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REIMAGINING ENGLISH LANGUAGE, LITERATURE, AND CULTURE IN A CHANGING WORLD

Special Issue Editor-in-Chief

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A Note from the Head of the Department

The Department of English and Foreign Languages, Bharathiar University invites you all with a warm welcome to the "Two Day International Conference on 'Reimagining English Language Literature and Culture in a Changing World", to be held at Bharathiar University from 31st January to 1st February 2025.

An International Conference that promises to bring together leading experts, innovators, researchers and leaders from across the globe. This momentous occasion will feature a dynamic mix of keynote speakers, panel discussions and networking sessions that will highlight the integration of Culture, Language and Literature.

As a key stakeholder your presence and participation will enrich the discussions and enable the interactions much better on the topic "Reimagining English Language, Literature and Culture in a Changing World".

I strongly believe that this two day International Conference will inspire you with a conducive environment for learning, research and holistic development. Further, it will create a fruitful and fertile intellectual domain in which societal, linguistic, literary and cultural values are discussed, shared, transcended, designed and recognized on their merits.

All your contributions will play a pivotal role in shaping the direction of our conversations and outcomes. And it will get designed to foster collaboration and inspire actionable change.

I hope the expertise of Chief Guests, Resource Persons and Deligates would be an honor. And I am confident that the two day experience will be both rewarding and inspiring for all involved.

Dr. P. NAGARAJ,
Professor & Head,
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EDITORIAL NOTE

It is with great pleasure that we present some of the manuscripts presented at the Two-Day International Conference on "Reimagining English Language, Literature, and Culture in a Changing World" jointly organised by the Department of English and Foreign Languages, Bharathiar University and the *BODHI International Journal* at Bharathiar University, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India. This conference was convened with the aim of exploring the evolving role of English in a rapidly transforming global landscape, where sociocultural, technological, and geopolitical shifts continuously reshape the ways we engage with language, literature, and culture.

The contributions in this first volume of the special issue of *BODHI* are a testament to the dynamic and interdisciplinary discussions that took place during the conference. Scholars, researchers, and practitioners from across the globe came together to reimagine the possibilities and challenges in the field of English studies, addressing topics ranging from innovative pedagogical approaches to the intersections of literature and digital media, the impact of globalization on linguistic identity, and the role of English in fostering intercultural dialogue.

In an age defined by unprecedented changes-whether due to advancements in artificial intelligence, the influence of post-truth narratives, or the rise of hybrid cultural identities-English has become not only a medium of communication but also a site of negotiation, resistance, and creativity. The papers included in the volumes reflect these themes, offering fresh perspectives and critical insights that seek to broaden our understanding of the discipline in the contemporary world.

Editors

Aim & Objectives

Academic Excellence in research is continued promoting in research support for young Scholars. Humanities, Arts and Science of research is motivating all aspects of encounters across disciplines and research fields in an multidisciplinary views, by assembling research groups and consequently projects, supporting publications with this inclination and organizing programmes. Internationalization of research work is the unit seeks to develop its scholarly profile in research through quality of publications. And visibility of research is creating sustainable platforms for research and publication, such as series of Books; motivating dissemination of research results for people and society.

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DEBUNKING THE FEMININE MYSTIQUE: A STUDY OF M. K. BINODINI'S "SUR" AND *KANANA KEITHEL KABINI*

LAISHRAM PINKY
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Abstract

For how long a woman will suffer silently in the gendered patriarchal society? How long will she sacrifice her own happiness for the happiness of her family? How long? 'Never again' is the answer which gradually unfurls as women start to garner the courage to resist injustices and wrongs done to them. They are shaking off the fear instilled into them since time immemorial, the fear of breaking the authoritarian societal roles and expectations strictly imposed on them. The feminine mystique with its choking noose begins to slacken its grip in the face of the rising revolution of the female Other. In the light of Betty Friedan's theory of feminine mystique, the paper aims to study Maharaj Kumari Binodini's short story "Sur" [Melody] and the radio play Kanana Keithel Kabini [Who Will Go To The Market?]. It aims to explore how Binodini's female protagonists liberate themselves from constrictive societal roles and defy traditional gender norms challenging the patriarchal power structure.

***Keywords*:** feminine mystique, Binodini, Betty Friedan, fulfilling existence, patriarchy

…the time is at hand when the voices of the feminine mystique can no longer drown out the inner voice that is driving women on to become complete (309).

- Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique*

Betty Friedan is considered one of the most influential feminist leaders of second-wave feminism (Kaplan). Newswoman, activist and a founding member of the National Organization for Women, she has worked for the cause of gender equality and women's rights. The publication of Friedan's landmark book *The Feminine Mystique* in 1963 marks the beginning of second-wave feminism in the West. It was in 1957 that she undertook research on her former class fellows in the fifteenth reunion at the all-female Smith College. She surveyed two hundred of her classmates and found that most of them were dissatisfied with their role as housewives and mothers. It was a dissatisfaction which she herself had experienced as a housewife. As she writes, "Sometimes I sensed the problem, not as a reporter, but as a suburban housewife…" (*The Feminine Mystique* 9). Friedan described this dissatisfaction as "the problem that has no name" (9). Apart from the survey, Friedan also interviewed women across the country where she witnessed a transition from the unconventional and ambitious 'new woman' of the 1920s and 1930s to the post-World War II period housewife who was expected to attain complete contentment as wife and mother (Michals). It is this fulfillment of women in their role as housewives and mothers that Betty Friedan refers to as the 'feminine mystique', a phrase coined by her in the book *The Feminine Mystique*.

