alive than any other literary device.

A number of proverbs embody Ibo beliefs about spirituality. For example, "When a man says yes, his 'chi' says yes also" (35). The chi in Ibo cosmology is the guardian spirit granted to every individual at the time of birth and is part of the individual's supreme creative essence. According to Ibo belief, the 'chi' is entirely responsible for the fortunes and misfortunes of individuals. Thus, when Okonkwo strived for prosperity, his chi agreed. But when he started becoming aggressive, his chi disagreed and precipitated his downfall.

In *Arrow of God*, the cluster of proverbs reflects the anxiety of fear of the local people confronted with threatening new experiences: "What a man does not know is greater than he" (405); "a disease that has never been seen before cannot be cured with everyday herbs" (456);"we are like the puppy in the proverb which attempted to answer two calls at once and broke its jaws"(513)**.**Another proverb cluster indicates positive disapproval of change or compromise with the agents of change as in "as soon as we shake hands with a leper he will want an embrace" (467);"a man who brings ant ridden faggots into his hut should expect the visit of lizards" (467).There are other proverbs which reflect pragmatic approach to change, to its inevitability and the need to come to terms with it as in "a man must dance the dance prevalent

in his time" (514); if the rat could not run fast enough it must make way for the tortoise" (493).

Nwakibie uses a proverb to describe his wise and careful attitude toward those who would borrow from him. He says, "Eneke the bird says that since men have learned to shoot without missing, he has learned to fly without perching" (31). A great many of Achebe's proverbs concern matters of power and politics, particularly where related to the effects of colonization. Thus, "If one finger brought oil, it soiled the others" (106) shows the effortless spreading of anarchy among the natives after the advent of the white man. Nwaka in *Arrow of God* employs proverbs abundantly in his speech and hence is saluted with the title "owner of words." Thus, Chukwuma in *Accents in the African Novel* states that proverbs are incorporated into the character's flow of speech imbuing it with much vigour, sense and style (11).According to Yakubu (2010), "proverbs are used to comment on people's behavior". This is another function of proverb.

The proverbs in *Arrow of God* comment on people's behavior. They are used as a weapon of satire and they also reiterate themes. Examples of these proverbs are:"The lizard who threw confusion into his mother's funeral rite did he expect outsiders to carry the burden of honoring his dead?"This proverb is used by the people to lambast Ezeulu who is the custodian of the culture of the people of Umuaro, in other words, the Igbo people and yet sends his son, Oduche to acquire western education and be converted to Christianity. This action draws criticism from his followers, the people of Umuaro.

Achebe is an interpreter of his own culture to show the strength of their culture; and what they had lost through decades of foreign colonial domination. He paid full tribute to the past in *Things Fall Apart* and *Arrow of God*. The colonial situation as he saw and portrayed it as a tragic one the protagonists Okonkwo and Nwaka,he depicted are men with dignity and respect who are caught up in a web of fate. So Achebe writes for the younger generation in his society who have been cut off from this heritage though his message speaks to all men everywhere. In "The Role of the Writer in the New Nation," Achebe's intention is contained in an Ibo proverb which says "a man who does not know where rain started to beat him cannot know where he dried his body"(158).Achebe documents folklore in order to preserve Igbo language and culture and also to enhance the understanding of his readers and preservation of their culture for future generation. Achebe through his anecdotes and proverbs illuminate community values in both the content and the form of the storytelling. They create the atmosphere to strengthen traditional life.

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# Sustaining the Identity of the Indian Woman in a Multicultural Realm
# "Mrs. Sen" in Jhumpa Lahiri's *Interpreter of Maladies*

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**Abstract**

Jhumpa Lahiri is a dazzling storyteller with a distinctive voice. Her collection of nine short stories Interpreter of Maladies speaks about the alienation and rootlessness experienced by the immigrants in the host land. "Mrs. Sen" is about the life of an Indian woman who has been transported to an alien society. She finds herself to be a total misfit in that society. Inspite of her attempts to adjust to her surroundings "her sensitive soul seeks nourishment of the home." It is reflected through her behavior which accentuates her affinity towards her native country. Her dress, the dot of vermillion on her forehead, her taste for whole fresh fish and her traditional way of cooking and hospitality portray her as a traditional Bengali woman. Lahiri brings out the loneliness and hollowness suffered by Mrs. Sen's.

Indian English Literature has acquired increased significance contributing to the expansion of Literature. The present glory has been achieved through several historical events and distinguished personalities who can be named the rare gems of Indian Writing. Initially, the Indian writings in English conveyed the Indian experiences through Western art form, catering especially to the educated Indians. It became one of the most powerful and characteristic mode of expression.

The early 20th century saw the advent of British writers who took up Indian themes and sentiments but portrayed them in British style. Then literature saw the advent of literary geniuses like, Rabindranath Tagore, Mulk Raj Anand, R.K. Narayan, and Raja Rao, who through their narrations brought about a social awakening. The late seventies set forth a new breed of Convent educated, elite class of novelists and writers, who set the world of literature afire. We have the likes of Salman Rushdie, Vikram Seth, Amithav Ghosh, Allen Seally, Jhumpa Lahiri, Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni, Arundhati Roy, Vikram Chandra, Aravind Adiga. The stream of writers is ever lengthening.

The post-colonial women writers show a "deep insight into human nature" (Mohit Ray 174) viewing life with a keen sense of observation and sensitivity. They have acquired fame and become dominant in the Post-colonial India by capturing the Indian experiences skillfully in their own different styles. Jhumpa Lahiri surprised the world by hitting the spotlight with her collection of nine quiet short stories *The Interpreter of Maladies* (1990). The novel *The Namesake* (2000), deals with a search for identity followed by *Unaccustomed Earth* (2008) another collection of eight stories. The *Lowland* (2013) is an unsentimental tale of loss. Her writings depict the immigrant experiences

and diverse aspects of India's culture. Nilanjana Sudeshna Lahiri was born in London of Indian parents on 11th July 1967 and grew up in South Kingstown, Rhode Island. Lahiri thus benefits from all three cultures their aroma filling all her creative art forms.

Lahiri contemplates and illustrates Indian sentiments of dislodgement, their intention to stick to the native culture, incorporate into their new home, and their affliction over ethical and emotional issues. She persists on the themes of love, matrimonial complexity, betrayal and estrangement. She is a powerful new voice in the horizon writing with the cultural insight of Anita Desai and the depth of Mavis Gallant charting the emotional voyages of her characters speaking in the language of the, alienated immigrants.

Lahiri's debut collection, *Interpreter of Maladies* (1999) comprises of her earlier short stories. She received the Pulitzer Prize for the collection in April 2000. As Jaya Lakshmi Rao V. enumerates in her article "Jhumpa Lahiri: A Perceptive Interpreter of Maladies" in *Poetcrit*, "With a remarkable insight she delves deep into the psychological depths of her characters and reveals their inner world by a fascinating yet deceptively simple style." (19) Lahiri depicts an Indianness in an unusual foreign setting stuffed with Indian characters, food, costumes and habits.

"Mrs. Sen" in *Interpreter of Maladies* defines an immigrant's experience of emotional exile. It represents Indian immigrant's alienation in a country and a culture which is not their own. It relates the companionship between two exclusively varied personalities inspite of their age difference. Mrs. Sen takes care of Eliot a, eleven year old boy while his mother is at work. She tries to learn driving in order to fetch him. She has an obstinate disinclination to learn driving. She shares her joy, loneliness and alienation and her memories in India with a spirit of great enthusiasm. The colourful world of Calcutta, comes alive in her words. After a minor accident Eliot's mother decides he is a big boy and can stay alone at home. But the emotional bond between them persists even after their separation.

Lahiri unfolds the events of "Mrs. Sen" as visualized by a young American boy Eliot. It is about an Indian woman who is in a state of 'emotional exile' (Lakshmi Rao 23). Clifford states in the article "Diasporas" published in *Cultural Anthropology* that "Life for women in diasporic situations can be doubly painful-struggling with the material and spiritual insecurities of exile, with the demands of family and work and with the claims of old and new patriarchies." (314) Here the wonderful companionship between two entirely different persons belonging to varying cultural background is witnessed. They develop an "emotional dependence" (Lakshmi Rao 24) which binds them in the absence of their immediate family. Mrs. Sen babysits Eliot in her own apartment at the University where her husband teaches. Mrs. Sen is a first generation migrant, a reluctant arrival who comes to a new place for the sake of her husband. Her nostalgic feeling towards her homeland India makes her so preoccupied that she says to Eliot, "Could I drive all the way to Calcutta?" (*IOM* 119) The nostalgic feeling persistently haunts the immigrants.

Initially Eliot's mother is apprehensive of sending him to Mrs. Sen's home. Earlier he had been looked after by Abby, a college student and then Mrs. Linden in their own home. But Mrs. Sen convinces her by saying, "…our home is quite clean, quite safe for a child" (*IOM* 112). She could not go to their home as she does not have a driver's license.

Eliot views Mrs. Sen as a woman of thirty with a small gap between her teeth and faded pockmark on her chin. She has beautiful eyes, with thick, flaring brows and liquid flourishes. She wears neat saris with prints and her lips are coated with a coral gloss. She feels isolated and displaced in the host country longing for home. She tries to overcome it by reading letters

and recollecting memories of home leaving her unsettled. Mr. Sen on the other hand is "a short, stocky man with slightly protuberant eyes and glasses with black rectangular frames" (*IOM* 112). He teaches Mathematics at the University. He belongs to the diaspora of first generation immigrant's who adjust to the new way of life without grumbling.

Eliot enjoys going to Mrs. Sen's after school. He finds their home warm when compared to his own home near the beach. It is always cold and he dislikes the lonely stay there. He learns to remove his sneakers, first thing when he enters Mrs. Sen's home and places it on the book self near the door. It was customary to remove the footwear in an Indian home.

Eliot always loves watching Mrs. Sen chop her vegetables using a "blade that curved like a prow of a Viking ship" (*IOM* 114). The blade has a serrated crest for grating coconut. She locks it such that the blade met the place at an angle when not in use. She is particular that Eliot did not move about when she was with the blade. She engages him with comic sections from the newspaper and crackers with peanut butter, popsicle or carrot sticks. He admires the deft manner with which she dices and cut the vegetables, sitting either "cross-legged" (*IOM* 114) or with "legs splayed" (*IOM* 114) an eye on the television as she works. Rashmi Gaur in "Nine Sketches Interpreting Human Maladies" comments that Lahiri repeats Mrs. Sen's habits and duty chores to reinforce the perception of loneliness and hollowness in Mrs. Sen's life.

The images from the lives of the Indian immigrants is brought alive through the "zippered sacks of Basmati rice" (*IOM* 6), "the mortar and pestle she'd bought in a Calcutta bazaar" (*IOM* 9), and Mrs. Sen's blade. They remain alive along with the many American habits picked up in the host country like "the spare brush…in the metal basket…on sale, in the event that a visitor decided…to spend the night" (*IOM* 6). But Mrs. Sen leading an isolated life is unable to pick up American habits like producing the paper napkins when needed. She finds it difficult to dissolve her Indian identity and assimilate the mask of the "Americanized immigrant" (*IOM* 108). Leon Mann defines this feeling as

A state of embarrassment is caused giving rise to uncomfortable self-consciousness in a situation in which the individual is aware that negative attention and critical judgement is focused on himself as a result of inappropriate actions which label him as either clumsy, low status or deficient in proper breeding and good manners. Embarrassment is particularly excruciating if the audience is of superior status, people whose high regard is valued by the offender. (Kurian108)

Mrs. Sen undergoes such embarrassment in the presence of Eliot's mother.

Mrs. Sen shares her loneliness and bewilderment, trying to adjust in a strange new culture. She elaborates how during celebrations, all the neighbouring women brought their blades and cut fifty kilos of vegetables sitting on the roof of the building, laughing and gossiping, making it impossible for anyone to sleep. She complains, "Here, in this place where Mr. Sen has brought me, I cannot sometimes sleep in so much silence" (*IOM* 115).

Mrs. Sen expresses her joy and sadness to the little boy who listens to her attentively as she relates her colourful life in Calcutta. Whenever she speaks about home Eliot knows it is India that she refers to. Suddenly she questions Eliot if anyone would come if she screams at the top of her voice. Eliot recollects his own mother calling their neighbor to keep it down when they have a party and replies innocently, "They might call. But they might complain that you were making too much noise" (*IOM* 117).

By the time his mother comes to pick Eliot the house is clean. The peels, skins and seeds are in the garbage pail, the broth simmering on the stove, a dinner prepared as if it is a party, only for Mrs. And Mr. Sen to be served at the square Formica table. Everything is wiped and clean

by the time Eliot's mother appears at the door. Mrs. Sen always serves her with "a glass of bright pink yogurt with rose syrup, breaded mince meat with raisins, a bowl of semolina halvah" (*IOM* 118). But Eliot's mother never relishes them as she never likes the taste. Mrs. Sen feels her identity questioned constantly when Eliot's mother despises her Indian hospitability. She suffers a sort of restlessness in her presence.

The immigrants go through a cultural perplexity when their mannerisms are mocked at and show resistance as it becomes a threat to their cultural identity. They suffer emotionally which is often considered as 'Cultural Shock' (Ranjini and Ramakrishna 67) The psychologist G. Guthrie called this as 'Cultural Fatigue' (Ranjini and Ramakrishna 67) where the immigrants go through homesickness, dissatisfaction, insomnia and psychosomatic disorders which is clearly visible in the case of Mrs. Sen who is unable to fit into the social milieu and ends in mental depression. Her loneliness is accentuated when her busy husband is unable to cater to emotional needs. She shares her cravings with Eliot saying that her family was of the opinion that she lived the luxurious life of a queen.

Mrs. Sen usually collects Eliot by the main road after his school hours. She provides him with snacks from her pocket and then they go directly for her driving practice. She practises around the complex as she is restricted from going to the main road without Mr. Sen. She usually requires Eliot's confirmation on her driving perfection.

Eliot learns that, two things bring immense pleasure to Mrs. Sen. One is the letters she receives from home and the other is her longing for whole fresh fish. Whenever she receives a blue aerogramme, nothing could contain her happiness. After reading its contents she reads the whole matter to Mr. Sen over the phone. Then they go to treat themselves at the college cafeteria. She informs Eliot that her sister had given birth to a girl baby, and is saddened that she cannot see her for three years.

Mrs. Sen's liking for whole fresh fish from the sea overwhelms Eliot. She tells him that "…she had grown up eating fish twice a day. She added that in Calcutta people ate fish first thing in the morning, last thing before bed, as a snack after school if they were lucky" (*IOM* 123). Mrs. Sen always depends on Mr. Sen to drive her to the market to get the fish. Mr. Sen at times due to busy schedule refuses to meet her constant requests. At such times she weeps and asks Eliot, "Tell me, Eliot. Is it too much to ask?" (*IOM* 125) Such is her liking for her favourite food. She even shows Eliot her gorgeous sarees and grieves that she never gets occasion to wear them. She feels alienated in a foreign land and has only this little boy to speak to her heart's content. They seem to share a loneliness being parted from their loved ones.

In November Mrs. Sen mourns the death of her grandfather. She stops her ritualistic routine duties for a week. She plays music which seems to intensify the sadness in the atmosphere. After a week she regains her original self and begins regular cooking again.

A week later, Mr. Sen calls and informs that he wants to take Eliot and Mrs. Sen to the seaside. Mrs. Sen, dresses up for the occasion with great joy. They first buy mackerel, butterfish and sea bass in large quantity. Then they visit the restaurant to have clam cakes. She is very happy and laughs at everything Mr. Sen says. Then they walk along the shore. They take photographs. While returning Mr. Sen wants her to drive. Mrs. Sen agrees reluctantly and drives well until she approaches the town. Then she becomes jittery and refuses to continue.

One day Mrs. Sen and Eliot take a bus to collect the fish. While returning one of the travelers complains to the driver about the smell. The driver suggests they open the window to avoid it. A few days later she receives a call enquiring whether she would like some 'very tasty halibut' (*IOM* 133). Mrs. Sen decides to drive on her own to get the fish. She drives around the campus several times before she gives a signal

and turns. The accident occurs after they travel a mile and take a left before she should have. There is not much damage except that Mrs. Sen has cut on her lip and Eliot complains of pain in ribs. Mr. Sen arrives on the spot. He does not say anything to her. He drives them home after completing the formalities. Mrs. Sen retires to her room after arranging snacks for Eliot. Mr. Sen details Eliot's mother on her arrival about the accident and offers to reimburse November's payment.

After this incident, Eliot's mother decides that he is a big boy and can take care of himself and is to contact the neighbours in case of any emergency. But Eliot misses his stay at the Sen's and when his mother calls to confirm whether he is okay, "Eliot looked out of the window, at gray waves receding from the shore, and said that he was fine." (*IOM* 135) He missed the warmth of Mrs. Sen's home and her affection. It reveals their emotional dependence of Mrs. Sen and Eliot on each other.

Mrs. Sen thus fails in fitting into the American society. Centering her life around "fish from the seaside" (*IOM* 123) and "arrival of a letter from her family" (*IOM* 121) she lives a lonely life. Her dream of a beautiful life in America vanishes in the air. As Dr. Elizabath P. Kurian quotes Sudhir Kakar in her article "Jhumpa Lahiri: Interpreter of Immigrant Dreams" as "an identity disturbance is felt here where there is a break in her sense of the self which prevents her from experiencing herself as a consistent and continuous being with a past, a present and a future." (108)

All the stories in *Interpreter of Maladies* are about relationships that explore frustrations, conflicts, pleasures, displacements and disappointments. As B.Gopal Rao enumerates in "The Human Incompatibility and The Inside of Interpretation – A Study of Jhumpa Lahiri's Short Fiction" student's,

…turn to disciplines such as sociology and psychology to find out about the world and human behaviour. Yet good short fiction, in its exact delineations of character and action, provides insights into the subtleties and complexities of human behavior that certainly are no less valuable than the information gathered and processed by the seemingly more objective methods of science. (132)

Lahiri true to this assumption employs her artifice to bring out the diversity of her characters through varied themes and depictions in her works.