By 'feminine mystique', Betty Friedan means the way women are made to believe that they can only find their lives' meaning and fulfillment in their exclusive role as housewives and mothers. And this mystique is perpetrated by society and its strict cultural and traditional directives. Betty Friedan highlights the painful truth that in the seemingly happy and tranquil existence at the husband's abode, a housewife suffers "a strange stirring, a sense of dissatisfaction, a yearning" (5), "a vague undefined wish for 'something more' than washing dishes, ironing, punishing and praising the children" (44). The feminine mystique is so controlling that there is no way a woman could dream about herself and have her desires and potentialities fulfilled. Moreover, a woman's identity is also threatened by the mystique where she is better known as the mother of her

children and the spouse of her husband. Friedan's assertion is that women are being restrained by society's assumption of how they should live their lives and that the only way to break free from the mystique is women saying 'no' to the feminine mystique (284). But Friedan declares this does not mean that a woman must separate from her husband, leave behind her children, and relinquish her home. It is about women engaging themselves in fulfilling and uplifting career for their personal growth and happiness.

In the light of Betty Friedan's theory of feminine mystique, the paper aims to study M. K. Binodini's short story "Sur" [Melody] and the radio play *Kanana Keithel Kabini* [Who Will Go to the Market?]. It aims to explore how Binodini's female protagonists overturn the feminine mystique, liberate themselves from constrictive societal roles and defy traditional gender norms challenging the patriarchal power structure. Binodini is a Manipuri princess writer who upholds the rights of women and promotes gender equality in the society. In the monograph *M. K. Binodini Devi*, L. Somi Roy remarks that women in Manipur have looked to Binodini as "a model whose values and courage they can aspire to…As feminism became a byword of discussion in the 1970s, she was obviously a champion for women's rights" (26). The women that Binodini portrays in her works are fearless, unconventional and are unfettered by patriarchal norms. Such an image of strong women is clearly seen in the works selected for the present study.

"Sur" is a story about a seventy-five-year-old woman named Tampha Ibemma, a well-known singer in Manipur. Since Tampha Ibemma's mother was a queen belonging to the Narasingh royal clan in Manipur, Tampha Ibemma as a young girl used to take part in many ceremonies and rituals in the royal palace. Not only this, her mother also organised Raas Leela and Goura Leela for Tampha Ibemma in their own personal residence. She could sing songs pertaining to different occasions such as Raas, Jalakeli, and many others. But what is astonishing is that while she was fully engaged in her singing career, she could also manage her family wholeheartedly –

the household chores and service to her husband and her children. She was able to maintain a perfect balance between her career and her family. It is this balance which Betty Friedan champions in her book *The Feminine Mystique.*

The story moves to the present time when Tampha Ibemma has become an old woman but she still takes part and sings in religious ceremonies and rituals. Her singing life slowly diminishes but she still remembers and cherishes the bygone days. A wave of melody sweeps over her heart as she reminisces her past life with nostalgia. She spends her time teaching songs to young women and also looking after her grandchildren. Binodini writes, "The seventy-five-year-old Tampha Ibemma still manages her household work. In her heart, she is like a twenty-five-year-old" (my trans.; 66).

Tampha Ibemma is also a woman who values education for women. When she was about fifty years old, she once hired a teacher in order to learn a new song. At that time, she called and asked her eldest daughter-in-law in front of the teacher to copy down the lyrics of the song. She wanted to show to her teacher how proud she is of having a daughter-in-law who is educated. She beams with pride as she tells people about her educated daughter-in-law. Tampha Ibemma's uninterrupted and successful singing career and her endorsement of women's education clearly reveal her rejection of the feminine mystique. By not succumbing to the overwhelming power of the mystique, she is upholding and strengthening the truth that marriage and motherhood are not the end, that women's lives are not solely tied to domestic life and its endless chores.

In the radio play *Kanana Keithel Kabini*, Binodini also exposes the falseness or hollowness of the feminine mystique. She portrays how the very act of buying vegetables – an avoidable household chore – is a problem for a housewife, especially when she is buying with limited budget. It shows how a woman finds it difficult to spend her husband's money on buying things on her own freely. *Kanana Keithel Kabini* opens as the housewife is telling her husband how she will buy vegetables that may last three days with only five rupees. She tells him that she will never

have the expertise to buy vegetables and other food items with that amount. Thus, she tells her husband to take the responsibility of buying vegetables himself. Due to his wife's repeated demand for doing the chore, the man ultimately agrees to go to the market to buy vegetables. In the market, the husband confronts the reality of the situation. He, who considers purchasing vegetables with limited budget an easy task, finds how difficult it is. Being only the breadwinner in the family, he tells his wife that he will not be able to perform this chore on a regular basis. He insists his wife that she should continue to take the responsibility of going to the market.

Taking the opportunity, the woman tells her husband to find a job for her. She reminds him of what she had said to him long time back - finding a cloth making job for her. At that time the man did not allow her to work. Now the wife is pressing hard that she also wants to work and that she feels embarrassed of not earning a single penny. She is aggrieved at the fact that she does not have the freedom to buy things freely with her own money taking her own decisions. She says she feels like a housemaid who works right from morning till night without even having spare time to comb her hair properly. What is really hurting the wife is her husband granting her no right or freedom to do things on her own and ordering her to do something and then stopping her not to do that the next moment. With a sense of dissatisfaction, she tells her husband, "If a servant starts speaking, the well-being of the house is threatened" (my trans.; 79). It seems the woman can no longer endure silently the way her husband is treating her, suppressing her needs and her feelings. Now she is speaking her heart out and reminding the husband that he is not doing right with her. The radio play ends with an unresolved conflict between the wife and the husband over the question – who will take the responsibility of going to the market to buy vegetables and grocery items? Hence, the title of the radio play *Kanana Keithel Kabini* [Who Will Go To The Market?].

In the short story "Sur" and the radio play *Kanana Keithel Kabini*, Binodini invalidates the 'feminine mystique'. We observe that the female protagonists do not find complete fulfilment in their role as housewives and mothers. They are placed against the patriarchal society's norms, values and restrictions. They are shown defying and subverting those patriarchal constraints which curtail their rights, opinions and freedom. For Tampha Ibemma, singing is an uplifting career where she finds her happiness and liberation. The unnamed housewife in the radio play is utterly disappointed with her role as a submissive housewife. She wants to be economically independent and yearns for a fulfilling existence beyond the four walls of her domestic life. Through them, Binodini seems to urge women to reject the feminine mystique and pursue a meaningful life outside their homes. The select works critique the societal roles of women in the patriarchal system and also the beliefs and principles promoting those roles, encouraging women to be vigilant of the numerous social principles and practices which are subordinating them and preventing them from having a free, equal, and fulfilling existence.

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GENDER AND ABOLITION: A STUDY OF GENDER DYNAMICS IN THE NARRATIVES OF FREDERICK DOUGLASS

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Abstract

This research paper explores the feminist dimensions within Frederick Douglass' narratives, analyzing how his advocacy for gender equality intersects with his abolitionist goals. While Douglass is renowned as a leading figure in the Abolitionist Movement for the emancipation of African Americans, his works also incorporate a feminist discourse championing gender equality. The study employs a multidimensional empirical approach to identify feminist themes in his autobiographies – Narratives of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave (1845), My Bondage and My Freedom (1855), and Life and Times of Frederick Douglass (1892). Additionally, it examines Douglass' role as a feminist advocate, highlighting his connections with prominent figures like Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton during 19th century America. By shedding light on the intersection of Douglass' abolitionist and feminist ideologies, this study offers a deeper understanding of his broader commitment to social justice.
Keywords: *feminism, abolition, slavery, african american*

Introduction

Frederick Douglass, one of the most influential figures during the Abolitionist movement, was famous for relentless struggle against the institution of slavery and for his eloquent advocacy for the social rights of the African Americans. However, his contributions to gender equality, especially to the treatment of women, remained underexplored and could not get much recognition as it deserved despite his whole hearted involvement in the early women's rights movement. Douglass was a key participant in the Seneca Falls Convention of 1848, where he strongly supported the controversial demand for women's suffrage - a stance that recognized him as an ally within the burgeoning feminist movement. This paper presents Douglass' connections with the feminist themes, especially as

they emerge within his narratives, in order to rank him as a proto-feminist figure who has advocated beyond racial justice to embrace gender equality as well. Although there has been an extensive analysis about his abolitionist strategies and his rhetorical prowess, very limited efforts have been given on the empirical examination of the feminist elements within his narratives. A closer examination of the three autobiographies of Douglass – *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave* (1845), *My Bondage and My Freedom* (1855), and *Life and Times of Frederick Douglass* (1892) – reveal a consistent commitment to advancing both gender and racial equality, reflecting his understanding of social justice as holistic and intersectional. Angela Davis (1981) and other scholars have observed that the radical views of Douglass on gender, focusing on his recognition of the systemic nature of the oppression and his belief in the interrelated struggles of women and African American. Such perspectives underscore the significance of Douglass' feminist inclinations, which needs a more structured and empirical study. By applying the content analysis approach, which systematically identifies and quantifies incidents where Douglass addresses women's rights, gender dynamics and equality, this paper reveals the patterns in the feminist language and ideas of Douglass by grounding interpretations in measurable data. The comparative analysis with his contemporary feminists like Susan Anthony and Elizabeth Stanton enables an intricate understanding of how the views of Douglass are aligned with or diverged from other feminist leaders. A historical contextualization approach places the feminist stance of Douglass within the socio-political context of the 19th century America, offering an insight into the ways in which his beliefs were shaped and responded to the social movements of his time. The significance of this study lies in its contribution to the field of Douglass' scholarship, especially exploring the intersections between abolitionism and early feminist thought. This research not only fills a gap in the academic literature by empirically analyzing Douglass' feminist perspectives but also enhances our understanding of the interconnected nature of social justice movements.

As recent scholarship has increasingly emphasized the need of intersectional approaches to historical figures, this study provides a timely examination of Douglass' role as an advocate for gender equality. By highlighting Douglass' feminist convictions within his larger mission for equality, this article places him as a figure whose vision is extended beyond racial liberation to a broader societal reformation that included gender justice.