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# Effectiveness of Video Based Programme in Teaching Grammar to the High School Students

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### Abstract

In India, English is the second language in primary, secondary and higher level of education. But most of the language learners in at all levels ignore to learn the grammatical side of the foreign language and they want to get pass in English language examination. So it is the responsibility of researchers in English to examine what kind of Teaching should be initiated for the effective learning of English. Here comes the role of video based programme which could be attempted by the investigator to find out whether video based programme has any influence in learning Grammar easily because the prevailing paradigm in the regular school system is computer mediated communication. Hence this study was undertaken with a sample of 100 students from IX standard from Government and Government Aided school in Ramanathapuram by Random Sampling on Quasi Experimental basis . The result showed that the Experimental group taught by video based programmes performed better than the Control group taught by Traditional method and irrespective of the type of school, the students of Joint family belonging to Experimental group got better post test score.

## Introduction

Education is regarded as the richest and highest treasure of man. Through education, a society transmits its way of life to the succeeding generation. Education is thus a social activity. The form of education provided is determined in large part by the values of the society.

An organized system of education must meet the real situations of a community. Our education must train persons who will be able to assume the responsibility of a leader in the social, political, industrial or any cultural fields. In ancient India, education constituted a real training for living life according to spiritual and moral values. There was a radical change in the aims of education with the advent of British rule in India. Lord Macaulay wanted an educational system which might bring about the cultural conquest of the people of India by British people. The roots of the need to speak and converse in English can be traced to colonial times, when the British enforced their language on the Indian people.

English is used extensively as a second language in our nation before and after Independence. Modern English is sometimes described as the World's Lingua Franca. It can

be argued that not much has changed in the past 60 years since Indian Independence from British colonialism in the need and use of the English Language. The vestige of British influence can also be seen in the teaching methods used at present in the country over the years.

## Place of English inIndia

In India, English is the second language in primary, secondary and higher level of education. As recommended by Dr.Radhakrishnan Commission (1948) and Kothari Education commission (1964-66), English has become the medium of instruction in the Higher Education. Even at school levels, English is used as the medium of instruction. But most of the beginners and language learners in primary and secondary level ignore to learn the grammatical side of the foreign language, they just skip it and they want to get pass in English language examination. So it is the responsibility of researchers in English to examine what kind of Teaching should be initiated for the effective learning of English. Here comes the role of video based programme which could be attempted by the investigator to find out whether video based programme has any influence in learning Grammar easily because the prevailing paradigm in the regular school system is computer mediated communication which provides education with tools for sustaining learning communities and associated knowledge management tasks. The Internet and the World Wide Web also provide access to learning in almost every subject and in a variety of media anywhere at any time of the day and to an unlimited number of people (Oginni) 2015. So it becomes imperative to use technology which also includes video based programme in teaching.

Video based programme is the package of audio-visual aids with suitable pictorial representations that will improve the interaction and attention of the learners in any subject. "Video, a kind of multimedia material consists of verbal presentations displaying simultaneous images, narration and on-screen text".Mayer (2002). This innovative method of teaching English will make the students feel easy in learning a foreign language and enable the learner highly to participate in the effective classroom conditions. Suitable illustrations will enhance practical experience of the learner. Because of these reasons, it is said that the video based programme can be used as a tool to enhance the process of learning in classroom situation. Hence the investigator has selected this topic to find out the "Effectiveness of Video based programmes in teaching Grammar - Articles and Adjectives to VII standard students." with the following objectives.

## Objectives of the study

· To prepare a Package of Video Based Programmes containing Grammar- Articles and Adjectives with definition, explanation, rules of usage, suitable illustrations with animation, text image to teach to the students of IX Standard.

· To identify the achievement level of the students of IX standard in learning Grammar by using Traditional method and Experimental method in their pre test and post test.

· To analyse the effectiveness of teaching Grammar through Video Based Programmes among the students of IX Standard in relation to the variables namely type of schools and type of family .

## Methodology

Quasi- Experimental Design was selected for the present study .The sample consisted of 100 students of IX Standard belonging to Government and Government Aided school in Ramanathapuram out of whom 50 formed the Conventional Group and 50 students were in the Experimental Group on random basis. The tools selected for the present study were Video based programme package on "Articles and Adjectives" which includes sound, text, animation, color, graphics and pictures explaining the meaning, kinds and usage of Articles and Adjective, prepared by the investigator with the help of the experts an

Achievement test tool consisted of 5 True or false statements, 5 objective type questions, 5 short questions and a Paragraph writing. The tools were prepared after establishing Reliability and validity.

**Analysis and Discussion**

The obtained data was analysed using Differential analysis and depicted in the following tables.

| Method | Variable | No. of students | Mean | S.D | 't' value |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Traditional method | Pre- test | 50 | 16.18 | 4.94 | 0.0030 NS |
| | Post-test | | 15.12 | 4.73 | |

NS – Not Significant

The 't' test was applied to find out whether there is any significant difference in the pre-test and post-test scores obtained by the students, taught by the traditional method. The result shows that the calculated 't' value is 0.0030 which is not significant. Hence the null hypothesis, "There is no significant difference in the pre-test and post scores of the students taught through traditional method is accepted". The reason for this may be due to the lack of interest on the part of the students due to mere lecture method which may create monotony.

**Table-2: Anlysis of Achievement Scores of the Students Taught Through Experimental Method**

| Method | Variable | No. of students | Mean | 't' value |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Experimental method | Pre-test | 50 | 16.08 | 2.183* |
| | Post-test | | 17.16 | |

\* **Significant at 5% level.**

It is inferred from the above table that the t-value is significant at five percent level which indicates that there is significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores obtained by the students, taught by the Experimental method. So the null hypothesis, "there is no significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores obtained by the students, taught by the Experimental method " is rejected. This may be due to the effect of the video based programme in learning English Grammer.

**Table-3 Comparison of the Achievement scores of the Two groups in the Post test**

| S. No | No. of students | Method | Mean Score | 't' value |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | |

| 1 | 50 | Traditional method | 29.96 | 12.706** |
| 2 | 50 | Experimental method | 34.20 | |

** Highly significant at 5% level

It is understood from the above table that the t-value is highly significant at five percent level which indicates that there is highly significant difference between the group taught by the Traditional method and the Experimental method in their post test scores studying in Government school. So the null hypothesis, "there is no significant difference between the Traditional group and the Experimental group in their posttest scores" is rejected. This may be due to the fact that the Experimental group evinced keen interest in learning English Grammar through the video based programme.

**Table 4: Achievement Score of the Experimental Group in Relation to the Type of Family in Government School**

| Type of school | Type of family | No. of students | Mean | 't' value |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Government school | Nuclear family | 11 | 6 | |
| | Joint family | 39 | 20 | 4.04265** |

** Highly significant at 5% level.

The above table indicates that 't' value obtained is higher than the table value at 5 percent level of significance. This shows that there exists highly significant difference between the students of Nuclear family and Joint family in the Experimental group. The high mean score of the students of Joint family reveals that they get more influenced by the Video Based Programme than their counterpart – the students of Nuclear family. Hence the null hypothesis "there is no significant difference between the students of Joint family and those of Nuclear family in the Experimental group belonging to the Government School " is rejected.

**Table-5: Achievement score of the Experimental Group in Relation to the Type of Family in Government Aided School**

| Type of school | Type of family | N | Mean | S.D | 't' value |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | Nuclear family | 23 | 12 | 6.78 | |
| Government Aided school | Joint family | 27 | 14 | 7.93 | 4.13** |

** Highly significant at5% percent level

It is inferred from the above table that 't' value obtained is higher than the table value at 5 percent level of significance. This shows that there is highly significant difference between the students of Nuclear family and Joint family belonging to the Experimental group in Government Aided School. The high mean score indicates that the students of Joint family are much influenced by the Video Based Programme than their counterpart namely students of Nuclear family. Hence the null hypothesis "there is no significant difference between the students of Joint family and those of Nuclear family in the Experimental group belonging to the Government Aided School" is rejected.

The Analysis and Interpretation of data resulted in the following findings which justifies the effectiveness of Video based programme in Teaching English Grammar.

**Findings:**

■  Analysis of the achievement score of the students taught by Traditional method revealed that there is no significant difference in the pre test and the post test scores of the students of this group.

■  The Experimental group taught by the Video Based Programme showed significant difference in the pre test and the post test scores. The reason may be that this group was motivated to learn Grammar by the Video Based Programme resulting in their better performance in the post test.

■  Statistical analysis also revealed that there was highly significant difference in the post test score of the group taught by Traditional method and that of the Experimental method. The Experimental group got high mean score.

■  It was also inferred from the analysis that in the Experimental group of the Government school, the students belonging to the Joint Family performed better than the Nuclear family

■  The same result was obtained in the case of the Experimental group of the Government

Aided School where the students of Joint Family got higher score than their counterpart in the Nuclear family.  The reason may be that the students of Joint Family might have got motivated by this Video based programme than their counterpart in the Nuclear family ..

**Conclusion:**

Teachers begin to understand that language acquisition was not a passive process but depends on the learner's interest, habits, background and attitude. However it was difficult for traditional English Grammar teaching methods to address these concepts until multimedia and video based packages address specific learning objectives and oriented towards the learner cultural background, efficiently addressing most students' sensory and cultural learning needs. To facilitate the process of learning in English, efficient video based programmes and multimedia materials should be integrated into learning materials to give a break-off to conventional classroom conditions and traditional teaching materials since Technology provides us with powerful tools to try out different designs in Education.  Today the prevailing paradigm in the regular school system is computer mediated communication where the primary form of interaction is between students and instructors, mediated by the computer. Let the teaching community utilize the benefits of technological advancement thereby produce good, knowledgeable, efficient and skilled future citizens.

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# Doing Ethics in the Light of Third Gender:
# Lesbian Ethics

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Generally in most of the societies two types of gender are recognized - masculine and feminine which correspond to the biological male and female respectively. A man is expected to carry out certain masculine traits like being rational or showing assertion in his character. The same applies with women. Society has fixed certain roles for both men and women which may vary according to different time and place. Gender, is thus, socially constructed. Gender must not be confused with sex for the latter is a biological category and the former a social one. In languages too we see the predominant role of gender. For example in French language the word 'pen' is a male ( le stylo) and chair is female (la chaise). Based on the gender of the words there is the utilization of articles and adjectives in French. Thus, the effect of gender is great irrespective of the context. It influences the ways we organize and think about the world and our way of knowing about the world.

Apart from the language, in the context of various disciplines like history, philosophy or political science, the masculine gender exerts a tremendous influence. The narrations, the epistemologies, the ethics or the diverse policies are all gendered in nature (masculinized). The feminine aspect is overlooked altogether. This exclusion of the feminine traits becomes problematic for many, especially to the feminists. Their endeavor is to include those concerns which are branded only as 'feminine'. By embracing feminine/womanly concerns in the current categories of various academic disciplines has led to the process of gendering the various units of analysis within the disciplines like such as citizens, voters, legislators etc in case of political science or ethics or epistemologies in case of philosophy.

The present aim of the contemporary world seems to highlight the 'inclusion project' of women which aims to bring in the forefront the absence of women that leads to partial, shallow, and biased knowledge as well as to integrate women into the theories, institutions, and practices from which they have been excluded. Thus, it demands for greater epistemological expansion.

So far it seems great but again a process of omission is at operative, where the account of the alternative sexualities are often find missing from the mainstream disciplines. There is a pressing need amongst them to find a place in the study of various disciplines. For example, to have a place in the study of gender politics or to have an ethics of their own. In this paper I would like to discuss the emergence of Lesbian ethics following Sarah Hoagland's book *Lesbian Ethics: Toward New Values,* when feminist ethics is not being able to represent properly their scholarly institutions and threads of research. Lesbian ethics talks about moral agency of lesbians under oppression which is otherwise overlooked by feminist ethics. Such an ethics also challenges the most dominant structure of the society, namely heterosexuality, which often remains a matter of less importance among feminist ethics. This paper endeavors to

talk about Lesbian ethics, a view point of third gender, within the core area of philosophy which is ethics. How much this ethics is similar (or dissimilar) with that of feminist ethics will also be a matter of concern in this paper. The feminist ethics I would be mostly talking about is Carol Gilligan's care ethics. She is an American psychologist who has written a famous book named *In a Different Voice*. Both the work of Sarah and Gilligan came out at the same time in the year 1982 and it would be an interesting to explore their work.

**Key words**: gender, philosophy, feminist ethics, lesbian ethics.

## A. Traditional Ethics vis-a-vis Feminist Ethics

Feminist ethics is an endeavor on the part of the feminists to talk about those issues which are often overlooked by the mainstream philosophers. Mainstream has always emphasized upon features like abstraction, universality, detachment or a 'view from nowhere' in order to have objectivity either in the formation of knowledge or to evolve more as a matured human being. The traditionalists have hardly talked about the factors like context specificity, attachment, 'view from somewhere' which too can lead to the expansion of epistemologies. The 'view from nowhere' gives us a view from a detached position, where context is immaterial. In this situation, embodiedness or situatedness of knowledge has no role to play. Whereas to the feminists, it is important to talk about context and thus, situated knower is important. In this context, 'view from nowhere' is replaced by 'view form somewhere'. Through various writings and debates, feminists have tried to incorporate the above mentioned overlooked factors within the mainstream account and thus have widened the horizon of ethics.

Feminists do talk about heterogeneity which leads to plurality. It is important to recognize the uniqueness of each individual. One cannot be judged based on someone else's values. The factor of homogeneity, which has always been uplifted by the traditionalists, has been rejected outright by the feminists. Feminists talk about an ethics which would be an egalitarian one, encompassing both men and women and not only men.

Traditional ethicists take reason as the one with the hep of which the fundamental principles of ethics can be seen to be true. Reason must not be distorted by anything (like emotion) and it only leads to superior kind of morality. Passion needs to be enslaved by reason. When controlled, reason rules in an individual and thus becomes desirable in a society. But the feminists tend to possess a different view altogether. They have not denied the importance of reason but at the same time have talked about the value of emotion profusely. It is not possible to lead a life based solely on reason; we may often need the guidance of both. Several feminists have emphasized the importance of emotion, on the basis of which a huge work has evolved in the field of ethics. Emotion does not lead any kind of weakness; it can, on the other hand, help an individual to evolve more as a matured human being. To feminists, the yardstick of development can never be based on reason; reason and emotion go hand in hand. While doing ethics, this is a very important factor which needs to acknowledged.

Reason is always associated with men and emotion with women. Under such a context, women hardly find any place in any of the disciplines. Often sited as incapable or a weak emotional being, it becomes imperative for the feminists to intervene and talk about women; to claim about the significance of emotion in women's life which feminists have done undoubtedly.

Feminist ethics helped feminist to talk more about themselves. This is a huge success for them where they are able to accommodate women who comprise half of the population. But this is only the one side of the success story. Feminist ethics is surely a victory over the traditional ethics but

it has failed to evade the binary of women/men, which is one of the agendas of feminists. At this juncture, lesbians formulate their own ethics, named as lesbian ethics which represents their own interests. Let us now discuss what is lesbian ethics.

## B. Lesbian Ethics

Lesbians are not at all happy as they find the feminist ethics essentially heterosexual in nature as well as exclusionist. According to many lesbian activists, feminists have failed to interrogate the category of 'woman' which necessarily reinforces the dominant patriarchal system. But before talking about the dissimilarities of the two ethics, let us have a glimpse on their similarities.

### i. The Similarities

Both the feminist and lesbian ethics talk about the relational aspect of the self; in a society, the self is undoubtedly connected to other human beings. This relational self does lead to a weak character; it helps one to gain maturity. Women or lesbians share a strong bond with the other members of the society. The way Sarah formulates the bond between lesbians in her book named *Lesbian Ethics: Toward New Values* is somewhat similar to Carol Gilligan's care ethics. Both the ethicists stress upon the communitarian nature of the self which makes one capable enough to to make judgments and choices of their own. Like care ethics, lesbian ethics also talks about the possibility of developing individual integrity and agency in relation to others.

When dealing with women or lesbians, both the authors are trying to develop a context. This context is an important factor where women and lesbians have the scope to express their opinions freely which in turn helps to ensure their social position.

Both the theorists talk about the need to know the world of the other, the need to travel to the other's world which would make us understand the position of the other better. Being attentive to oneself and towards others give rise to new meanings and values in a relationship. While attending the other person, one becomes more tolerant and responsive. Both the ethics have also emphasized on the factor of intimacy. The way to know oneself will ultimately lead to knowing others as well as sharing and understanding others interests. The effort from one's part would enhance the communication with the other.

The relation between two individuals as proposed by Gilligan and Hoagland is more of an engagement rather than any kind of sacrifice. The engagement is of such a naturewhere one does not lose anything. And at the same time, one is able to express one's desires. Both women and lesbians have the will to be engaged with one another. Being engaged does not mean one loses her independence. They remain related and yet are autonomous beings.

Both the ethicists talk about difference, the principle of heterogeneity, which triumphs over the factor of homogeneity. We all are different and the theories should be in a position to understand such differences and to reach a commonality based on the differences. Besides the factor of difference, both have emphasized the emotional side of human beings rather that doing something solely out of duty and obligation. In this context, Hoagland expresses, specifically, that the act of caring leads to lesbian connection. Focusing on duty creates a gap between reason and emotion; acting from duty undermines the ability to care.

The above mentioned factors can be sited as some of the similarities between the two ethics. Now let us see the point of divergence.