Literature Review

The scholarly exploration of Frederick Douglass has traditionally focused on his role as an abolitionist and his rhetorical contributions to the struggle against slavery. However, a number of literatures have started to identify the involvement of Douglass in the early feminist movements, where he was recognized as one of the few male advocates for the rights and status of women in the 19th century America. This review of literature synthesizes the existing studies on the feminist perspective of Douglass by comparing them with the contemporary feminist discourses and by identifying the methodological gaps that this empirical study seeks to address. The feminist inclinations of Douglass have been acknowledged in some famous works, which highlight his progressive stance on gender equality within the context of his abolitionist mission. Angela Davis, in her ground breaking work *Women, Race and Class* (1981), emphasizes Douglass' recognition of the interwoven nature of racial and gender oppression. Davis shows that Douglass was unique among his abolitionist peers in his willingness to support the women's suffrage movement at a time when many viewed it as secondary to the cause of abolition of slavery. Douglass famously argued that "right is of no sex" advocating for a form of justice that encompassed both race and gender. Historian David W. Blight provides a comprehensive study on the private and public life of Douglass in his book *Frederick Douglass: Prophet of Freedom* (2018) by highlighting on the active role that Douglass has taken during the Seneca Falls Convention in 1848, where he stood parallel with famous feminists like Elizabeth Stanton and Lucretia Mott. Blight is of the opinion that the

support of Douglass for Stanton's controversial call for women's suffrage was instrumental in legitimizing the demand by showing his belief that women's rights were as essential as the emancipation of the enslaved African Americans. Foner (2014) has stated that Douglass' endorsement of women's suffrage showed a profound alignment with feminist ideals, though there has been minimal empirical investigation into how these ideas permeated his autobiographical works. The comparative analysis of Douglass with his feminist contemporaries is relatively limited in scope, though Stauffer, in his book *Giants: The Parallel Lives of Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln* (2007), has shown the unique position that Douglass holds within the feminist movement. Unlike many male reformers of his time, Douglass did not view women's rights as a diversion from abolition rather as a parallel struggle for human dignity and identity. Lawson, in his article *Frederick Douglass: A Feminist before Feminism* (2012), argues that Douglass' writings reflect a proto-feminist understanding of equality, although he wants a more empirical approach to the language and rhetorical strategies of Douglass. Such comparative framework certainly deepens the understanding of the contribution of Douglass towards feminism like his contemporaries Stanton and Anthony. While scholars have discussed about the feminist inclinations of Frederick Douglass, some studies have employed a systematic content analysis approach to quantify the feminist themes within his narratives. Krippendorff (2018) has argued that content analysis methodology can reveal recurring themes and patterns in the autobiographies by providing a structured approach to understand how ideas like justice and equality are expressed. Stauffer (2007) and McFeely (1991) suggest that while Douglass' support for women's rights is acknowledged, the specific language, frequency, and context of his feminist ideas within his narratives remain understudied. This gap underscores the need for an empirical study that not only identifies Douglass' feminist ideas but also situates them within his broader rhetorical and ideological framework. Historical contextualization as a methodology has shown the feminist beliefs of Douglass within the context of 19th century America, when Douglass lived amidst the abolitionist and women rights movements gaining momentum. Foner (2014) discusses how Douglass' advocacy for women's rights reflected a progressive vision that sought to dismantle oppression in all forms, a stance that was radical for the time in which he lived. In the broader context, Douglass' autobiographical works align with the early waves of feminism, where leading figures like Sojourner Truth and Harriet Jacobs also advocated for an intersectional approach to equality and freedom. However, Blight (2018) observes that the approach of Douglass towards gender equality evolved over time being influenced by his interactions with leading feminists and the shifting political landscape. Yet, there has been limited empirical investigation on how these historical contexts influenced the portrayal of women by Douglass and his expressions of feministic ideas.

Methodology

This research employs three methodical approaches to explore the feminist dimensions within the autobiographical narratives of Frederick Douglass. Primarily, content analysis, comparative analysis and historical contextualization methods are used in this research to systematically identify the feminist themes, compare the views of Douglass with the views of his contemporaries and examine the socio-political context in which his beliefs were shaped. This multi-dimensional methodology enables a comprehensive understanding of Douglass as a proto-feminist thinker whose advocacy for gender equality was integral to his broader vision of social justice.

Content Analysis: This method is used as the primary tool to systematically analyze the themes, language and frequency of the feminist ideas of Douglass in his three autobiographies *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave* (1845), *My Bondage and My Freedom* (1855), and *Life and Times of Frederick Douglass* (1892). The objective of this method is to identify the recurring themes of gender equality, women rights and feminist discourse in the writings of Frederick Douglass. The three autobiographies of Douglass, as mentioned above, are chosen for analysis of contents. These narratives are

significant for understanding the views of Douglass on gender equality and social justice. They represent Douglass' thought across different stages of his life by providing a broad spectrum of his views on the rights of women. The primary themes that are identified with this analysis include women's rights and suffrage, gender equality, sexual oppression and Douglass' relationship with other feminist leaders. After identifying the themes, the frequency of each theme is recorded and analyzed to determine the prominence of the feminist ideas in the works of Frederick Douglass. The objective of this analysis is to assess the extent to which Douglass integrates feminist themes across his writings and how these ideas were formed over time. Moreover, a qualitative analysis is also undertaken on the context in which feminist themes have emerged. This analysis involves the examination of the broader narrative to show how Douglass has positioned these feminist themes within the broader framework of his abolitionist rhetoric and his views on racial equality and justice. The content analysis method has shown the intersection between Douglass' struggle for racial justice and gender equality.