### ii. The Dissimilarities

Both the theorists have talked about bonding, among women or lesbians. But in Gilligan's ethics such a bond is not trying to question '*norms*' of the society as well as does not resist and refocus on the dominant standards within the mainstream society which Hoagland's bond between two individuals endeavors to do.

The *patriarchy* remains unchallenged in Gilligan's theory although she tries to bring a change within the psychological developmental theories of human beings. If the patriarchal system is not challenged, then it will always try to validate certain kinds of oppression and behavior within society. Lesbian activists are very particular to challenge the patriarchy. Any reform under such a system will go in vain unless such a system is abolished altogether. The very notion that a man is superior to a woman rests on the working of the patriarchal system. Gilligan is trying to show us a different developmental picture but did not really probe deep into the problem which has its invisible tentacles spread out within the patriarchal society.

The concept of **'*woman*'** in a patriarchal society is used with a vested interest by men where they emphasize female competence and skill according to their own need (at the time of war). Woman, under such a system, emerges through her relationship to a man. The dominant category of 'woman' is problematic to lesbians as it portrays women only as objects to be conquered by men as well as look into women as breeders of boys. To the lesbians, the term 'lesbian' appears to be more emancipatory in nature when compared to 'woman' as Hoagland believes that the term 'lesbian' is not "tied up with dominance and subordination as norms of behavior"[1].

*Heterosexuality* is a product of patriarchy which goes unchallenged in many feminists theory including Gilligan's. It is a system of domination of women by men. Heterosexuality is defined as "a particular economic, political, and economical relationship between men and women: men must dominate women and women must subordinate themselves to men in any of a number of ways. As a result, men presume access to women while women remain riveted on men and are unable to sustain a community of women"[2]. This quotation explains the system very well. Sarah finds heterosexuality problematic and thus questions this system. She views that this system erases lesbians rightful existence in the society. Within the patriarchy, women are seen in a particular way where tend to be more emotional and passive in nature. These are women's typical gender characteristics assigned by patriarchy. Lesbians talk about the need to have moral revolution which would not happen unless we talk about reforms rather than reinforcing the existing social order. If one does not pay any attention to contest this system, then such a system would make men's rights always undebatable. The domination and subordination of women or lesbians are prominent, and feminists are unable to handle it carefully as they are unable to question the system. It is true that feminists have talked much about male domination but have not necessarily challenged heterosexuality.

Lesbians also point out that under the heterosexual system, women are not always a victim. They may use their nurturing skills to manipulate men. Women can easily exercise their power of control from a subordinate position also. It may be the case that women under such an oppressive system have enhanced their feminine virtues as a means to obtain some control in a male-dominated world. So, women may not always be self-sacrificial in nature.

Many feminists have essentially assigned women with the role of caring and nurturing. It may be used as a technique to valorize the importance of women within a patriarchal system. Gilligan is not an exception to this. Feminists have locked women with the responsibility to take care of others and women feel happy when they take care of others. In such a situation, femininity all the more normalizes male domination and shows women as someone who love being controlled. Feminism, to lesbian activists, keeps 'femininity' intact; it does not re-interrogate such concepts and thus fortifies the patriarchal system. Resistance to institutional dominance is missing in feminists account which lesbians explore. Very poignantly Hoagland points out that "feminists continue to note how women are victims of institutional ordinary behavior, but many have ceased to challenge the concept of 'woman' and the role men and male institutions play as "protectors" of women"[3].

*Feminism* portrays women as helpless and in need of protection. In such a situation, women's moral agency is denied. What lesbian activists try to point out is the fact that feminism has its root within the masculinist ideologies and the former fails to break apart from it. Lesbians, like Sarah, would challenge those individuals who would try to embrace the self-sacrificial nature as it strengthens the various masculinist ideologies.

After going through the similarities as well as the differences between feminist ethics and lesbian ethics, let us see how lesbian ethics is different and how they formulate their own ethics in a more enriched manner.

Lesbians say that there is no problem when a woman cares but the question is of *choice*. They talk about woman's choice to care or to not care and not because of her biological reasons she should be assigned with the task of caring. To choose caring can be one's independent decision rather than sacrifice. Here 'to choose' is to involve oneself. And if she thinks to re-consider her choice, then it is accepted, as change is the driving force of life. Within this change, lies the possibility of creating something new and to lesbians it is the essence of their existence.

For the lesbians, the choice is of utmost importance. This making of choice is central to lesbians moral agency which helps to develop lesbian ethics. Such an agency would definitely be outside the heterosexual system. Given such an opportunity, one would be in a position to create new values and new conceptual framework which is believed to be free from the defects of the dominant system.

To do away with domination, Hoagland tries to give a solution by talking about '*separatism*'. This can be defined as the ability to "withdraw from a particular situation when it threatens to dissolve into a relationship of dominance and subordination. And we may withdraw from a system of dominance and subordination in order to engage in moral revolution"[4]. Separatism is both a moral and a political choice which helps

one to fight against the established patriarchal system. To 'separate' as an option, needs to be acknowledged. This withdrawal is not be taken as disengagement; rather it is a kind of engagement and the separation is nothing but withdrawal from heterosexualism.

Hoagland strongly feels the need to revolt against the existing system without which liberation in its truest sense is not possible. More specifically, this is possible when one withdraws oneself from the dominant conceptual framework and not abiding by its rules. Lesbians, like Sarah, would stress upon revolution rather than reform for within reform, the seed of oppression lies intact; it buttresses the existing values.

Relationship is important to lesbians but they go a step further where they claim that "the real risk of connecting lies in a willingness to take the next step, to change the relationship, to let go of the "security" of static predictability"[5]. To come out of the comfort zone in a relationship is what Sarah tries to talk about. This would not be encouraged by many feminists. To be in a relationship is the ideal situation of women where embracing the unknown finds no place.

Before one expects to be known by the other, it is important *to understand oneself*, which, according to Hoagland, leads to the way to moral revolution. The deep understanding of oneself accompanied with the understanding of the others provide the opportunity for female agency independent of heterosexualism.

While taking care for another, lesbian activists claim that we should be careful of not weakening the other person's responsiveness and thus her moral agency. Care ethics does not regard this as an important factor to be considered. While caring for other, we often believe that whatever we are doing or thinking for the other person suits her own interest. But we fail to acknowledge the fact that this very way of helping out the other may bring down the confidence which may affect her agency as a subject. This makes a person more vulnerable rather than being competent.

Talking to the other in distress or taking help must not take away the ability to attend to her own responsibilities. So it is very important to do away with paternalism as it reinforces the conditions of oppression. The idea is to empower the other and not make her cripple.

According to lesbian ethics, we need to *attend* and focus on the other which would empower the other. But by controlling the situation and not leaving the choice to her do not lead to any kind of emancipation. Lesbian ethics tries to warn us when we act on behalf of other and bring down her integrity. Attending to the other's needs demands skill. While attending the other, no one becomes authoritarian. It is just one is lending her helping hand who at present is unable to look after herself. This process of attending the other heightens *self- understanding* which is a quintessential factor of lesbian ethics. This will in the long run enhance the ability to respond and would make possible to work together with people of different backgrounds. Engaging or attending the other does not lead to any kind of bondage. Lesbians choose to interact with each other rather than controlling the other. It is the power from within which is the driving force of lesbians. The intention to control the other reinforces the patriarchal values of which lesbians are against.

In order to enhance the bond between women, Gilligan does not mention about any women's community but Hoagland proposes to do so. Such a *lesbian community* will help to know each other more with all their differences and divergent backgrounds. Sarah mentions that these communities provide the space where "we create a relationship, we create value; as we focus on lesbian community and bring our backgrounds, interests and abilities and desires to it, we create lesbian meaning"[6]. Such a community evolves and emerges out of one's choice. She develops this concept of 'choice' as our ability to be a moral agent.

The working of feminist ethics within the heterosexual paradigm does not allow lesbians to develop their moral agency. This moral agency leads to the development of *intelligibility* which is important for lesbians. Also be named as attending, it helps to connect with one another. Sarah describes 'intelligibility' as "… self-understanding and thus an ability to examine what is going on in our lives. It is part of our process of understanding our own changes and transformations"[7]. Intelligibility is seen as a virtue among lesbians which Hoagland proposes to cultivate. It can be seen as a kind of introspection where one has the power to think about what is happening in one's life, in one's relationship. This factor helps both the parties (one cared for and one who is caring) to see each other's view, to understand each other in a more sharing manner. Thus, the differences among many become intelligible to us. Along with intelligibility, Sarah talks about the option of *withdrawal* which is of crucial nature as it helps in such situations when" … the interaction dissolve into dominance and subordination framework of manipulation and control"[8]. She beautifully points out the fact that the insistence to keep on holding others together may not necessarily mean that the bond exists; on the contrary, it may appear that such a bond existed and now it does not. Sarah is aware of the fact that withdrawal may hurt the persons involved. But she wants this feature as an ethical option where the situations would decide the time of withdrawal instead of sustaining it. While going through the accounts of feminist ethics or Gilligan, we do not come across such a concept of withdrawal. Though Gilligan talks about 'exit', which is the last resort, but she is not very clear when a person can really come out of an oppressive relationship. The onus seems to be upon women to maintain the relationship under thick and thin condition.

In Lesbian ethics, self –understanding has another name called *integrity* which means '… periodically assessing ourselves in terms of our values and in relation to others and their values"[9]. Integrity gives a sense of ourselves, helps to develop lesbian ability and responsiveness.

Lesbian ethics embraces difference. It is an ethics that talks about the development of lesbian integrity and agency and also about caring which yields to lesbian connection. Acting towards the other solely with the feeling of duty and obligation does not lead to the understanding of each other but acting out of caring does. This ethics endows one to say 'no' to coercion. Lesbian ethics promotes responsiveness rather than only responsibility. The former is important to them as it gives rise to the energy which keeps the lesbians connected to one another. To take each other seriously and to appreciate the other are all about the concept of responsiveness. Lesbian ethics speaks of weaving which "involves understanding and creating patterns, and it includes, among other things, the choice of which threads to select, which to leave behind, which color and thickness to use, what to unravel and discard, what to do over again, where to repeat, and when to end"[10]. This is what lesbian ethics stands for.

Thus, Hoagland's lesbian ethics is an attempt to transform the prevailing perceptions of the society so that the existent repressive values become non-functional. It tries to give lesbians the space to articulate their concerns and the voice where they can speak out their own mind. She develops an ethics which is relevant to lesbians under oppression. Such an ethics is an endeavor to fight against the oppressive social structures. It talks about values that promote lesbian connection. Lesbian ethics uses lesbians way of living or their lived experiences whereby they redefine ethics in a male-dominated world.

**(Footnotes)**
[1]Hoagland, p.68. , [2]Haogland, p.29., [3]Hoagland, p.49., [4]Hoagland, p.55., [5]Hoagland, p.112., [6]Hoagland, p.93., [7]Hoagland, p.221-222. , [8]Hoagland, p.229., [9]Hoagland, p.286., [10]Hoagland, p.302.

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# Is the Skill of Writing Declining?

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**Abstract:**

Writing is one of the primary skills of a language. Students who start learning a language find writing as the difficult skill as its needs perfection from the beginning. Figuring the letter appropriately only can make it readable and understandable. More importance is given in writing the letter  rather than pronouncing the sound properly. Such a significant skill is not in use these days as students use it only during the exams that also can be replaced easily. Keyboard is replacing pen and the act of writing is being swiftly replaced by typing. For students, typing brings more advantages when compared to writing. This paper discusses the disadvantages that students face in writing and how typing rectifies them.

Key words: Writing, good hand writing, legibility, typing, time saving, easy access.

## Background of the study:

Writing is a significant skill in a language. One who doesn't know how to write is called an Illiterate, even though he speak s the language well. Reading is related to writing as both of them go with the symbols or letter forms of the language .on the contrary, listening and speaking go with the sounds of the language. Writing is the fourth skill in learning the language. Having learnt  others previously, learners have a prior knowledge about the forms and sounds.

Figuring the letters of the language is a very difficult task making children find difficulty in learning the language. More practice is needed to get legible hand writing. This paper will computerized world, the use of pen is getting decreased. We prefer the typed and printed documents than manuscripts. This brings down the act of writing. Starting from this issue, the paper deals with the further drawbacks in writing when compared to typing.

## Introduction:

We live in a world that depends on computers and internet. Communication has become an easy process in  this scenario. We are connected to all the nooks and crannies of the world. Communication started with letter transformation but today they have lost their significance. These letters were once hand written but now their number has decreased to the core and in addition we are sending typed letters rather than hand written ones. This decrease in letters is because of the easy access and speed of the e-mail and other messaging applications. It can be said that all official documents are typed ones. Students write more than all others. They do write for taking notes, assignments and examinations. But now-a- days this also has stopped as they are typing. Students use palm tops and laptops to take notes; they type and print their assignments. School board exams are the only exception where students are writing still. Even that is changing slowly as exams are happening online. These are the prime issues which will be discussed in this paper.

## Hypothesis:

The study for this paper is made with the assumption that writing helps students in conceptualizing and typing is helpful in various aspects for students to get more marks than they get by writing in examinations.

### Review of Literature:

Writing is being overtaken by typing as the second one has more visible advantages than the first one. People in this scenario don't write much. They have almost stopped writing and started typing. This creates a thought in us 'why we have learnt writing the letters which have no use today?. For this question the study published in Psychological Science, Pam A. Mueller of Princeton University says that students who take long hand notes are able to do extra process on the materials they have collected through notes. On the other hand Daniel M. Oppenheimer of the University of California says that the benefits of being able to look at your more complete, transcribed notes on a laptop outweigh the drawbacks of not processing that information. On the other hand, when writing longhand, you process the information better but have less to look back at. These results of the researchers helped to make this study.

### Writing versus Typing:

Writing is related to improved creativity, critical thinking and problem solving skills. It is a complex cognitive process involving neuro-sensory experiences and fine motor skills. Feeling the writing surface and holding the writing instrument directs a person to precise movements with thoughts. Figuring the letters helps learners to recognize them easily than those who studied the forms of it from the keyboard. Typing in the keyboard is a simple memory based movement. It just involves repetitive motions based on the letter placement in the keyboard. People prefer typing as it is fast, convenient and easy to share and print as an electronic document. Researchers

say that one in three people in UK write long form letters only twice per year.

Typing has become the effortless method of writing for everything from official e-mails to personal to-do lists. Though typing has more expediency, writing has its own unique advantages.

### Writing as a Skill:

Writing is a skill which needs more practice than all the other three skills. It is the complex skill which involves the mind with the motor exercises to practice. Figuring out a letter gets recorded in the mind better than learning the shape of the letter from just identifying it from a paper. The act of writing helps you clarify your thoughts, remember things better, and reach your goals more surely. It is common that words can rush out in the feral state when pen is the tool. Meanwhile, technology or typing is distracting and distancing. There are some scientific reasons for the superiority of pen over key board when it comes to cognitive functions.

Researchers say that children's writing ability is consistently better when writing with a pen rather than a keyboard. Another research says that adults learn new symbols and graphic shapes while reproducing them by using pen and paper instead of typing them. Whether the pen or the keyboard is better depends on one's own personal experience and comfort with those tools. As a compromise we have got stylus friendly tablets with digital pens.

### Writing as Technology:

Writing is a technology for collective memory, for preserving and passing on human experience. This applies to all writing. The printing press mechanizes writing by the invention of typography which provided the first uniformly repeatable commodity and the first mass-production. Printing changes the visual character of the written page, making the writing space technically clean and clear. The computer also changes the technology of writing in several ways. It adds flexibility to printing, allows the writer/reader to change texts according to user's

needs and desires.

### Research Questions:

The following research questions helped the researcher to frame the discussion:

1. How can typing become everyone's cup of tea?

2. How should students take notes: by typing or writing?

3. What are the basic problems for students in writing in examination?

4. How does typing help students in examination?

**Discussion:**

Typing or writing is a long gone research which resulted in both ways leaving readers in dilemma. Writing has its own unique advantages compared to typing. But typing is widely used now-a- days because of its convenience. Persons belonging to most of the professional fields have completely stopped writing and switched them to typing. All official documents have become typed and printed. Manuscripts have become rare in professional settings. Mailing has become the most important pathway in official settings as it is on time. All reports, memos, letters, proposals are mailed on time with ease. This convenience is because of the easiness in sending multiple copies, no time delivery, paper less messages etc. Speed in typing is mounting in technocrats as they are key padding most of the time. They are used to type to send messages, post status, comment on others' posts through communicating applications. Texting through these applications have become mandatory like bathing and eating daily. This has become a major part of their daily activities. These are all few reasons for typing to become everyone's cup of tea.

Taking notes in classes are seen convenient when students type the content as it is fast, easy and clear. Using laptops and other gadgets in class room is very common. It helps the students to carry light. They are able to type much than they write. But researches have proved that students using gadgets are taking notes verbatim but others who take notes in written write in their own words. And it results that more they take notes verbatim, the worse they perform in tests. Another thing in taking written notes is they have superior external storage as well as superior encoding functions than taking notes using gadgets. We will have a question now that can it be possible to switch ourselves back to pen and paper? But we have answers for that too as we have doodling gadgets and stylus to help us write in gadgets also. So it can be better if students take notes hand written rather than typing.

Having such a potential to type, students of this age prefer typing to writing. They also type more than they write. Notes taking in class, assignments, letters, reports, presentations, seminar preparations, projects all are done easily by typing. The place where they write under compulsion is during the exams. As they have less exposure to writing, they find it difficult to write during the exams. There were some drawbacks in writing the answers in exams. Exams are conducted to evaluate the students with the marks awarded for them for the answers they have written. Here writing creates some problems as hand written scriptures are unique to all. Some students have neat handwriting, some do not. Some students present their answers closely not leaving much space which shows their answers as little and others leave more space between words and lines which show their answers as lengthy. This makes the evaluators to award more marks for the handwriting which is legible and reduce marks which is not. This is major drawback faced by students who don't have legible hand writing. Another major problem is, students have more practice in typing rather than writing. This makes them feel difficult to write once in a monsoon that they cannot pick up the speed to finish the answers in the allotted time. These are the basic problems for students in writing during examinations.

Typing is the day to day process done by students of this age. The basic problems of students in writing during examinations can be easily avoided by making the examinations typed.

The first disadvantage discussed there is having neat hand writing. Here it is not at all an issue as typed fonts are universal and they can be made common so that teachers cannot find anything

as good and bad to award marks on that basis. The next problem is legibility .it also can be avoided by setting the same spacing, coloring and making the presentation as common. And the major problem of time can be saved when typing is allowed in examination as students can type faster than writing and can save time. Other advantages in typing for exam is we can go paperless and save nature too. Copying during exams can be avoided completely by having typed exams. This can make a huge difference in the valuation pattern and will benefit the students as teachers can award marks only for the content they have written rather than for hand writing or legibility.

These are the ways in which typing helps students during examination.

## Summation:

Writing being a motor exercise helps in increasing the creativity of people by figuring the letters as we learn a language. Though there are splendid reasons to learn and practice figuring the letters, typing has become the easiest way to convey something in written form. Whatever benefits typing can give, we are in need to retain our capacity to think and be creative. For being so we should have the habit of taking notes hand written. As we are moving away from writing, in many ways we can have exam answer sheets to be typed which can help the students to get appropriate marks for what they have written.

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# The Role of English Language Teacher in Empowering Speaking Skills

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## Abstract

A language achieves a genuine global status when it develops a special role that is recognized in every country. To achieve such a status, a language has to be taken up by other countries around the world. This is being done by English, the world's *lingua franca,* because of the growing area of education worldwide. The drive to make progress in science and technology has also enabled English to attain the global status.

My paper intends to focus on the four skills – LSRW – and in particular, the speaking skills that are so very important in the present context but only little importance is being given to it even in the present syllabus. It is Literature or Language, the teachers are "not adequately trained" and the facilities in the classrooms do not permit innovative methods of language teaching. I would like to stress the need of inculcating these essential skills to the younger generation who study in schools and colleges. By enabling them, language teaching can be made vibrant and in particular, speaking skills will make them aware of the importance of English in the present scenario. This would in turn reflect the importance of English in the society which may enlighten the public on the richness of English language.

My paper titled, "The Role of English Language Teacher in Empowering Speaking Skills" will suggest methods to facilitate the non-native speakers of English to acquire the speaking skills and speak English in a much better way. I strongly believe that English must be taught as a skill subject so that it will become a language very familiar to our students.

The presence of the English language in today's world is becoming more significant because of the spreading out of the language in new territories and disciplines. The need to communicate in English is a day to day activity for the majority of the workforce. The present day scenario demands effective communication skills to meet out the challenges in the varied circumstances. The importance of teaching these skills in schools and colleges has not been understood in its proper manner. Speaking a non-native language will be critical for the students but it is more crucial for teaching a second language. But today's world requires professionals who have the ability to communicate effectively as well as efficiently. The same old method of teaching English i.e., repetition of exercises or memorizing passages or poems, would not benefit either the teacher or the student. The methodology must inculcate the training of the four language skills, in short called as LSRW.

The teaching of English language has taken new shapes according to the changing situations. English for specific purposes has been introduced keeping in mind the need of English language for different professionals. This demands the teaching of English should be treated as a skills subject rather than as a mere subject. The difference is that, the teaching should be mostly practical/situation oriented exposing the students to use the language effectively. The language teacher should play the role of a facilitator inside the classroom. They should focus on the outcome of the various activities conducted to

the students. The teacher should plan activities that enrich the students use the language with interest as well as understanding the need to learn the language in a better manner.

The students should be able to speak English – the outcome of any activity being planned by the teacher. A clear pronunciation should be expected from the students and not perfect pronunciation like that of the native speakers. If the students are able to understand clearly what the teacher speaks in English, it shows his/her good listening skills. Though reading is considered a passive skill, it enhances the ability of the students to understand the language in much better way. Reading habits must be inculcated among the students through which they can learn new words and enrich their vocabulary. Our students exhibit their talents in writing only during their exams. They should be allowed to write creatively which in turn will make them search for words and its meaning. They should be trained to write concisely and precisely so that their choice of words will make the content meaningful.

English language is predominantly the language of international business and commerce. Though it's the language of the technology and sciences, being the business language has taken it to new destiny. This has undeniably helped Indians in general to do business worldwide. In addition, it has also given India an added advantage in software and business process outsourcing industry. This in turn creates a larger workforce, "but to survive and thrive in a global economy, companies must overcome language barriers— and English will almost always be the common ground, at least for now." English has been taught in India for centuries but still most of our students are lagging behind if the communication ought to be in English. Where we go wrong? I accept that the tendency to use our mother tongue is high and common among us. Still the mother tongue medium schools are on par with the number of English medium schools in India. But I would like to point out that English is still taught as a subject irrespective of the mediums of instruction. The students should at least be able to converse in simple English though not even as fluent as an illiterate child in any English speaking nations. At this juncture, I too applaud the number of students who gets placed in MNCs, research organizations and reputed firms worldwide. But what about the majority of the students who has learned English as a subject till his childhood but finds it difficult to make it even in the local companies?

This clearly states that the methodology adopted to teach English should undergo a rapid change according to the strategies and requirements in the present global scenario. The demand for the ever growing language should be met with greater acquisition. I would like to note here that English is a second language for both the students as well as the teachers. By mentioning this, I intend to say, we, as English language teachers, should update ourselves to the latest developments in ELT pedagogy. We have a superior role to play, as English language teachers, in the lives of our students as they can be made communicatively competent only by us. Making them one really demands a better acquisition of the teachers. We should be able to identify situations that are relevant to use English. This will make the students as well as the teachers to be competent as communicative competence is the need of the hour as our students need to cater their needs by gathering information worldwide.

The role of a language teacher should be more efficient in meeting out the requirements of the students in the present global scenario. He/she should be aware that the present situation demands effective communication skills either be it oral, written or mail communication. It should be bore in mind that all these are essential as the corporate world expects the candidate must be able to communicate effectively in all possible ways. The outcome, as expected, is our students speaking skills that should be proficient enough to get the desired jobs. The method should be one of the traditional method

called direct method i.e. using only English inside the classroom and insisting the students also to communicate only in English. If only it is stressed, our students will adhere to our instructions. This in turn will make our students thinking process towards English at least in a slower pace. The activities planned should be able to sharpen the students thinking process as it is unique for each of them. Here, the teacher should motivate the students to express his/her thoughts, if not, at least in simple English.

The approach the teacher handle should be communicative approach rather than the traditional lecture approach. This will make the teacher group the students and allow them to discuss the current topics. I too suggest group discussion as it gives scope for better thinking and also understanding of the current affairs. This will lead them towards knowing more facts and situation based conversation. But the role of the teacher should be to restrict the students to use only English to express their views. This will help the students enrich their vocabulary by listening to their classmates. The teacher may ask them to note down the various points to enhance with the spelling of the different words used as well as their meaning. He/she should facilitate them by explaining the simple rules of spoken English in between to ensure the students use it effectively. This will surely help to develop their habit of using English fluently. I insist that the teacher should be a facilitator and not a mere spectator.

More recent textbooks stress the importance of students working with other students in pairs and groups, sometimes the entire class. The teacher should facilitate the students to work in pair and groups in order to give opportunities for almost all of the students to participate more actively than and as equally as possible. Such activities also provide opportunities for peer teaching, where weaker learners can find support from 'stronger' classmates. The teacher should observe each of the students' organization of ideas and how well he expresses to his group or classmates. This in fact will enhance the

students to think logically and analytically. To sustain in the globalization and the competitive pressure, they have to think smart and better than others. If they can organize, anlayse and think differently they can pursue in their job in a better manner.

The listening and speaking skills have become absolute necessity as our students take up GRE, TOEFL and other international exams. Expressions of greeting, gratitude, small talk, introductions and making acquaintance, leave-taking, appreciation, expressions of regret and asking to be excused, etc., are very important communicative acts students need to master for TESOL exams. Such expressions take different form in English than the Indian languages. These expressions vary from culture to culture. Our students are accustomed to in their language and culture. The role of the English language teacher is to make the students aware of the differences in both language and culture. The teacher should use expressions or examples that matches the real life situations. The teacher should know the expressions that are used both formally and informally so that the students adapt to such situation-based dialogues. These expressions, though less informative, can be used by our students as icebreakers and also to maintain the rapport. The teacher can improve the pronunciations as well as provide repeated practice to the students.

The attainment of students' ability in English can be brought out through his usage in real life situations. For example, he/she can be asked to pick up a conversation with the employees in a railway station, with a bank manager, executives in malls and also with other faculty members. The teacher can ask them to present the conversations they had in different situations and contexts, in the class. This will benefit other students in knowing words and also grammatical functions like active voice, passive voice, direct speech and indirect speech. This also enhances the students to ask questions – either using 'wh'-questions or yes/no questions. The teacher can allow the students to involve in role-play based

on the real situations. The activities carried out should involve each and every student of the class and they should be equally treated in giving chances. The teacher can ask the students to listen to other students and write down too. The speaking skills should be enhanced by inculcating other skills so that the students' interest can be enriched towards English. This is the reason why I say that the teacher should be a facilitator as he/she has to look after each and every student and make them involved in using English. The teacher needs to prepare materials, topics and also needs to update about the current events to discuss with students. The teacher's update and interaction also will indirectly make the students have an interest towards learning English.

The usage of social media like whatsapp can also be used by the language teachers. He / She can form a group for each of their class for formal or professional chats in which English only can be used. This will help the students to communicate better and also to know how to use English in practical situations. The teacher can ask the students to speak and record and share it in the group. He / She can give corrections, if needed, to individual students to speak better. Videos relating to speaking can be shared by the teacher in the groups. This can be regarded as teaching or using English beyond the classroom which can make the students open up freely and frankly. As the students are fond of using the social networks nowadays, this can be an added advantage. Being a language teacher, we must strive a bit more to make our students communicatively competent in the present scenario. I would like to conclude with the quote of Prof. Jacob Tharu who says,

"English is no longer some remote but a powerful mystery, lying hidden in the world of textbooks and examination."

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(**Why do children**)

inquisitively. In our mother tongue, he asked me: "Sir, why did you touch the roof?" I stared into his face, innocence writ large on it.

After half a century, and after passing through all the approaches, methodologies and transactional devices I am still not able to answer the young mind's inquisitive query: What was it for?

During these 50 years, my loyalty shifted from -ism to –ism in literature (postmodernism, post-colonialism…), movement to movement in ELT (including the hard and mild versions of Communicative Language Teaching and its offspring such as Suggestopedia, and Community language learning. Right now I am an ardent follower of the 'Focus on form' movement, the latest in the field of teaching grammar, within the reach of my reading.

Which –ism, approach or methodology will finally help me in answering the 'why' questions of my learners?

**P.Bhaskaran Nair (Editor)**

# Voices Silenced: Haitian Memory and Culture Altered in Edwidge Danticat's Krik? Krak!

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**Abstract**

There is such a thing as self-imposed, psychic exile: a feeling of estrangement and alienation within one's adopted culture, a nagging sense of homelessness and dispossession. - Jess Row

This article entitled "Voices Silenced: Haitian Memory and Culture Altered in Edwidge Danticat's Krik? Krak!" proclaims how Haitian culture is silenced due to long lasting resistance; how memory plays a significant role; and how it gets altered in the present, due to the past horrific experiences. Danticat's work primarily reflects these ideas through her characters. The short-story collection Krik? Krak! (1995), is a National Book Award Finalist, comprising of nine stories and an epilogue, which takes place in Port-au- Prince, Haiti, Ville Rose and New York. All the stories are interconnected with recurring ideas, characters and themes, which are also known as a short-story cycles. Women are the main speakers who portray their suffering in all the stories, in silence. Herstories also have prominent focus on the relationship between her protagonists with other characters.

Silence turns out to be a suffering untold, for years and years together, which bear witness for beingtraumatised. Again, this traumatic memory is a veil of silence, due to the past violence that hasoccurred during war and political instability in the Haitian history. Violence that arose during thosetimes "resulted in decades of a continuing inability to tell what happened" (Shaw, par. 4). Thisinability to express creates "distorted memories" (Felman and Laub, "Trauma and Media" 20).Moreover, these "distorted memories" gain power over the individuals, and in the process, the lives of Haitians. Therefore, "Danticat seeks to restore collective and individual histories",

through her characters, to "recount the unspeakable" and "the reader becomes the sole witness to these atrocities" (Shaw, par. 6).

Key Words: Voices, Silence, Haiti, Memory, Culture, Altered, Edwidge Danticat, Felman, Laub

Nature has no memory  - Edwidge Danticat, The Farming of Bones Edwidge Danticat (1969), born in Haiti, came to the United States when she was twelve years old and published her first writings in English two years later. Her short stories have appeared in twenty-five periodicals. She has won a 1995 Pushcart Short Story Prize as well as fiction awards from The Caribbean Writer, Seventeen, and Essence magazines, and her first novel, 'Breath, Eyes, Memory' (1994), has won wide acclaim. Krik? Krak! was a National Book Award Finalist in 1995.

There are nine stories with an epilogue: "Children of the Sea," "Nineteen Thirty-Seven," "A Wall of Fire Rising," "Night Women," "Between the Pool and the Gardenias," "The Missing Peace," "Seeing Things Simply," "New York Day Women," "Caroline's Wedding," and the Epilogue: "Women Like Us." The play is named Krik? Krak! as telling stories of the folklore, is a Haitian tradition. Danticat gives an explanation for the Creole name, through the unnamed boy in "Children of the Sea" as when, "Someone

says, Krik? You answer Krak! And they say, I have many stories I could tell you, and then they go on and tell these stories to you, but mostly to themselves" (14). That is how the other stories fall in coherence with each other.

In all these stories, Danticat examines the lives of ordinary Haitians, those who had struggled to survive under the cruel Duvalier or "El Generalissimo, Dios Trujillo, the honourable chief of state [s]" regime who "had ordered the massacre of all Haitians…" (33); and about the others who have left the country. It also highlights the dreams of the Haitian people and the distressing lives they live in reality. All these years, even after decades, the past horrific experiences keeps reminding them of those cruel events, which the people to undergo.

In the first story "Children of the Sea," there is riot and political instability. The army or the

tonton macoutes had taken over the country. The people of Haiti had to flee to the Bahamas or the Americas, and others who could not, had to stay in fear. Those who had to escape death in Haiti face their end at the sea: with no proper boat, with no food, with no nearest land at sight, right under the burning sun. The unnamed boy registers, "Now we have three cracks covered with tar" (18). He is afraid of the situation, where they are to an extent of losing even being a human: "I am scared to think of what would happen if we had to choose among ourselves who would stay on the boat and who should die. Given the choice to make a decision like that, we would all act like vultures, including me" (18). The boat the boy travels in sinks in the sea at last, with their dreams sunk with it.

And for those, who had to stay back at Haiti, had to face unspeakable tortures like forced physical contact – between fathers and daughters, mothers and sons, irrespective of their age and relationship.

If the youth riot, directly or indirectly via radio – "the radio six" (7), they had to face an extremely painful death. For an instance, like the son of Madan Roger, who was a part of the radio six,

was beheaded in secrecy. Moreover, only his head was given to his mother after a long struggle. The mother was also eventually beaten to death in the public, because she publicly cursed and spoke ill of the macoutes' atrocities.

In the story "Nineteen Thirty-Seven," the narrator's mother is accused falsely of killing the children, with invisible wings at night. They shout and beat her mother by calling names such as

"Lougarou, witch, criminal!" (39), who is then "trapped in cages" (35) or the prison. She dies with no food, no water and no clothing; chained, dragged and ill-treated.

In "A Wall of Fire Rising," Danticat expresses through her characters: Guy, Lili (his wife), and their son Little Guy, the urge and the feeling for revolution in order to liberate from poverty and

other social evils during the Duvalier's regime. Boukman, a slave revolutionary's name, is the role Little Guy has been assigned for a play, at his school. Through the dialogues of Boukman, the characters sense an awakening. Guy, who works at a sugarcane field, has a dream to fly his master's flying balloon with baskets, for years. After listening to his son practise the words of the revolutionary, he plunges out at midnight and takes away the balloon for a ride. But he does not know how to stop it. He does not know how to climb his family into the basket. He dies shot and falling down from the balloon. Hence, this depicts the inability to fight for their freedom. They become silent, only with a moment of spark, lost within. All such experiences of the Haitians have left them unspoken until now.

Danticat continues to weave such incidents, which follows throughout the text, in the form of various stories, and characters, even if they stay in Haiti or in any other part of the world. Because the victims have to undergo so much violence in the past, they become mute or they have to be silent due to the unspeakable atrocities that had happened to them. Their voices go unheard, lost in this silence. In the long run, their inability to express or recall, the exact traumatic experiences of the past, creates "distorted memories"

(Felman and Laub, "Trauma and Media" 20). They become weak and unstable. The everyday life of the Haitian people is disturbed. Their progress is stunted.

Therefore, the victims become traumatised and form traumatic memories. This traumatic memory that the Haitian people had retained, turn them into trauma victims, which had risen from being mute. Dori Laub gives a clear explanation about the silencing of trauma victims, [t]he "not telling" of the story serves as a perpetuation of its tyranny. The events become more and more distorted in their silent retention and pervasively invade and contaminate the survivor's daily life. The longer the story remains untold, the more distorted it becomes in the survivor's conception of it, so much so that the survivor doubts the reality of the actual events. (qtd. in Shaw, par. 4)

This inability to speak out the real events, because of the distorted memories and the accuracy of the memory, not only accuses the victim as a participant in the traumatic event but also, turns the victim being blamed and its consequent silencing. Laub elucidates that the Holocaust survivors too had to go through the same process, as the "Nazi system turned out… to be foolproof, not only in the sense that there were in theory no outside potential witness from the inside, [but also] that what was affirmed [for Holocaust survivors was an] 'otherness'… [so] that their experiences were no longer communicable even to themselves" (qtd. in Shaw, par. 5). These experiences turned the survivors to be disconnected from the reality and made them to lose their position as the witness.