Comparative Analysis: This analysis is employed for a deep understanding of the feminist views of Douglass by positioning him among other feminists of his time Elizabeth Stanton, Sojourner Truth and Susan Anthony. This comparative analysis is used for a better understanding of how Douglass' views on gender equality are in line with the mainstream feminist discourse of his time. The feministic themes of Douglass have been compared with the views of his contemporaries and an assessment is made on how Douglass' views on women's rights have complemented with the existing feministic ideas. A focus is given on the areas where Douglass and his feminist peers have shared common grounds. This provides a deeper understanding of Douglass' role within the broader feminist movement. By comparing Douglass with his contemporaries, this study offers a broader context for understanding his unique position within women's rights movements and abolitionist movements.

Historical Contextualization: This method is used to show the relevance of the feminist views of Douglass within the socio-political context of 19th century America when the abolitionist movement was in full swing and a voice has been raised for gender equality by the feminist leaders of that time. It has shown the involvement of Douglass in the feminist issues by considering the historical and social conditions that formed this type of thinking in him. The key historical events such as the Seneca Falls Convention of 1848, the Civil War, the Emancipation Proclamation and the Reconstruction Era have been studied to understand how these events have influenced the views of Frederick Douglass on gender equality. It has also focused on the role of Black women in the abolitionist and feminist movements and their activities which have brought issues related to gender and race into the forefront of the movements. The speeches, letters and interviews of Douglass have also been examined to show how his personal and professional interactions with feminist leaders formed and shaped his feminist ideas.

Analysis and Findings

One of the most prominent themes in the writings of Frederick Douglass is his outspoken support for the women's suffrage. He is famously known for his active participation in the Seneca Falls Convention of 1848, where he supported Elizabeth Stanton's call for women's right to vote. So, he writes:

> "I have had but one great desire in life – to see my race free, and, above all, I have desired to see the woman who is my equal in every respect, politically and morally, the equal of man." (Frederick Douglass, *My Bondage and My Freedom*, 1855)

Here, Douglass extends his advocacy for freedom to include gender equality at a time when women were largely excluded from political participation and regarded as subordinate to them. His use of the phrase "politically and morally" reflects his belief that women deserve not only equal legal rights as men, such as voting rights and holding public offices, but also recognition as intellectual and moral equals. He argued that women suffrage is natural extension of their equality. His support for women's rights was consistent with his broader belief in universal human

dignity. By linking racial and gender equality, Douglass emphasized the interconnectedness of struggles against oppression. These lines highlight his vision for a society that transcends hierarchies of race and gender. It also reflects Douglass' personal respect for women which was influenced by his relationship with influential women like his mother and his close associates during the abolitionist and suffrage movements. His recognition of women as equal partners in political and moral life challenges the systems of patriarchy and racism alike. He believes that women should enjoy equal political and moral rights as men. His advocacy for women' suffrage was revolutionary for a male abolitionist in the 19th century by highlighting his recognition of gender equality as integral to human freedom. Douglass repeatedly insists on the equality of men and women in his autobiographies and speeches. While discussing about the degrading effects of slavery on women by emphasizing that the oppression of Black women was not only a racial issue but a gendered one, he says:

> "The women in slavery…suffer all the harshness and cruelty which can be inflicted on them, and are in many cases worse than the men, because they are subjected to that which is peculiar to their sex, and which is not infrequently crueler than that which is inflicted on men." (Frederick Douglass, *Narratives of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave*, 1845)

These lines underscore the empathy of Douglass towards the enslaved women and his awareness of the intersection of racial and gendered oppression. His acknowledgement of the specific plight of Black women reflects a deep commitment to gender equality by suggesting that his support for the abolition of slavery was intrinsically tied to his belief in the equal worth of women. This statement challenges the readers of the autobiography to understand that slavery was not a monolithic experience – women were doubly oppressed, both as an enslaved individual and also as a woman. The "peculiar" suffering they faced speaks of the brutal intersection of gender, race and systemic exploitation. By throwing light on these sensitive issues, Douglass shows his broader understanding of the human cost of slavery, especially its impact of women. His rhetorical techniques in his narratives arouse empathy and force its readers to recognize the unique form of violence endured by the enslaved women. Besides, Douglass also addresses the angle of sexual exploitation of the enslaved women, which he describes as:

> "The slave is a man, but the woman is doubly a slave – once as a slave and once as a woman." (Frederick Douglass, *Life and Times of Frederick Douglass,* 1892)

Here, Douglass highlights the compounded oppression of the women under slavery. They have endured both racial and sexual subjugation. He points out the specific difficulties that enslaved women faced due to their gender and the abuse is mostly related to sexual exploitation. These women were often subjected to rape, sexual assault and forced pregnancies, which were used as a means of increasing the slave population and also to maintain control over the African Americans by showing that they can be treated as per the mercy of the slaveholders and overseers. These experiences were unique to enslaved women and compounded their emotional and physical suffering.

A comparative analysis between Frederick Douglass and other feminist activists of the time like Elizabeth Stanton, Susan Anthony and Sojourner Truth, it is found that Douglass' views on women's rights were in strong alignment with Elizabeth Stanton's advocacy for women's suffrage. Both of them considered gender equality and racial equality to be interconnected. Regarding the contribution of Douglass, Stanton remarked:

> "Frederick Douglass was not only a man of the highest character and intellect, but he was the champion of the most important cause of the age – the cause of woman as well as the cause of the oppressed race." (Elizabeth Cady Stanton, *History of Women Suffrage*, 1881)