As a result, Laub terms this as "the true meaning of annihilation, for when one's history is abolished, one's identity ceases to exist as well" (qtd. in Shaw, par. 5). The same has happened to the lives of the Haitians, who have survived generations together in America through some occupation, where they have lost or failed their position as a witness. Some of both the Dominicans and the Americans have sustained this position as a witness, only through their oppressing and demeaning deeds.

Henceforth, individual or collective histories, that had taken place during those eras and its aftermaths, has become not only distorted but also abolished. This is how, Haitian identity has become "blurred, marred, and in some cases annihilated" (qtd. in Shaw, par. 5). Thus, Haitian cultural frame gets tampered or altered irrespective of its significance.

In order, to give a new dimension to this unspoken and unrecorded history, of the accounts of the ordinary Haitians, the author has given more importance to the readers. Danticat's motive, is a quest, "to restore the collective and individual histories by having her characters recount the

unspeakable," where it's the reader who becomes "the sole witness" to "personal accounts" of "these atrocities" or "violent acts" (qtd. in Shaw, par. 6). In addition, Danticat's plot is to the point, a series of stories that breaks off, this silence and deletion of memory. They are "of personal and historical" importance which reconstructs "individual and collective memory" (qtd. in Shaw, par. 6).

In conclusion, Danticat has voiced out to the readers, imprinting and reconstructing Haitian history through her work. As, the Haitians no longer recollect or remember their own identity, their own past and their own mysterious and forgotten roots; it's only the Readers who must bear witness or stand as a testimony, to these unspoken truths or which the so far recorded Haitian history had failed to do so. It's the only way, to their healing. It's the only way, for a progress, in their lives. It's the only hope, to reach people, irrespective of indefinite cultural differences, for them to share the real history that had gone untold. They need the readers to hear, listen to their unheard voices buried in depths of the hell. Haitians are indeed, in need of this spiritual healing.

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(**Transmission of Meaning** *Continued from page:10)*

all these are archetypes which make up the Cultural Code that gives life to this chapter, in semiotic terms.

### III

### Conclusion

Keeping in view the analysis of the text from a semiotic perspective, it is evident that when different codes come into contact with one another in the narrative process, there is friction between them and from this friction generates the 'significance' of that particular narrative. These semiotic codes helps in the transmission of meaning giving a realistic picture of the human life of Black South Africans in the era of Apartheid through the portrayal of different scenes, episodes, characters, dialogue and above all the moving human situation obtaining in South Africa especially in Ndotsheni and Johannesburg focusing on its slum areas inhabited by the black workers who suffer from the misery of unemployment, poverty, dirty environs and above all from fear of the police and imprisonment during the apartheid in South Africa.

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# Evaluating Reading Skill of ESL Learners: Issues in Testing Reading

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## Abstract

In recent years, the fields of education and educational measurement are keenly concentrating on the concept of communicative competence. The ability to use language to communicate successfully has become the need of the hour. Testing the four language skills is the broader trait of communicative competence and it is critical in most academic and workplace settings. It is important to test each of the four skills independently because each one deserves its own significance in communicative competence. Among the four communication skills, reading is the process of getting ideas that cannot be expressed orally. It is also a gateway skill to learning. It is probably the most commonly tested of the four language skills. Testing reading seems to be the easiest but it has its own difficulties. Generally testing reading is done by giving short passages followed by general comprehension questions. However, testing reading seems to be simple but it has its own difficulties. This study examines the issues in framing questions for reading test in an ESL classroom. General comprehension questions do not assess the variety of skills involved in reading so we should construct reading tests which help the learners to encounter the challenges in their day-to-day and work life communication demands.

## Introduction

Over the last few years, the field of language teaching has developed rapidly and has been subject to changes and controversies. Communicative approach to teaching and learning English has been a significant development. At present, it is used worldwide in teaching and learning English, especially in ESL & EFL situations. Success of the teaching of English through communicative approach entirely depends on the practice of the four fold language skills. Among the major skills, teaching of reading has a significant place and it is still very important for higher education. Teaching of reading, therefore needs special attention from the experts and professionals for a meaningful higher education in the country.

Effective second language reading is considered as an important skill to be mastered in the real world since one is required to read and comprehend academic as well as non-academic texts. Evaluating the reading ability is complicated as it involves not only the ability to read but also the knowledge and ability to use the language. To test a person's reading ability, one should understand the process of comprehension, what one has to know and do in order to read effectively. Since reading is very important skill in learning second language, much effort has been taken to develop reading skill.

## What is reading skill?

Reading is a complex activity that involves several stages and processes that act simultaneously to achieve comprehension. It is not a single skill that we use all the time in the same way but it is a multiple skill that is used differently with a kind of test and fulfilling different purpose. It helps us to understand other culture

and to meet through its literature, its great thinkers. It develops our knowledge of the language itself. It is understanding, interpreting or making sense of a given text. The message will not be passively absorbed, it requires effort.

The main focus of reading instruction should therefore be developing the reading ability of the readers in order that they might become independent readers.

## Importance of teaching reading in the ESL classroom

Nowadays teaching reading in the ESL classroom is based on product based approach and the focus is on testing how much content is comprehended by the learner. An ESL classroom therefore should encourage the learner's ability to monitor and control his reading process by identifying the purpose of reading strategies required to attain that purpose and employing these strategies effectively. Reading helps the reader to read on his own with an initial support of a system or method that activates and stimulates his process of reading with intention of making it visible to him or making conscious of it. The need to make a learner aware of his reading process is that it helps him manipulate, transform or modulate it on his own and it will enable them to use the same procedure to facilitate reading comprehension in all circumstances and all texts without any external support. It is the duty of ESL teachers to develop in our students the ability to read materials in English that they come across in their everyday life.

## Testing Reading

In a literate society, it is not always noticed how complicated the act of reading is. Although we have learnt to read, most of us do so easily and relatively with little effort. Testing reading is a complicated process and reading is far more complex than is generally recognized. We can have a valid test by taking a text and asking questions about that text but actually that is also not simple. The methods of testing reading should reflect the actual reading process. At the early stage the skill of using simple words units will

constitute the reading text, but in later stages the skills become complex. Reading comprehension depends upon one's familiarity with the complex syntactic patterns of written texts.

## Issues in testing reading

Many methods have been used to test reading skill. Though it seems easy at first glance, there are several aspects we must take into consideration while making tests for assessing reading proficiency. We should be careful in the selection of text chosen for reading so that it reflects not only the purpose of the test, but also its importance to learner. The prior knowledge of the learners also should be considered so that the learners will not have advantage over others. The type and writing of questions are other factors we should pay careful attention to for ideal pre-testing.

## Skills involved in Reading

The reading skills which are to be attended to are:

1. Relating graphic symbols with sounds and words

2. Understanding relationships between parts of information in a sentence

3. Predicting

4. Identifying the main idea and supporting details

5. Understanding inferences

There are various lists of the skills involved in reading drawn by various researchers but it is very difficult to find out which skills are easiest and which should be developed for which level of learners. While making a test, list of skills can be useful, since it encourages test makers to broaden the reach of their questions than just ask general comprehension questions.

## Various factors for making a test
### 1) Selection of text

We should be careful in selecting a text for testing reading because while choosing a text one needs to know the topic and level of difficulty of the text. The selected text has an impact on the results. Generally we use prose passages to test

reading skills, but there are lots of other types of texts too that can be used for testing.

We should make use of authentic materials like timetables, newspaper articles, brochures etc. By using various texts  test reading enables the learner encounter several types of texts in their everyday reading activities. The type of text selected should reflect the goals of the language teaching situation.

## 2) **Background Knowledge**

Another important factor in testing reading is that background knowledge to test skills  in reading comprehension. By knowing the background knowledge, the learners are able to comprehend it more easily and more completely than when reading a text whose topic is unfamiliar, or in other words, for which we have little background knowledge.

## Tasks to test reading for varying level of difficulty

There are a variety of tasks that can be used for testing reading ability. Here we are going to discuss some tasks which are used to test skills of varying levels of difficulty.

### 1) **Testing beginners.**

Different types of tests that assess low level skills are word recognition, sentence recognition, and word and sentence comprehension. This type of test can be made more difficult by asking them to do within a Specified time.

### 2) **Tasks for Middle and Higher level students**
#### a) True/False Questions

True/False questions can be constructed relatively quickly and easily, and they are also easy to evaluate.

This is one of the most common tasks types used by teachers. While making true/false questions, one should remember that questions should be made by rewording the text; if the questions make use of the same words as the text, they become too easy. One can also make questions based on a possible misunderstanding of the text.

### b) **Multiple choice questions**

Multiple type questions are common task type for testing students' text comprehension. They allow testers to control the range of possible answers to comprehension questions, and to some extent control the students' thought processes while responding. However, the value of multiple-choice questions has been questioned. By virtue of distracters, they may present students with possibilities they may not otherwise have thought of. This amounts to a deliberate tricking of students and may be thought to result in a false measure of their understanding. Students can learn how to answer multiple choice questions by eliminating the improbable distracters, or various forms of logical analysis of the structure of the questions.

### c) **Short answer/ completion questions**

In this type of questions, answers are not given; the students have to give their own responses in phrases or in brief and complete sentences. In this case questions may be set to give maximum coverage of the test passage. Some questions may be of inferring type.

### d) **Ordering tasks**

Students are given a series of statements based on the information in the text. They are then asked to put  them in their order of occurrence in the text. Ordering tasks are useful for texts that make use of sequencing devices like instructions and narratives and also for expository texts that deal with the development of an idea.

### e) **Cloze test**

Cloze tests are used for various test purposes because they are easy to prepare and score. Most test makers regard them primarily as tests of general language proficiency. They are useful for determining proficiency in reading. However their validity as tests of reading has not been convincingly demonstrated. It is constructed by deleting every word in a text. Students are required to fill in the words that have been deleted. One or two sentences are usually left incomplete at the beginning and end of the text to provide some degree of familiarity and

contextual support. Research shows that reliable results will only be achieved if a minimum of 50 deletions are created.

**f) Gap filling exercises**

Gap-filling tests are somewhat different in that the test constructor does not use a pseudo-random procedure to identify words for deletion: it decides on some rational basis, which words to delete, but tries not to leave fewer than five or six words between gaps.

**g) Summarizing**

It is the condensed form of ideas presented in the text. There are several reading and writing skills tested by asking students to write summary. Through summarizing st udents need to be able to gather ideas from paragraphs, categorize and prioritize information, decide the main idea and present information in an easy and clear language.

**h) Synthesis of Journals/ Projects like Multimedia Packages**

Students should undertake projects during their course of study. The class/groups can make an authentic multimedia package based on the theme chosen from the textbook. A Synthesis journal, unlike a multimedia package, is produced by the teacher. It provides multiple perspectives on a topic by providing inputs from various sources and asks the learners to synthesize the information presented. Because this a complex process, it may need to be modeled by the teacher beforehand.

**Conclusion**

Just as reading happens in authentic contexts using authentic materials, evaluation should also be authentic.

Evaluation should help learners see what they know and identify what they can next learn,. In other words, evaluation should help us to consolidate and review learning. There are several aspects we must take into consideration while making tests for assessing reading proficiency. In testing reading, only purpose we typically give students for their reading or lack of it. The challenges for the person constructing reading tests is how to vary reader's purpose by creating test methods.

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# Gender Bias in Indian Films

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In the world we live in, with its ever increasing Globalisation, the potential held by Media seems almost infinite. Media has the power to mould values, norms and behavior, to shape attitudes and influence the very way we live. These new and evolving roles of Media are immensely powerful and risky. In an ideal world these powers would go hand in with some sense of responsibility, but in the real world there is no such guarantee. This lack of responsibility is perhaps made most evident by the Gender Bias that is prevalent in every aspect of mainstream media. Gender bias can be described as prejudice, stereotyping, or discrimination, typically against women, on the basis of gender. Throughout history women have (with little exception) always been at a disadvantage due to the roles ascribed to them in a patriarchal society. Even though women have gained more freedom over the years, misogyny seems to be ingrained in our society. The sexism women face every day is trivialized and normalized. Media plays a huge role in dehumanizing and objectifying women, especially through advertising and movies. In India, Bollywood is one of the most influential forms of media and the main focus of this article.

Rape culture and sexism are hot topics of interest in the Indian context at present. Watching Bollywood films that are touted as classic romances helps one understand why. The most obvious example would be the cult hit "Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge" which had an unprecedented 20 year run in the Maratha Mandir Theater. It is extolled as the most romantic movie in India and set the benchmark of romance for 10-15 years to follow. One of the first tactics the hero uses is throwing Simran's (his love interest) undergarment in her face, which is a belittling thing to do to another. He then proceeds to physically harass her to her understandable irritation. Even after doing all of this he is still portrayed as the "Dilwale" or good hearted guy.

A study was conducted by Steve Derné analysing Hindi films during the late 1980's and early 1990's. Through this it was found that Hindi films not only tend to "eroticize" sexual violence but these films often legitimize such violence by showing heroes who use milder forms of sexual violence to gain the affection of heroines. When Indian men were interviewed on how films shaped their beliefs about romantic relationships and women's place in society, it was confirmed that men at that time idealized submission in women and that the ideal was often supported and even amplified by the images they saw in films.

Another study analyzing nine super hits from the 90's showed that over 40% of sexual scenes included sexual violence, and perhaps even more

shockingly, nearly 70% of the perpetrators of this violence were the "heroes".

Traditionally Bollywood movies have reduced the portrayal of women down to 3-4 stereotypes: the dutiful obedient good daughter/ wife/lover, the ever loving supportive mother/ aunt/grandmother, the vamp/ jealous lover/ evil manipulator (how progressive and ambitious women are usually portrayed) and the supportive friend/sister/coworker. Women are rarely given important roles in the movies they are part of. Usually there will be 1 woman and 5 men in an ensemble movie. The female roles are almost always just arm candy, to look pretty and be around to boost the desirability and showcase capability of the male lead or to support him in the pursuit of his dreams. The roles essayed by women are the mother, the wife, the sister, the friend: The existence of a female character of any import with ambitions, goals, principles, thoughts and values of her own or even an identity all her own distinct from the one ascribed to her through her association with the men in her life has been a rare feat in Indian movies of the past couple decades. Women are not shown to have their own job or career. They are portrayed as a prize to be won by the hero. A very very small percentage of Indian movies star a female protagonist or address issues that concern women. And even this small percentage has only emerged in recent years.

Very rarely do we see female lead roles with substance. Even rarer is it to see a movie from a woman's point of view. This is because women's roles behind the camera are even rarer than those in front of it. Last year, a study on the representation of women in cinema across 11 countries, conducted by the Geena Davis Media Foundation along with the United Nations revealed that Indian films are lacking not only in substantial roles for women. India is far behind other countries in simply having female roles. According to the study, less than a quarter of all speaking or named characters were women and none had lead roles. Not only that seeing women who hold jobs and pursue their careers passionately in Indian films is a rare thing. Women in Indian films play second fiddle to the male leads in most cases. The same study also examined the gender of those working behind the camera. It was found that the gender ratio in India's film industry stands at 6.2 males to every one female, much worse than the average of 3.9 males to every 1 female. Sadly there is only a disproportionately tiny percentage of women taking on the roles of producer, director, lyricists, sound and light technicians, etc and contributing to the magic that happens on the big screen from behind it.

"We still have spaces where women, perhaps they are not forbidden, but definitely don't have an equal chance of access in many sectors within media and entertainment. There's actually no physical reason for women not being able to make in that sector, except the almost inherent bias that exists," Lalita Kumaramangalam, chairperson of the National Commission for Women, had said at a conference in New Delhi.

Surprisingly, one of these fields was makeup, a field dominated by women, but one where women in Bollywood were expressly forbidden from participating till last year. Until that point a 60 year old archaic system existed that was supposedly put in to ensure equal opportunities for men and women. Men were forbidden from becoming hairdressers and women from being makeup artists. Equal opportunities do not equate with fairness as makeup artists earn far more than hairdressers. And this biased system was dismantled only after a Female makeup artist, Charu Khurana, with the support of the National Commission for Women, filed a petition of protest and won in The Supreme court, lifting the informal ban.

"I couldn't be seen as working as a makeup artist, so I would be doing all the work in the vanity van, or in the hotel room, while a man would represent my work on the sets," Charu Khurana said. "I would share my credits, and my salary with that man to be my face on the set."

"If the crew is of 200 people, there are hardly 12 or 15 women- the lead actress, a few junior artists and dancers," Khurana added, when talking about the Gender bias in the industry.

The percentage of men participating in the making of a Bollywood movie can go as high as 90%.

This is exemplified by the experiences of Hetal Dedhia- Bollywood's only female gaffer. She works as the head of Electrical and lighting, a profession once practiced by her father. And yet he was the first person to oppose her decision to join the industry. She was mocked by other men in the profession who believed she was too frail to handle the demands of the profession.

The numbers of female producers and directors in Bollywood have risen steadily in the past few years. But even these numbers aren't as heartening as they appear as a majority of these women now involved in the making of a movie are usually associated with either a Bollywood family or with established veterans of the industry, more often than not, related to them in some way. Those without a Bollywoodian Godfather still struggle to make their presence.

The message a movie carries is told by the writers and perhaps this explains why Bollywood movies seldom say stories about women. A few Female writers have been able to find success and prove themselves in the industry like Juhi Chaturvedi, Urmi Juveikar or Advaita Kala, but these are too few a number for an industry that boasts the release of over a 1000 movies a year. Writers like Advaita Kala also claim that the Indian film industry is not a female-friendly workplace.