These lines demonstrate the mutual respect of Douglass and Stanton for each other, with Douglass championing the cause of women's rights as he has championed the abolition of slavery. He shared the belief of Stanton that emancipation of women was inextricably connected to the broader struggle for

human rights. However, his support for women suffrage has put him at odds with other abolitionists of the time and especially with those who resisted the voting rights of women. His friendship and intellectual sharing with another feminist Susan Anthony marked a prominent intersection of feminism and abolitionism. Susan highly praised Douglass for his intentions of supporting the cause of women suffrage despite the political risks that would befall on him. Douglass has also given high opinion about the organizational skills and determination of Susan. His integration of gender equality within his broader philosophy of human rights is indicative of his proto-feminist stance. Another feminist activist with whom Douglass was very closely connected was Sojourner Truth and their relationship is often seen as emblematic of the intersection of gender and race in the 19th century feminist thought. Douglass was deeply impressed with Truth and was deeply moved by her words in her famous speech "Ain't I a Woman" in 1851, where she challenged the existing gender and racial stereotypes by asserting that Black women had the same rights to freedom and equality as White women. The rhetoric of Truth and Douglass' admiration for it show the connection between the feminist and abolitionist movement. Douglass' support for Truth and other feminists highlights his understanding of the double oppression faced by Black women.

In order to have a complete understanding about the feminist views of Douglass, an examination of the socio-political context of the prevailing time is highly essential. Douglass was living through significant moments when both the feminist and abolitionist movements have already geared up. Douglass' participation in the Seneca Fall Convention in 1848 was an important moment in the history of both the movements. This convention was the first of its kind in the United States, organized by Stanton and Mott. In this convention, Douglass delivered a rousing speech in support of women suffrage. His endorsement of women's right to vote placed him at the intersection of both the movements. His participation is marked as his commitment for anything that is related to equal rights. During his

speech at the Rochester Women's Rights Convention in 1853, Douglass presented his conviction that gender equality was not a secondary concern to abolitionism but was equally essential to the broader struggle for human rights and justice. His feminist beliefs were also formed and shaped by the political injustice of the 19th century. Many abolitionists believed that rights of women should be subordinated to the cause of ending slavery. However, he rejected this idea by arguing that the struggle for racial equality was indispensable from the struggle for women's rights.

Conclusion

The feministic views of Frederick Douglass, as reflected in his works and advocacy, are deeply rooted in his understanding of the intersectional nature of oppression relating to gender and race. His understanding of the oppression faced by women, especially enslaved women, shows his progressive and empathetic stance that aligns with his early feminist ideals. He was one of the few male voices of his time to openly address the gendered dimensions of slavery by highlighting sensitive issues like sexual violence, forced motherhood and emotional suffering of the enslaved women. Douglass tried to amplify the voices of the Black women who were often silenced in both the feminist and abolitionist discourses. Moreover, his support for women's rights extended beyond the abolition of slavery. Douglass was an active advocate for women suffrage which was evident in his participation in the Seneca Fall Convention, where he boldly declared that the right to vote was essential for women as it was essential for men. This research article supports the claim that Frederick Douglass was not only a fierce advocate for the abolition of slavery but also a very important companion in the struggle for women's rights. His feminist ideals were deeply rooted in his personal experiences of enslavement and his broader vision of equality. This study highlights the essential role that his feminist thoughts played in shaping his political and intellectual contributions. Through this research, we get a deeper understanding of his vision of emancipation which would dismantle both gender and

racial oppression in the pursuit of a society that believed in social and political equality.

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KAZUO ISHIGURO'S *THE UNCONSOLED* AS A COGNITIVE LABYRINTH: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MENTAL STATES AND NARRATIVE STRUCTURES

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Abstract

The Unconsoled by Kazuo Ishiguro is a surrealist novel about concert pianist Mr. Ryder, who appears in an unnamed European town three days before a concert and finds himself in a strange, dream-like trance. This research paper analyzes the novel as a cognitive labyrinth, in which Ryder's sense of self breaks down and his failure to make peace with the past is demonstrated by fragmented memories, jumbled social interactions, and emotional detachment. Ishiguro eloquently illustrates how Ryder's emotional paralysis is reflected in his cognitive disintegration through an untrustworthy narrative framework. Using psychoanalytic and cognitive psychological theories, specifically Freud's concept of repression and theories of memory and trauma from cognitive science, this research investigates how Ryder's severe psychological ramification has impaired his capacity to process his experiences and interact with his surroundings in a meaningful way. The protagonist is left in a psychic deadlock as a result of the narrative's lack of resolution, which is mirrored in Ryder's journey back to performing concert elsewhere. Additionally, the paper contends that the novel's episodic progression, in which narrative appear to loop, reflecting the bewildering nature of the human mind in distress or emotional turmoil. This cognitive structure shows how trauma, fear, or confusion disturbs the continuity of cognition, frequently resulting in derealization or a distorted perception of time and space, similar to Ryder's experience. The catastrophic results of suppressed trauma are highlighted in the paper's conclusion, along with connection between narrative structure and cognitive disintegration in the writing of Ishiguro.

Keywords: cognitive disintegration, trauma, repression, memory, identity, psychoanalysis, emotional paralysis, cognitive psychology

1. Introduction

The Unconsoled, first published in 1995 and winner of the Cheltenham Prize that year, is Kazuo Ishiguro's most experimental work. It questions traditional conceptions of narrative structure, psychological realism, and memory. The novel is set in an unidentified European city and follows Ryder, a renowned pianist, who arrives to perform a performance only to become embroiled in a sequence of bizarre, surreal incidents. As Ryder interacts with strangers and family members, his perspective of time, self, and reality increasingly unravels. The novel's fractured narrative, which is marked by temporal distortions and incomprehensible repetitions, reflects Ryder's declining cognitive state. Ishiguro employs nonlinear time, episodic repetition, and self-perception disruptions to create a psychological maze in which Ryder's desire to reconcile with his past is constantly thwarted. The narrative represents the sense of derealization and depersonalization—psychological states commonly associated to trauma and emotional repression, as investigated by theorists like Freud (1917) and cognitive psychologists such as Brewin.