"As a writer, one's work is mostly solitary, so the risk of gender politics is greatly reduced in terms of practical working conditions," Kala remarks, "What one really encounters is the male gaze that dominates film making in India. The producer, director, camera man – essentially every major player on a film in most cases be male- that influences the approach to the material."

If more women are not allowed to write their own stories then Bollywood will continue to churn out warped delusions of what a woman is or should be. But Gender bias is a double edged sword that cuts both ways. And its not just the portrayal of women that has been stereotyped. The men too are all painted as macho Chuck Norris rivals – setting unrealistic goals for young men to emulate. Any sign of emotion treated as a weakness that needs to be bullied and taunted out of existence.

Fortunately, recent trends indicate steps in the right direction – away from these one dimensional portrayals of both men and women, and towards a more inclusive tomorrow. One hopes that the day when we have majority of Indian movies that pass the Bechdel Test is, if not right around the corner, not too long in arriving.

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# Plain English in Software Project Management

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## Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to provide a platform for research on the feasibility and efficacy of using "Plain English" in main stream business management especially in software project management, which utilizes a great deal of English in its documentation and written communication. According to Gartner, approximately 40% of a software project time is spent on documentation and communication. Usage of "Plain English" may reduce this time leading to faster completion of the project and thereby leading to more savings. This research may also help thousands of software engineers who struggle daily due to their inability to write or speak in contemporary English. Linguistic empowerment through the learning of "Plain English" may allow more engineers to transcend geographical boundaries and become global citizens. Stanford University USA, which has since 2014 embarked on a unique experiment in learning known as "CS + X" aimed at integrating humanities and computer science, intersecting opposites, create altered perspectives, fresh intellectual possibilities and new strengths. Integrating "Plain English" with software project management may bring about a sea change in how the software industry delivers. Plain English in Software Project Management

## Key terms

Plain English is a style of writing that the intended audience can understand on first reading. Plain English is clear English – It is simple and direct. Plain English avoids using jargon, technical terms, acronyms and any text that is not easy to understand. It avoids obscurity, inflated vocabulary and convoluted sentences. When writing in Plain English, the meaning of what needs to be said is not changed but only the way of saying it is changed. It allows readers to concentrate on the message conveyed, not on the difficulty of the language used. Plain English uses the right word for the right occasion and does not use unnecessary words. It is not a dumped down version and also does not require the audience to refer other information. If technical terms are needed, they are properly explained. Software Project Management is the art and science of planning, implementing, monitoring and controlling software projects by managing people (who), product (what), process (how) and project (when). It includes project planning, scope management, project estimation, project scheduling, resource management, risk management, project execution, project monitoring, communication management and configuration management. The key objectives of effective software project management include ensuring quality, increasing productivity and reducing risk. Key documents used in managing projects include business case, statement of work, project charter, project management plan, traceability matrix, change request, risk register, status reports and lessons learned.Software Engineering involves development of software product using well defined scientific principles, methods and procedures. The outcome of software engineering is an efficient and reliable software product. Software Development Life Cycle (SDLC) is a well-defined, structured sequence of stages in software engineering to develop the intended software product. SDLC stages include communication, requirement gathering, feasibility study, system analysis, software design, coding, testing, system integration, implementation, operations and maintenance. Key documentation includes scope statement, requirements design, issue log, change log, test cases, deployment plan and acceptance.

**Introduction**

In the eyes of a practitioner, software project management is documenting reasonable and mutually agreed upon deliverables within mutually agreed upon time frames and their communicating progress, success and problems on a regular basis. Typical issues in management include: a) the relevant stakeholders do not understand or they misunderstand b) requirement changes or unexpected scenarios during the course of the project c) the software delivered does not work as required and d) change in management / priorities / budgets.

Documentation and communication can address most of the project management issues and ensure success of the project but they consume a significant amount of time and money. Plain English could help the stakeholders in communicating in simple terms ensuring that the stakeholders understand it, the first time itself.

**Plain English - Explained**

Simply put, plain language is language that's easy for the reader to understand.

These two quotes from authorities in the field explain it better:

'Writing is an instrument for conveying ideas from one mind to another; the Writer's job is to make the reader apprehend his meaning readily and precisely.' – Sir Ernest Gowers in "The Complete Plain Words" (1954) states: 'Plain English refers to the writing and setting out of essential information in a way that gives a co-operative, motivated person a good chance of understanding it at first reading, and in the same sense that the writer meant it to be understood.' – Martin Cutts in "Oxford Guide to Plain English" (2004)

While the plain English (or plain language) movement is generally considered to have emerged in the mid-1970, the movement's pedigree dates back to centuries and is said to have been developed in response to consumers' demand

for documents that they could understand and also the recognition by governments and commercial institutions that plain English brings efficiency and economic benefits. Plain English usage has been made mandatory in all official documents and correspondence in the US, UK and Australia. This includes the legal profession, banking and insurance sectors. The scientific and medical fraternities have also started to actively use plain English while India still uses contemporary English. The campaigners of plain English state that plain English saves time and money, it helps in compliance and avoiding disputes / litigation and it creates a more efficient, effective and productive working environment.

The six rules that George Orwell set out for writing English in his essay "Politics and the English Language" are:

1. Never use a metaphor, simile, or other figure of speech which you are used to seeing in print.

2. Never use a long word where a short one will do.

3. If it is possible to cut a word out, always cut it out.

4. Never use the passive where you can use the active

5. Never use a foreign phrase, a scientific word, or a jargon word if you can think of an everyday English equivalent

6. Break any of these rules sooner than say anything outright barbarous and the golden rule is: "think about your readers, and don't make them work too hard". When this rule is followed, writers will find themselves doing the hard work of writing plainly and striving to get the meaning across effectively, rather than risk confusing the readers.

The following guidelines have been adopted from a presentation given by

Professor Peter Butt to the Plain Language in Progress conference in Houston,

USA in the year 2000. They remain as applicable today as they were when he presented the paper.

■ Write for the intended audience

- Organize material logically
- Be human and avoid a formal, bureaucratic tone
- Have a well-designed layout and design
- Use Informative headings
- Avoid legalese &amp; other jargon (including the archaic)
- Beware of unintended ambiguity
- Use Tables, graphs, diagrams, flow charts and lists
- Keep sentences short
- Prefer the active voice to the passive
- Use verbs, not nouns
- Prefer the simple to the complex (words and sentences)
- Use specific words instead of generic or abstract words

Though all good writing techniques share the same characteristics, plain English differs in what it emphasizes and the heart of the matter is that it emphasizes the reader – not the writer and not the message, but the reader. It stresses on making the important information easy to find, understand and use, writing relatively short sentences and being straightforward in the order of words.

The following discussion is taken from an article written by Professor Joseph Kimble of the Thomas Cooley Law School, Michigan, entitled "Notes toward Better Legal Writing" in 1996.

Myth: Plain language means baby talk or street talk. It is not 'literary'.

Reality: Plain language is all about clear and effective communication - nothing more or less. It does, though, signify a new attitude and a fundamental change from past practices. It is the language that good writers use when they are determined to be understood.

Myth: Plain language is mainly concerned with getting rid of archaic terms like hereby and &aforesaid.

Reality: Plain language is concerned with all the techniques for clear communication – dozens of them. These techniques and guidelines are flexible and varied. They include planning, design, organization, sentences, words, and testing. Getting rid of archaic terms is only a liberating first step

Myth: Plain language is not accurate or precise

Reality: Plain language is an ally in the cause of precision, not an enemy. Plain language lays bare the ambiguities, uncertainties and conflicts that traditional style tends to hide. At the same time, the process of revising into plain language will often reveal all kinds of unnecessary detail Examples to demonstrate how plain English can help in effective communication:

**Before After**
The following summary is qualified in its entirety by the more detailed information contained elsewhere in the prospectus This summary highlights some information in the Prospectus As the applicant, it is a requirement that you provide a mailing address and an identification number when an application is made for a hardship grant

You need to send a mailing address and an identification number when you apply for a hardship grant If there are any points on which you require explanation or further particulars we shall be glad to furnish such additional details as may be required by phone. If you have any questions, please call.

**Need for Research**
A detailed research is the need of the hour to determine if usage of plain English in software project management for its documentation and all written communication would help in creating a more efficient, effective and productive working environment for the software industry thereby reducing time and money and also improving quality compliance.

The following questions need to be answered as part of the research to determine if plain English would be helpful in software project management:

■ Are current project management document templates utilizing a complex language and does this affect productivity?

■ Are user requirements documents easy to understand by the software developers?

■ Do project managers correspond to clients in clear terms or use jargon that creates misinterpretations?

■ Will plain English have a significant effect in reducing cost and time for the software industry?

The researchers may follow the following step by step methodology to check the hypothesis:

1. Identify project documentation that requires conversion to plain English

2. Identify current usage of complex sentences / words and find alternatives

3. Identify key English writing skills issues of software professionals involved in software project management

4. Identify problems in current English training methodologies for personnel

5. Create alternate templates in plain English for standard project management documents and customer communication such as memos / emails / reports

6. Create plain English writing skills training methodologies to personnel

7. Set up a pilot study with the alternate plain English templates and training in a software organization and monitor productivity over a period of time

The researchers must also be aware of ground realities and not get carried away.

Plain English is not writing in such a way that everyone understands it. It is writing in such a way that the intended reader effortlessly understands it. The intended readers in the software industry are the project stakeholders of the project.

This research should not intend to translate every technical word / terminology into plain English. It is more towards ensuring that documentation and written communication are made simpler and clearer so that productivity increases and misinterpretation decreases.

Documents such as budgets, estimates etc. that involve spreadsheets and core technical documents such as design, test cases etc. should not be in scope of this research. At most generic guidelines could be provided to ensure that the documents conform to plain English principles.

**Conclusion**

The benefits envisioned in the event of a positive outcome for the research leading to usage of plain English in the software industry are as below:

■ Help the software industry to reduce time and effort leading to faster project completion and more savings.

■ Help thousands of software engineers who struggle daily due to their inability to write or speak in contemporary English. Linguistic empowerment through the learning of "Plain English" may allow more engineers to transcend geographical boundaries and become global citizens.

■ Act as a catalyst for using plain English in other domains of businesses such as banking, insurance, legal etc. that create documents in complex language which the stakeholders do not read in full but accept in faith and regret later.

The intention of this paper is to pursue the idea and possible research of utilizing plain English and its techniques in business management especially software project management.

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# KALIYATTAM, A TRIBUTE TO A STATE'S FOLK TRADITION

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William Shakespeare, his highness, the crowned king of English literature has made great contributions including his four great tragedies. Let's roll the camera at Othello, the tragic story of a Black moor who had fallen for the beautiful Desdemona. The Malayalam film "Kaliyattam" is the version of *Othello* with characters in different outfits. Suresh Gopi plays the role of Perumalayan and Manju warrior, the role of Desdemona. With the devilish deeds of Paniyan (Iago),Kannan (Othello) misunderstands his chaste wife and kills her out of grief and anger. Later Kannan realises his sin and out of guilt he commits suicide in the Theyyam ritual fire.

Theyyam is a popular ritual form of worship in Kerala. The performers of Theyyam belong to the lower caste community, and have an important position in Theyyam.People of these districts consider Theyyam itself as a God and they seek blessings from Theyyam. It is generally performed in front of the village. It is also performed in houses where ancestors worship with elaborate rites and rituals. There is no stage or curtain or other such arrangements for the performance. The dancer along with the other members recites the particular ritual song which describes the myths and legends of the deity of the shrine or the folk deity to be propitiated. This is accompanied by playing the folk musical instruments. Every art is a representation of a region's culture, beliefs and traditions whether music, dance or film.

"Great art always transcends its culture, while lesser art merely reflects it."

*-Madeleine L'Engle*

Even after 400 years of his passing away, William Shakespeare, the uncrowned king of English literature, is still an inspiration and motivation, not just for the theatre enthusiasts or the literati. There had been scores of celluloid adaptations of his theatre productions including his four great tragedies - Hamlet, Othello, King Lear and Macbeth – that have been interpreted in different times and spaces. However, for the Malayalam movie buffs, it has been a rarity and the only movie adaptation of a Shakespearean play is 'Kaliyattam' by Jayaraaj (1997), which has been inspired, by Othello – the tragic story of a Black moor who had fallen for the beautiful Desdemona.

What makes this film, which has been narrated in a totally alien culture, in the backdrop of Theyyam, the ritual form of north Kerala, and also a theyyam artiste thereof, is that the original works of the great playwright makes its presence only at an invisible plane at the same time making the audience experience the inner turbulence of the invincible protagonist who is the epitome of catharsis.

The play tells the story of Othello, a powerful general of the Venetian army, whose life and marriage were ruined by Iago, an envious soldier who is not just cunning and dishonest, but also a man of sociopathic self that has been immortalised by The Bard of Avon.

Why Shakespeare's works are immortal is because of the fact that the central themes in his works are mainly about innate human emotions

that have a universal nature. Lust, jealousy, ambition, greed, betrayal, and revenge that were evident in Shakespeare's time are evident in our times too, and that will be the same in future as well.

As is the case of real world, jealousy causing mental blindness in a myriad of different situations, has been an integral theme of literature too in all periods. And this is exactly what happens in Othello, too - the envy of one causes passion and emotions to take over the mind. No doubt jealousy is the main cause of Iago's revenge against Othello, his superior officer. Othello's decision to promote another in place of him infuriated Iago, who is the epitome of ruthless jealousy in the play. He uses this hatred as fuel to launch a deceitful operation, which ultimately lead to the tragic downfall of Othello. Othello's blind jealousy (which is caused by Iago), in turn, causes him to murder his chaste wife and also to end his own life.

The Malayalam film Kaliyattam is the version of Othello with characters in different outfits - in a distant land and culture. Suresh Gopi plays the role of Othello who is Kannan Perumalayam, a theyyam artiste here, and Manju Warrier the invincible Desdemona, who appears as Thamara, the beautiful daughter of the village head. It is in an interesting manner that the director transplants the theme of Othello into a different landscape.

The character Unni Thampuran hates Kannan because he had an eye on Thamara, and Panniyan (Lal), who plays a komali (Joker character in Theyyam) is jealous because he pampers within to don the coveted role of Theechamundi which is held by Perumalayan. Paniyan sows not the seeds but weeds of doubt on Thamara's fidelity in Kannan's mind making him suspect that Thamara and his assistant Kanthan (Biju Menon) are having an illicit relation. With the devilish deeds of Paniyan, Kannan mistakes his chaste wife and the poison tree grows within. He finds the silk kerchief, which he had presented to Thamara, in Kanthan's hands. Kannan, out of grief and anger,

kills Thamara by suffocating her by forcing a pillow on that charming face that always smitten him.

Meanwhile Paniyan's plan to get Kanthan killed by Unni Thampuran goes futile. Later Kannan realises the truth and grinds Panniyan's legs with a big stone and lets him live his rest of his life crawling like a reptile. Kannan Peumalayam gives the Theechamundi title to Kanthan and, out of guilty, he commits suicide in the Theyyam ritual fire. The film won many awards including National Film Award for Best Director and National Film Award for Best Actor.

Othello and Kaliyattam happen in two different cultures but without breaking the thematic thread at all.

Theyyam is a popular ritual art form of worship in the Malabar region of Kerala. It is a cultural expression of the dalits, and they are the performers of Theyyam, which means "Daivam", meaning God in Malayalam. Despite the casteist segregations prevalent in the society, the theyyam performer is considered God and cutting across castes, people of these districts seek blessings from this Theyyam.

Theyyam, which is performed in the 'kaavu' (sacred groves) in the villages and the ancestral houses, is a colourful performance with elaborate rites and rituals, at times resembling a theatre production in natural light. There is no stage or curtain or other such arrangements for the performance, which can be seen as one of the earliest forms of street theatre, despite its ritualistic fervour. Most art forms did not take place on a theatre, nor did it depend upon ticket sales, but upon certain sponsorships until the development of modern theatre in India. The theyyam performance, also known as 'Kaliyattam' or 'Thirayattam' (the play of God), is celebrated each year ceremoniously. Theyyam, the sacred ritual performed to worship the Hindu Goddess 'Kali', starts in the morning and continues till next morning, and there are kaavus where there are many theyyam performances in a series for days.

Theyyam is a belief in the hearts of people that immortal spirits enters the mortal bodies so as to perform a ritual dance and mime over a music depicting folk tales that bridge the man and God. There are different forms of Theyyam where each differs with its facial make-up, headgear, costume, body decorations and ornaments. 'Devakkoothu' is the only form of Theyyam performed by women. Musical instruments too play a vital role in creating awe for Theyyam. Most important among them is Chenda, the cylindrical wooden drum having very loud and rigid sound. This percussion instrument starts with a soft beat, later moving on to fast and louder beats going along with the 'thottam', the narrative tales in a poetic form.

Though it is performed by the dalits, the upper castes, including Brahmins had great influence on theyyam, which in a sense questions the Brahminical notion of God. At the same time, it can be said that the acceptance of theyyam by all sections of the masses can be argued to be the result of the recognition and patronization it enjoyed from the Brahmins. Still here we can see the 'children of the lesser god', enjoying a dominant position in theyyam, which is not just a religious art form but it is the voice of common man. Theyyam is played by a person belonging to a lower caste but when wears the costume of Theyyam he is believed to be transformed into the position of God who has the power to bless, prophesize or even heal. Thus he becomes more powerful than the representatives of upper castes.

And here is the movie adaptation of a play like Othello in the context of theyyam becomes a challenge. Though there are areas of disagreement, it can be said that the director discreetly makes use of polymorphism and intertexuality when he translocates the narrative into a different time, space and culture. While Shakespeare narrated the tragedy in the backdrop of the war between Venice and Cyprus in the late 16th century, here Jayaraj has set the story in a rustic landscape of early 20th century North Malabar, and the battle was replaced by theyyam. In a sense the director is looking at the 'Othello complex' through the film for which the storyline of Othello itself was the thread and inspiration. Or, in other words, Kaliyattam is an independent film ignited by the vision of conflicting humanity depicted by Shakespeare.

Back to theyyam, the backbone of Jayaraj's film.

When the film was released, the biggest criticism was that it was bit too musical. But the counter argument could be that theyyam is blank without music and hence a movie with the spirit of theyyam running through the veins also should have some music into it.

In theyyam, most of the tottams (the songs) are based on stories of deities and rituals while there are some which tell 14 stories of the victims of social evils. In fact, these victims are those who once fought against social evils and thus later got transformed into gods or into Theyyams. Certain Theyyams themselves stand opposing social discriminations as they tell us their stories.

Art is a product of a highly creative mind, like creation of images or objects in fields including painting, sculpture, photography, visual arts etc. It is the totality of socially transmitted behaviour patterns, arts, beliefs, institutions and all other products of human work and thought process. Every art is a representation of a region's culture, beliefs and traditions - whether music, dance or film. And here, Kaliyattam also imbibes within that element of the culture of a region at the same time having its root in a Shakespearean play.

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# TEN- MINUTE ACTIVITIES AS MOTIVATIONAL TRIGGERS FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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## Introduction

We are at the threshold of changes in our approach to education as the idea of constructivism is served as the basis. A distinguishing feature of this approach is that it constructs knowledge in a natural manner through learning activities based on acquired knowledge and conceptual background of the learner. Many researchers point out the poor level of language acquisition and communicative skill among the students of primary classes. It is found that the teachers give more importance to complete the portion in stipulated time to satisfy the department and moreover the parents. In this situation, the learners are not motivated properly and they show inhibition to communicate in English. So it is very essential that teachers should create the situation and ensure the participation of all students in class room activities. In addition, learners are to be motivated properly and their special skills and talents are to be identified by the teacher. This paper is limited to the relevance of the ten-minute activity , Reporting , for primary school students in native context.

## Memory and knowledge

The Dictionary says: If you know a language, you have learned it and can speak it. And defines Memory is the ability to retain and recall information, ideas, images and thoughts. But memorising is not done by anyone while learning a language. It may have done in later childhood while developing earlier knowledge of language. A language was learned in practical use of whatever is accessible in concrete situations.

Fuster's statement that memory is made up of many pieces of knowledge named mental cognits and their biological correspondence consisting of neural networks. These memory networks operate dynamically and generate at appropriate moments. Each cognit activity supported by other cognit's cognitive networks. Fuster's principle is justified by stating that knowledge is the power of dynamic memory and structured dynamic network power is knowledge.

## Influence of Motivation

There are a number of language learner motivation models with relation to second language acquisition in a classroom setting. The different perspectives on second language motivation can be divided into three distinct phases as the social psychological period, the cognitive situated period and the process oriented period. The social psychological perspectives on second language learning motivation emphasize the role of the individuals social context and social interactions.

The Cognitive perspectives focus on how the learner's mental process influence their motivation. During the late 1980s and 1990s, the cognitive revolution takes place in psychology and it leads the language learning motivation field towards cognitive models. Cognitive psychologists argued that how one thinks about one's abilities , possibilities, potentials, limitations and past performances has major influences on motivation.

Noels and colleagues explored self-determination theory in the language learning

context and developed the language learning orientation scale which categorises a person's motivational orientation as either intrinsic, extrinsic or amotivated based on the continuum of self determination. It was found that in the language learning classroom, which the learners feel non-controlling , promoted intrinsic and self-determined orientation of motivation in students.

Attribution theory contends that the casual reasons which are attributed to the past success or failure plays a critical role in motivation and in future endeavours in that area. Process model of second language learning is marked by three distinct chronological steps ; pre –actional stage, Actional stage and post actional stage.

Pre actional stage is associated with setting goals, forming intentions and launching actions and attitude towards second language speaking community. The actional stage includes sustaining one's level of motivation throughout the language-learning process. Post actional stage , the major motivational influences are the learner's styles of attribution and biases, self concept beliefs and received feedback during the second language learning process.

### Need of Triggers

Triggers are the actions or events that play a role in prompting particular behaviour. Triggers can be used deliberately by teachers to elicit the expected student behaviour. For example, if a teacher wants students to listen, he/she will generally call for their attention (sometimes using a signal) and wait for them to be quiet thereby triggering the derived attentive behaviour.

Sometimes actions or events in the classroom may be a trigger for the students with learning difficulties to exhibit challenging behaviour , which could reveal that they are struggling. The challenging behaviour will depend on the individual student , the environment or setting in which the action takes place. The crucial element in second language classroom is identifying the suitable triggers for the students. When any triggers are identified as challenging, teachers should avoid these and start to develop and use other triggers to elicit positive behaviour. Positive student behaviours are effectively developed and supported through relationship-based whole-school and classroom practices. Schools have the ability to define their own set of behavioural expectations as there is no common set of behaviours that can be universally regarded as challenging.

### Nature Related hobbies of kids

According to Family Activities Expert Dr.Bravada Garett-Akinsanya ,kids love the idea that they are positively impacting the natural world. They have the hobbies of making bird-feeders and bird houses. They are not averse to getting muddy and seeing sprouts from seeds is a pure magic. Kids show interest in insects and they love to recognise patterns in nature. Our solar system will always be fashionable bedroom accessories. With the digital revolution, videography and photography are easier than ever to master. Traditional stamp and coin collection are still favourite with young kids. They have fun and enthusiasm in sharing these collections.

These interests may change over time, but even temporary, ones have a significant impact on a child's development. Teachers can identify how the child prefers to learn and think and what special skills or talents he/she might have by using the theory of Multiple Intelligence of the Psychologist Howard Gardner.

### Classroom Activity

The fascinating thing in language acquisition is that children need to hear language to learn it. But in most of our classes ,children get the chances to hear only the language of their teacher. The young learners will be motivated when they get opportunities to hear their friends.

Every day the teacher should made an introductory talk on a relevant topic which the learners are interested to. For example, the teacher can talk about the legend of Onam celebration during that festival time.

All students are asked to take photos of the flower carpet which they made at their home using the mobile phones of their parents and sent it to the teacher. The teacher prepares slides of the snaps for power point presentation and bring it in the class.

The learners may be asked to say something about their floral design and the flowers they used. The teacher can show the slides along with.

Five minute discussion can also be allowed with the class on their experience.

Learners will get the chances to evaluate their floral design with others in the class and the support of ICT which the teacher provides will be a motivation for learners.

Such a way the teacher can change the topic as the aquarium which most of the primary school students maintain at their home, their garden, their pets or any funny experiences on their way home.

A chart can be put in the classroom where all the new words they heard are written. At the end of a week/fortnight the teacher can do a brief revision on that new words.

## Parent Scenario

The curriculum provides activity oriented language learning on the basis of constructivism. It is found that the activities are designed by the curriculum committee. But it provides freedom to teachers for the modification of the activities to the level of their learners. Unfortunately it is not happened. The learners will not get enough chances to express their feelings and experiences in their classroom.

Most of the Primary School students possess huge treasure of matchbox labels, cartoon stickers , tattoos and marbles. They never get a chance to show off these treasures. Neither they get a chance to share their personal feelings such as the injury of their pet bird/animal or any jovial incident at their own home. So it will be a great motivational trigger if they are allotted ten minutes everyday either at the beginning ,middle or at the end of the class for reporting their experiences, preferably an immediate past : that means what happened to them between last evening and that morning.

## Conclusion

There is a greater need at present to develop communicative skill among primary school students and it is the duty of teachers to give them enough exposure and confidence to speak. So the classroom activities should be related to their lives and the learners should have the provision what they speak in the class.

It is clear that the ten-minute activity, REPORTING personal experiences and feelings, helps the students to develop listening and speaking skills. The students will be highly motivated if any external factors are set by the teacher.

Howard Gardener theory of Multiple Intelligence helps the teachers to identify how the child prefers to learn and what special skills /talents he might have. Then the teacher can do the adaptation and design the activities suitable for the children with special needs .

The students will get chances to hear other's experiences and feelings and to develop empathy . it is the chance to know others and many moral values are sprouted in their heart without any external factors.

Positive behaviours will be developed among the students when they are provided enough chances to exposure their feelings and experiences to a group of students. It is an opportunity that they feel they are listened by others. So this activity is a motivational trigger which promotes positive behaviour and prevents behavioural issues.

 It is important that REPORTING makes the classroom active and enthusiastic and it will be a strong stepping stone to the world of communication.

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# War for Land in *Mornings in Jenin* by Susan Abulhawa

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**Abstract**

*The paper throws light upon neo- colonialism in the form of modern day wars and deviation of democracy into dictatorship. It brings out the issues of refugees that have an impact all around the world. Postcolonial approach is used to analyze the text to bring out the social, economic, and political issues faced by refugees. Coerced erasing of culture, tradition, and identity is focused as a continuity of colonial practice in modern era.*

***Keywords:*** *Neo- colonialism, postcolonial, refugee.*

*Mornings in Jenin* is a work by Susan Abulhawa published in 2010. Susan Abulhawa was born to refugee parents of the War of 1967, when her family's land was seized and Israel captured what remained of Palestine, including Jerusalem. At the age of ten, she was in Jerusalem and ended up in an orphanage. Later, she moved to the USA as a teenager, graduated in biomedical science and established a career in medical science. In July 2001, Susan Abulhawa founded *Playgrounds* for Palestine, a children's organization dedicated to upholding the Right to Play for Palestinian children. *Mornings in Jenin* is her first novel and was later published in nineteen countries. She lives in Pennsylvania with her daughter.

*Mornings in Jenin* deals with the historical evidence of the war that resulted in the creation of the State of Israel and the conflict between the Arabs and the Zionists from 1941 to 2002. It is a narration of the life history of an Arab family for four generations who has been a part and parcel of the history. It presents all events, emotions, lifestyle, massacres, horror, and death in a conglomerate manner. It speaks volumes on the conflict between life and death along with crisis between the Arabs and the Zionists.
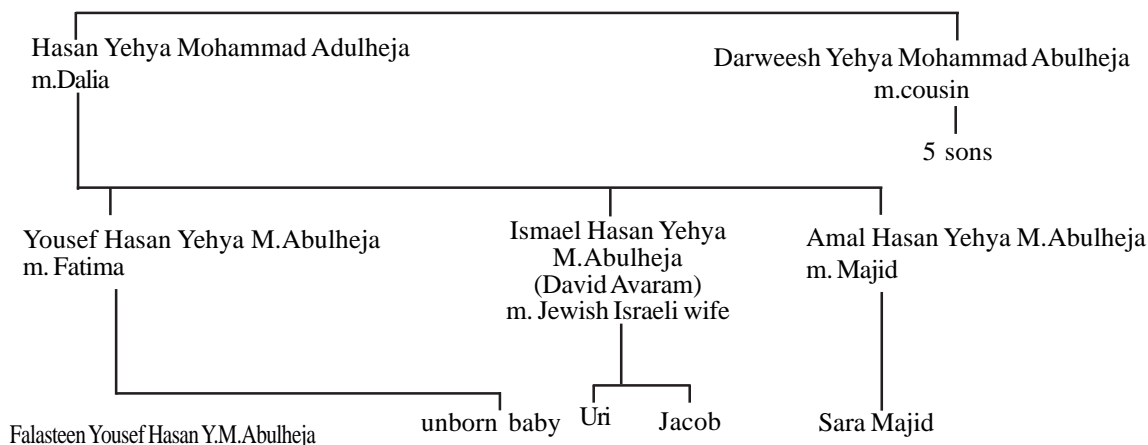
Jenin is a village in Palestine that turns into a refugee camp. This happens with the end of the colonial rule by the British and the upstart of Neo-Colonial rule by the Zionists. In May 1948, the British put an end to the Mandate rule in Palestine as a sign of acceptance to the UN verdict of September 1947. The Zionists establish the State of Israel in April 1948. The irony in the conflict is that, the Zionists enter the British Mandate Palestine as refugees of Holocaust and later turn the citizens of Palestine as refugees of Israel.

The quotes from the text elucidate the Zionist plan of confiscation and proper execution of it in a stealthy way.

"Don't you hear the news every day? Zionists killing British and Palestinians every cursed day? They're getting rid of the British so they can get rid of us and everybody's too stupid to see it or do anything about it." Yehya grabbed his cane in one hand, his nye in the other, and walked outside in disgust of his fears, which had been intensifying with the near daily BBC reports of terrorism by the increasingly Zionist gangs. ( Abulhawa, p.17)

In May 1948, the British left Palestine and the Jewish refugees who had been pouring in proclaimed themselves a Jewish State, changing the name of the land from Palestine to Israel.

"Jolanta had sailed alone to Palestine at the end of the Second World War. She knew nothing of Palestine or Palestinians, following only the lure of Zionism and the lush promises of milk and honey. She wanted refuge. Jews killed my mother's family because Germans had killed Jolanta's."

David Ben Gurion, on 15 May 1944, i.e., about four years before the establishment of Israel expounded the Zionist goals when he said: "The present map of Palestine is that of Mandate. Jews have their own map of Palestine. It is the Torah's map which our youths are duty-bound to realize: from the Nile of Egypt to Euphrates in Iraq."

The first step towards implementation of this nefarious plan had started as early as 1880s when a group of Jews entered Palestine and built a settlement. By 1885, the number of Jewish settlements had increased to five with financial aid from Baron Edmund Rothschild, who looked at the operation as a lucrative venture. ( MWL 10.3 21, 22)
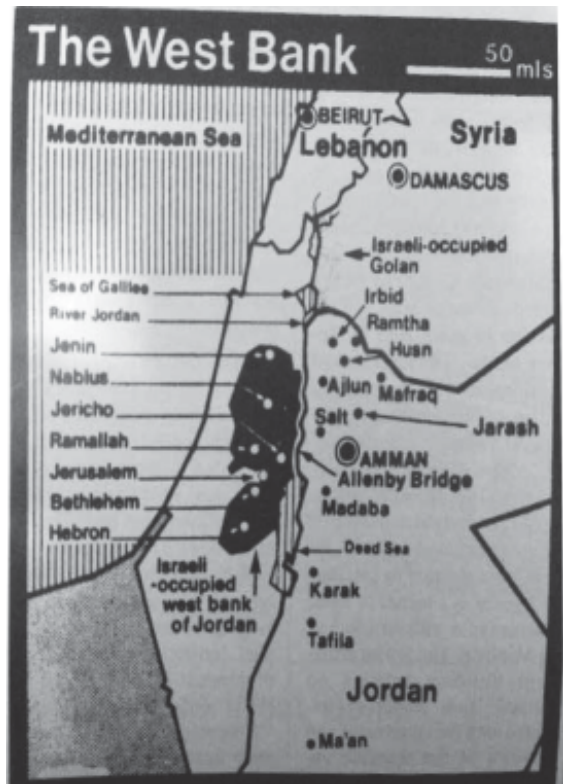


The British reign is well known for its 'Divide and rule policy'. It applies the policy not only during the rule but makes it mandatory to end the rule. In November 1948, the UN announced the Partition of Palestine into two as 55% of land to Zionist or State of Israel for 1/3 of population, 45% of land to Palestinians and Jerusalem as an International city under UN trusteeship.

The State of Israel is seen as a nation by the Jews but Palestinians see it as abduction of land. An idea of territory inflicts mental or psychological torture in the refugees. The incidents quoted from the text may justify this statement.

When Hasan tried to stop him – "Yehya, please. They'll kill you" – Yehya gazed at his son with an Arab patriarch's unquestionable final authority. Then he turned and walked as he once

had…to the edge of the camp, past its boundaries, outside the limit of that eternal 1948, beyond the border into what had become Israel – into a landscape he knew better than the lines on his hands – until he finally arrived his destination. Sixteen days later, Yehya returned ragged and dirty with tangled beard and radiant spirit….Yehya had made his way back to Ein Hod, undetected by soldiers. "That terrain is in my blood!" he proclaimed. "I know every tree and every bird but the soldiers do not."….Yehya's audacity injected life into the refugees, who had become weary of the promises of the United Nations and lethargic with the humiliation of 1948, that year without end….But this time, he performed the rites of the forbidden Return with the deliberate strokes of experience….No one knew exactly when Yehya died….Everyone in the camp agreed that Yehya had known that when he again set foot outside the boundaries of that eternal 1948, he would be gone forever." (Abulhawa 43-47)

The State of Israel is established as a Democratic Nation yet it rules over Palestinians as a dictator. Ambivalence suits the governing policy of Israel. It is evident through Bhabha's words "It is from this area between mimicry and mockery, where the reforming, civilizing mission is threatened by the displacing gaze of its disciplinary double, that my instances of colonial imitation come what they all share is a discursive process b which the excess or slippage produced by the 'ambivalence' of mimicry (almost the same, 'but not quite') does not merely 'rupture' the discourse, but becomes transformed into an uncertainty which fixes the colonial subject as a 'partial' presence….so that mimicry is at once resemblance and menace. (253) Thus Israel has a democratic face for the world and dictator face to the natives.