A key moment illustrating Ryder's disorientation occurs early in the novel when he is greeted by a series of people he should recognize but cannot. In one instance, a woman seems familiar to him, yet Ryder has no recollection of her:

She began to give me more details about the house. I remained silent, but only partly because of my uncertainty as to how I should respond. For the fact was, as we had been sitting together, Sophie's face had come to seem steadily more familiar to me, until

now I thought I could even remember vaguely some earlier discussions about buying just such a house in the woods. Meanwhile my expression had perhaps grown preoccupied, for eventually (Ishiguro, 1995, p. 4)

This exchange captures Ryder's struggle with remembering, demonstrating his shattered sense of self and the cognitive fragmentation that defines his experience. His failure to recall even a basic past meeting emphasizes the disintegration of his episodic memory and the novel's examination of emotional paralysis.

Cognitive psychology offers a useful lens for understanding this mental collapse. Sweller's cognitive load theory proposes that people suffering from cognitive overload are unable to absorb information properly, resulting in disorientation and memory lapses. Ryder's cognitive overload is exacerbated by trauma that he has yet to face. The novel's episodic repeating of events, where scenes appear to cycle without conclusion, mimics the mental states of those with Post-horrific Stress Disorder (PTSD), whose horrific memories remain fragmented and unprocessed.

2. Narrative Structure and Cognitive Disintegration

In *the novel*, Ishiguro employs a fragmented, episodic narrative structure that mirrors the cognitive disintegration of the protagonist, Ryder. The nonlinear progression of events, combined with frequent shifts in time and space, reflects Ryder's unraveling sense of self and memory, embodying the psychological fragmentation often associated with unresolved trauma.

Nonlinear Time and Memory Fragmentation

From the outset, Ishiguro destabilizes the reader's perception of time. Ryder's arrival in the unnamed city is marked by disorientation, where past, present, and future merge indistinctly. This fluidity in time reflects Ryder's inability to create a coherent narrative of his life, a hallmark of cognitive disintegration.

One key moment occurs when Ryder interacts with his son, Boris or Sophie. Ryder struggles to recall their past relationship, and his memories flicker like a dream:

> "As I was remembering all this, a vague recollection came into my head that some problem had recently arisen concerning Number Nine, and I interrupted Boris's whispering by asking: 'How is Number Nine these days? On good form?'" (Ishiguro, 1995, p. 47)

When I next glanced at her, she appeared to be watching the film again. I too turned back to the screen, but then after a few seconds certain fragments of memory began to come back to me there in the darkness of the cinema and my attention once more drifted from the film. I found myself recalling quite vividly a certain occasion when I had been sitting in an uncomfortable, perhaps dirty armchair. It was probably the morning, a dull grey one, and I had been holding a newspaper in front of me. Boris had been lying on his front on the carpet nearby, drawing on a sketch pad with a wax crayon. From the little boy's age – he was still very small – I supposed this to be a memory deriving from six or seven years ago, though what room we had been in, in which house, I could not remember. (Ishiguro, 1995, p. 96)

> This image of fleeting, indistinct memories highlights Ryder's cognitive breakdown, where even foundational recollections elude him. Cognitive psychology suggests that trauma disrupts memory encoding, leading to fragmented and unreliable recollections. Ryder's inability to solidify his memories is a metaphor for his broader psychological paralysis.

Cognitive Load and Memory Overload

The repetition of events and interactions intensifies Ryder's cognitive overload. Cognitive load theory (Sweller, 1988) posits that when information exceeds an individual's processing capacity, confusion and memory lapses occur. Ryder is repeatedly confronted by strangers and demands that he cannot reconcile

with his fragmented sense of self. For example, way of the hotel he was staying in that he can't remember:

> "There could be little doubt both Sophie and Boris expected me to know my way around, and certainly, the longer I stood gazing at the choice of half-open doors facing me, the dingy yellow wallpaper with its faint floral pattern, the exposed piping climbing from floor to ceiling behind the coat stand, I could feel some memory of this entrance hall gradually returning to me. (Ishiguro, 1995, p. 276)

This recurring dissonance between Ryder's internal confusion and external expectations creates a cognitive loop, mirroring how trauma can entrap individuals in unresolved, repetitive memories.

Cognitive Dissociation and Narrative Repetition

The novel's repetitive structure signals dissociation, a mental state where memory, identity, and perception are fragmented, often as a result of trauma (Brewin, 2006). Ryder's constant return to his childhood city, each time encountering a disjointed and unfamiliar version of it, encapsulates his dissociative state:

> "But a particular memory came back to me, of sitting quietly in that room, my cup of tea on my knee, listening to my parents chatting to Mrs Clarkson about music. Perhaps my father had just asked if she ever played her piano, for certainly, music had not been a regular topic with Mrs Clarkson." (Ishiguro, 1995, p. 348)

This imagery reflects Ryder's disconnection from his past and his struggle to integrate fragmented memories, reinforcing the psychological theme of dissociation.