To explicate the iron hand of Israel on Palestinians and civilians' outburst towards it the following quotes from text is implied: "How was it that a man could not walk onto his own property, visit the grave of his wife, eat the fruits of forty generations of his ancestors' toil, without mortal consequences?"( Abulhawa, p.48) It projects the anger of Civilians as they were deprived of their usual life. Another event that creates a permanent scar that leads to self pity for Amal is:

Yousef was leaving, she feared he was being hunted by Israelis. Amal ran unable to control….Now it was off-limits to Arabs, another domain she dare not trespass. Yet there I was, just beyond the first row of trees in the peach Orchard, and it was growing dark….I slept that way, melted into the darkness of a star-filled sky….I got to my feet and started back to Jenin, confident that Yousef was not really leaving, that it had been a misunderstanding. A voice broke my fantasy in broken Arabic. "Stop!" A soldier! I lifted my pleading eyes toward the sun…I was caught trespassing. First one, then two more soldiers were upon me like hyenas and I shook with fear…. "Go home", he said. As I ran, a swoosh seemed to set my ear on fire as something terrible passed within an inch of my head. Then my abdomen cramped. I stopped at the edge of Jenin….I'd been shot. The bullet had struck my right side just above the kidney and exploded, tearing chunks of flesh from my belly upon exit….Majid saw my maimed belly. He kissed its wave of scar tissue. He gave my body the acceptance I had been unable to give it myself." (Abulhawa 116-119, 206)

Amal was just Fifteen years old when she had shot. It projects a good picture of survival in refugee camp.

In his epic memoir, 'Pity the Nation: The Abduction of Lebanon', the British correspondent Robert Fisk described phosphorus Israeli shells: Dr. Shammaa's story was a dreadful one and her voice broke as she told it. "I had to take the babies and put them in buckets of water to put out the flames," she said. "When I took them out half an hour later , they were still burning. Even in the mortuary, they smouldered for hours." Next morning, Amal Shammaa took the tiny corpses out of the mortuary for burial. To her horror, they again burst into flames.

We had Ben Gurion and Moshe Dayan on record, that they were planning the dismemberment of the neighboring state of Lebanon much earlier. The inhuman behavior and the wild crimes committed by Israelis in Lebanon is only recent history. The slashing of women's breasts, the tear-opening of the wombs

of pregnant ladies, the pounding of the skulls of children, the cutting of hands and legs of the men folk, all these are reported by foreign journalists and by international service agencies, like the Red Cross, and they go to prove the barbarity perpetrated in broad-day light in the post-UN era and in the second half of 1982. (MWL 10.5: 18)

There are many issues faced by refugees in their own soil. Those who lead a luxurious life were turned to poor laymen. Major issues are social, economic, and political. Social issues of refugees begin with their mere survival, denial of rights, humiliation, tortures to identity crisis. Denial of rights to survive can be elucidated by a quote from the text:

Ariel Sharon marched his military into Lebanon on June 6, 1982 – known as "the Oasis of the Middle East" for its splendor – and laid siege to Beirut for two grueling months, during which Israel deprived its people of water, electricity, and medical care….By August, the results were 17,500 civilians killed, 40,000 wounded, 400,000 homeless, and 100,000 without shelter. Prostrate, Lebanon lay devastated and raped, with no infrastructure for food or water. Israel claimed it had been forced to invade for peace. "we are here for peace. This is a peacekeeping mission." (Abulhawa 218, 219)

Orphans, widows among the refugees are left at the mercy of international aids and UNRWA. It projects the Economic crisis in the refugee camp. The event in Shatila camp would explicate the poor state of refugee camp. "I knew we had arrived when children began to swarm around the Fiat. We had done the same when I was a child. In particular, we had badgered visitors and UN investigators to no end….seeing the children at Shatila now gave me a look at myself as I must have appeared to those visitors – bed-ragged and needy." (Abulhawa 188) This is the untold story of all refugee camps in Israel.

Crest and fall of war is the main political arena of Palestine. Involvement of other countries in the conflict is monitored as a Political event. The following quotes will elucidate the political events turning into personal through its impact on the people.

"In March 1968, a formidable Israeli invasion force marched through the morning fog over the Allenby Bridge into Karameh, intending to eliminate the guerrilla base of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in a matter of hours. Israel miscalculated. The fedayeen fought with mad courage. Some fighters jumped with bomb belts around their waists, blowing themselves and Israeli tanks to pieces." (Abulhawa 121)

In August, Ronald Regan dispatched Philip Habib, who brokered a cease-fire deal in which the PLO evacuated Lebanon….The fate of those I love lay in the folds of that Roland Regan promise….On September 16, in defiance of the Cease-fire, Ariel Sharon's army circled the refugee camps of Sabra and Shatila, where Fatima and Falesteen slept defenselessly without Yousef. (Abulhawa 219, 223)

Ariel Sharon is not merely a terrorist, but also notorious for his involvement in the massacre of thousands of Palestinians in the Sabra and Shatila camps of Beirut in 1982. Since he came to power in 2000, he is bent on destroying the Palestinian Authority and its institutions as well as killing the Palestinians as much as possible. ( MWL 30.5: 1)

The war doesn't halt in 2001 but still boils and spreads its vapour throughout the Arab nations up till date. The war is to usurp the land from the in from native civilians and usurpers achieved it. "A land without people, for a people without land." (Abulhawa 38) Yet they wage war that denotes the plan of converting the consequences of war into a Genocide.

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# Let them speak out their mind !

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As a parent counsellor and a parent myself, I have come across a constant issue that the parents face: 'not able to make children share what they have in their mind'. Now, this could be due to various reasons ranging from 'lack of appropriate linguistic proficiency' to 'lack of confidence in parents'. Let us try to reason out with some of these issues related to children who are reluctant to share their 'self' with parents or who find it difficult to open up in front of the parents.

One of the key reasons behind the grave silence on personal experience sharing by children is that they 'really don't know' what to say and how! Hardly our education system or parenting methods supports children to share their emotions with others around them. Most of the parenting training at the initial stages of child development focuses on equipping the children to 'express their needs' and 'answer the questions'. Here, 'expressing needs or telling what they want' is different from 'expressing the innermost feelings and emotions'.

We all might have observed that most of the parents ask their toddlers 'are you happy'? 'are you hungry?' 'are you sad?' type questions. The major drawback of such questions is that they more or less tend to be close ended questions which leave little room for discussions

Another key factor that contributes to the 'silence of the child' is the parental intervention and 'guessed-explanations' by the parents. When the child is angry, sad or joyful, the parents tend to ask the toddler 'whether she/ he is happy because of ….'. Here again, there is only limited scope for detailed discussion. The parents tend to guess why the child is behaving so; and they are 'intelligent' enough to predict the reason 'correctly' most of the time. On such occasions, children tend to stop thinking about converting the intense emotions into verbal expressions and start analysing whether the reason given by the parent is right/ apt or not. Thus the child moves from creative expressions to analytical thinking. His responses tend to shrink to nods or mere 'yes/ no'.

The regular lexicon around the child (which he hears) need not necessarily contain linguistic items that represent the emotions within the child. They may be more suitable to express the emotions of the adult. Here, I am not stating that the emotions of the adults are entirely different from those of the child; rather, there may be different shades of similar emotions overlapping among various stages of child development. Even the 'baby talk' variety of spoken language has very limited vocabulary when it comes to words and phrases expressing intense emotions and thoughts. The reasons for the absence of child friendly language to express inner thoughts and intense emotions may be many; however, the reality remains the same!

So, the impending question is 'what to do?' or 'Is there a way out?'

Yes, there is… very much… and the way out is giving special training for developing a strong repertoire of fine vocabulary which will enable the child to speak out his mind successfully. The next question would be 'how?' well, the child needs systematic training and assistance in developing and practicing that language of mind and emotions. Most of the children are deprived of such words or rather parents/ adults think that children will not be able to understand those high-funda terms or intense language. Well, the truth is the child will understand most of those intense terms, if taught/ learnt meaningfully in a language-life context.

There are several methods of inculcating or developing such a set of vocabulary in children. The first and foremost requirement for successfully implementing these methods is a patient and observant parent. From a very young age, the children should be provided with lots of 'wh' questions (instead of yes/ no questions). 'why are you clapping'? 'what do you like?', 'how did you make it?', 'where do you go?', 'when will you tell me?'… It is more like a role reversal. In young age children tend to ask a lot of questions and parents remain as 'answering machines'. Later on, the role will change-children will be developed as 'answerable beings' and their questions will eventually die out. Instead of that, the parents should give a lot of scope for self- expression by asking open ended questions.

At the initial stages, when parents ask the children questions, children are bound to struggle for words to express their emotions and thoughts. Here, the parents can give some clues or hints or suggestions and those leads will enable the children to reach for the right word and the right collocation of that word. It is better we adults do not give away 'our answers' to them. Another tactics is giving many choices so that the children could associate, pick and choose the best option.

Another technique is detailed narration of incidents which the child can relate to where emotions and thoughts and words, phrases and usages related to them are consciously incorporated. It can be stories as well. Similarly when the children are watching cartoons or movies, parents can interpret emotions depicted through the visual clues (cry/ pain/ excitement…) and talk elaborately why they are behaving like that, how they should do etc. in this way children would be familiarised with complex vocabulary in an easy way.

When children find it difficult to express their thoughts and emotions, the parents have to be very considerate and give the children confidence to take their time to search words for their emotions. When they take time to reflect, they should not be hurried. The parents should have full confidence in the children and they should be given ample time and support to express themselves. Such a scaffolding will equip the toddlers to gain confidence and speak their mind out.

Ability to express successfully and effectively is very crucial in a child's life. It is essential that the children are equipped to convey what they have in their mind. If something goes wrong, then they would be in a position to share their mind efficiently. Such an ability to express oneself will help to ensure the safety of the child. An eloquent child will share her grievances, anxieties, tensions, traumas and any such intense emotions more confidently and successfully. Such a training is very essential in present scenario, where every day we begin the day by reading a report on child abuse.

Let us empower our children through ensuring on providing dedicates and focussed intense language and expressions development activities. As parents, let us help our children to speak their minds!

**Report from the field**

# Mr. Remesan Memorial ELTIF Event: Helping Learners to Get Rid of the Fear towards English

**PV Vasudevan Nambudiri**
Academic Coordinator, ELTIF

On entering the fifteenth year of dedicated, selfless service to the rural and backward children with the mission, 'Empowering Rural India through English Language Education', ELTIF remembers with thanks one of its pioneers, who is no more with us, by organizing a meeting of students and teachers and also by conducting a course in Communicative English for school children.

Mr. Remesan who was the Principal of Govt. Higher Secondary school Manathana (Kannur District Kerala) was a teacher of English, par excellence. As a scholar of English language, its structure, grammar and phonetics he excelled even university teachers. He was a ready reference book for his colleagues and friends, as far as English language was concerned. He was the member of the Curriculum sub Committee (English), member of the textbook preparation team and also a master teacher trainer too for the SCERT Kerala for a long time. His untimely demise while in service in 2003 was a great loss to the student community and to ELTIF, too.

As a close friend and team mate on the textbook production team, I still personally feel his absence much in my academic career, though after a decade or so.

ELTIF has been organizing programmes in memory of Mr Remesan in various parts of Kannur District. This year it was at Mattanur Higher Secondary School, where Mr Maheswaran Nambudiri (HSS Teacher English), a friend of late Mr Remesan, took the initiative for conducting the memorial lecture and a class

for the students. On 2 February 2017, a course in Communicative English was organized for the higher secondary students. The inaugural session was presided over by Smt. Jaya, the Principal and Sri. Maheswaran Nambudiri welcomed the gathering. The session was inaugurated by Sri. K T Sivadas, the Manager of the school, and a memorial reference to Sri. Remesan was made by Sri. K T Francis, Principal of GHSS Manathan (where Sri. Remesan worked last as principal). In his reference Sri Francis paid rich tributes to the great scholar-teacher. Sri PV Vasudevan Nambudiri delivered the Remesan Memorial Lecture. In his speech Sri Nambudiri recalled the contributions of late Sri Remesan to the various sections of the academia including researchers in English language, and how his large personal collection of books became a source of reference and inspiration to students, teachers and scholars.

Resource Persons of ELTIF, Sri. Mohanan, Sri. Haridasan, Sri. Asokan and Sri. Pavithran felicitated the function. Sri. Dileep, HSST of the school proposed vote of thanks.

Following the memorial session, higher secondary students were divided into five groups and a Communicative English session was taught by the ELTIF resource persons mentioned above. The students actively participated in the interactive sessions led by the new teachers.

Once again, ELTIF reached out the rural learners, though for a few hours. Our mission is just to help the poor, rural, backward learners to get rid of the fear distilled in their mind, towards English. No more tall claims.

**It works in my classroom**

# Linking Ideas, the Play Way in the Secondary Level English Classroom- Part 1

## P.Bhaskaran Nair

Usually students are good at sentence level grammar—they combine simple sentences into complex or compound sentences, change simple sentences into passive voice, report statements into indirect speech and so on. The reason is obvious—these are the age old questions appearing in the examinations, and usually teachers spend more time and energy on these items, so that the exam result may look better.

But when it comes to writing a short paragraphs on simple topics, students fail to maintain connection between one idea with the next. Sentences remain isolated and independent, as a result, reading gets stuck. Teaching of formal grammar ends with supplying the appropriate linking words and phrases in the blanks. Teaching how to link one idea with another is never taken care of. For example, how to express the notion of *addition*, which are the words and phrases to be used for expressing the notion of addition, which of them can be used in the beginning of the sentence, in the middle, or at the end? Similarly, how to state the notions of contradiction, contrast, comparison, condition, supposition, purpose, illustration, explanation, expansion, summarizing (putting briefly), conclusion and so on?

Here is a group work which suits for large classes, too. The objective is ' to enable the learners to link their ideas together according to their needs in contexts'. The activity is meant for secondary level.

Let the class be divided into two groups, and let the teacher write two sets of linking words and phrases on the board—the first set for addition and the other for contradiction. Students should frame statements using these words and phrases—the first group should make use of the first set (addition) and the other group, the second set (contradiction). Please remember, the statement which Group B makes must be closely connected with the one made by Group A. Within each group, students must be encouraged to work in pairs, as well. See the lists below, followed by the statements.

| Addition | Contradiction |
|---|---|
| And | But |
| Also | Though |
| Too | Even though |
| Besides | Even if |
| Apart from | Neither…nor |
| Moreover | Yet |
| In addition (to) | Still |
| Similarly | On the other hand |
| What else | However |
| Not only…but also | Nevertheless |
| As well | Not…either |

Group A: Our Principal and our Physical education teacher have Enfield bikes.

Group B: Mrs. Malathi comes on an Activa, but Mrs. Beena comes in an autorikshaw.

Group A: Many men teachers, as well as lady teachers have their own vehicles.

Group B. True, but many teachers come by school bus.

Group A. Apart from the school bus, some of them come by private bus too.

Group B: Yes. Some of the teachers have cars; still they come by school bus.

When this topic (transport used by teachers) is exhausted, they can move to the transport which students depend on, lunch timings and eating habits of students and so on.

A list of more linking words and phrases follows.

Below you will find some examples of linking words and how to use them. This is not a comprehensive list. You may want to add your own linking words and phrases.(Source: ©**www.lern-english-today.com** )

Examples of linking words within one sentence:

| Linking Words | Example of use |
|---|---|
| **Conditions** As long asprovided (that)providing | You can take my car **as** long as/provided (that)/providing you don't damage it.(I will lend you my car on condition that you don't damage it.) |
| **Contrary/ Opposite** Although/even though | Although/even though he is rich, he lives in a small house.(In spite of the fact that he is rich, he lives in a small house.) |
| Even if | He is poor and has no house, but even if he had money, he wouldn't buy a house.(Supposing he had the money, he still wouldn't buy a house.) |
| In case | Take an umbrella in case it rains.(It might rain, so it's a good idea to take an umbrella.) |
| In spite of / despite | In spite of/despite the rain, she walked to the station.in spite of/despite being blind, he walked to the station.(without being affected by the rain or by being blind.)Tom is rich, whereas Jack is poor. |
| **Cause-effect** that | She arrived early so that she could help her colleagues.(She arrived So early for the purpose of helping her colleagues.) |
| Whatever | You can count on me whatever you decide to do.(No matter what your decision is, you can count on me.) |

| Whenever | I will lend you my car whenever you need it.(No matter when you need my car, I will lend it to you.) |
| Wherever | My thoughts will be with you wherever you go.(No matter where you go, my thoughts will be with you.) |

### Examples of linking words that connect two separate sentences or two clauses:

Note : If linking words start a sentence, they are followed by a comma.

When they are used to connect two clauses, a semi-colon is used at the end

of the first clause, and a comma is often used after the linking word(s).

| Linking Words | Example of use |
|---|---|
| **Reason-result**<br>As a resultConsequentlyTherefore | Prices were reduced by 20%. As a result, sales increased.The company is expanding. Consequently, there are jobs on offer.A hurricane has been announced. Therefore, air traffic will be disrupted. |
| **Addition**<br>BesidesFurthermoreIn additionMoreover | The trip is too expensive. Besides, I don't really like hot weather.Computers are cheaper nowadays; furthermore, they are lighter.You haven't paid the rent yet.  In addition, you owe me money.The report is badly presented. Moreover, it contains inaccuracies. |
| **Illustration**For instanceFor example | There are several problems to consider; for instance/for example,there is a lack of public transport. |
| **Opposite**<br>ConverselyOn the contrary<br>On the other hand | Northern European countries had a great summer.On the contrary/conversely, southern Europe had poor weather.Laptops are convenient; on the other hand, they can be expensive |

| | |
|---|---|
| HoweverNeverthelessNonetheless | The hotel was open. However, nobody came to the reception desk.He had severe injuries; nevertheless**,** he completely recovered. The weather was bitterly cold. He went hiking nonetheless. |
| **Similarity**<br>same wayLikewiseSimilarly<br>same token | Alex enjoys telling jokes; in the same **way/**In the similarly/likewise,his son adores funny By the stories.Teenagers should be more respectful**;** by the same token**,** parents should be more understanding. |
| **Summarizing**<br>To summarise/sum up<br>Briefly | I've covered the main events of the year. To sum up/briefly, our team is now one of the best in the world. |
| **Concluding**<br>To conclude In conclusion | To conclude, I want to wish you all a very happy holiday season. |

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