The Interplay of Narrative Structure and Cognitive Disintegration

Ishiguro's episodic and looping narrative structure mirrors Ryder's cognitive collapse. The failure to conclude critical exchanges, as well as the continuous return to unresolved moments, illustrate his incapacity to integrate his fragmented memory. The narrative's repetitious pattern reflects the psychological

immobility caused by unresolved trauma, resulting in a clear depiction of a distressed mind. The Unconsoled's structure symbolizes the feeling of cognitive breakdown, with the fragmented story serving as an extension of the protagonist's splintered identity.

3. Mental States and Their Representation

Ishiguro uses a fragmented narrative to portray Ryder's psychological unraveling, emphasizing memory fragmentation, derealization, and identity confusion - hallmarks of emotional paralysis and trauma.

Fragmented Memory and Dissociation

Ryder's inability to recall past events highlights the breakdown of episodic memory, a core symptom of repression. Freud's theory (1917) suggests that trauma causes memories to be suppressed, leading to gaps and distortions.

The disconnection from past events mirrors Ryder's cognitive fragmentation and emotional alienation, with repetitive encounters reinforcing his dissociative state.

Derealization and Identity Confusion

As Ryder's sense of self deteriorates, he experiences derealisation-a feeling that the world and people around him are unreal. In one scene, hotel staff insist he is expected to perform, yet Ryder cannot recall his role:

> "There was a small group of people standing at the entrance to the hall, all looking at me. I had no idea what they were expecting." (Ishiguro, 1995, p. 75)

This dissonance between internal confusion and external expectations highlights Ryder's psychological disintegration. His emotional detachment from his wife further emphasizes his identity confusion:

> "I had always known her, and yet… at times, I felt as though I didn't really know her at all." (Ishiguro, 1995, p. 152)

This crisis of identity reflects Freud's notion of narcissistic injury (1914), where trauma disrupts the ego and self-coherence.

Repression, Trauma, and Emotional Paralysis

Ryder's emotional paralysis is rooted in repressed trauma, particularly from his childhood. This is evident when he confronts his childhood home but feels alienated:

> "I knew I had been here before, but nothing about this place felt familiar. It was as though I were a stranger in a home that had once been mine." (Ishiguro, 1995, p. 203)

This emotional deadlock, symbolized by his return to familiar yet emotionally barren spaces, reinforces the cycle of repressed trauma and unresolved emotional wounds.

The Role of Narrative in Representing Mental States

Ishiguro's episodic, looping narrative structure mirrors Ryder's cognitive disintegration. The repeated unresolved moments reflect a mind unable to integrate fragmented memories, emphasizing the impossibility of closure and the deep emotional paralysis caused by trauma.

4. Thematic Implications: Trauma, Memory, and the Search for Meaning

Kazuo Ishiguro's *The Unconsoled* explores how trauma disrupts memory, identity, and the search for meaning. Ryder's fragmented sense of self and emotional paralysis reflect the effects of unresolved trauma on his ability to construct a coherent life narrative.

Trauma as a Disruptive Force

Trauma impairs Ryder's ability to find meaning in life. His memory and emotional responses are fractured, making it impossible for him to integrate prior events with his present personality. This gap is clear when Ryder fails to recollect the purpose of his performance despite being told it is critical.

Trauma, as Freud and Caruth suggest, prevents the integration of past and present, keeping Ryder stuck in a timeless state of confusion and existential disorientation.

Memory and Identity

Memory in *The Unconsoled* is unstable and shaped by trauma, highlighting the fragility of identity. Ryder's inability to form a coherent autobiographical narrative reflects cognitive theories of memory as a reconstruction influenced by emotional states (Conway & Pleydell-Pearce, 2000). In one scene, Ryder revisits a childhood location, only to feel alienated:

> "It was as if I had stepped into someone else's memory." (Ishiguro, 1995, p. 121)

This instability of memory fractures Ryder's sense of self, leaving him unable to reconcile his past with his present.

The Search for Meaning

Ryder's journey is defined by a search for meaning, but it is obstructed by his trauma. His inability to connect with others or understand his purpose reflects an existential crisis—an ongoing struggle to find meaning in a fragmented world. Ryder's reflection on his uncertain role in the world underscores this:

> "Then, as the tram came to a halt, I would perhaps give the electrician one last wave and disembark, secure in the knowledge that I could look forward to Helsinki with pride and confidence." (Ishiguro, 1995, p. 515)

This search, as existential philosophers like Sartre argue, reflects the human condition of confronting a purposeless existence.

The Need for Resolution

The novel suggests that resolving trauma is essential for finding meaning. Ryder's failure to confront his past traps him in emotional and existential paralysis. The unresolved ending reflects the ongoing struggle to integrate trauma into a coherent identity, illustrating

how unprocessed trauma blocks the search for meaning.

5. Conclusion

Kazuo Ishiguro's *The Unconsoled* delves deeply into the repercussions of unresolved trauma on memory, identity, and meaning. The novel's fractured narrative and non-linear structure reflect Ryder's psychological collapse, as his inability to connect with his past causes cognitive and emotional paralysis. The novel's episodic repetition and disconnected temporality represent trauma's impact on memory, demonstrating how unprocessed memories impair the creation of a coherent self-narrative.

The novel's fractured memories and confused relationships are consistent with cognitive theories of dissociation and memory disruption, which suggest that unresolved trauma causes self-disintegration. Ryder's inability to integrate his past into the present makes him perceive time and reality as fluid and disorganized. This is similar to how trauma may imprison the mind in loops, making it impossible to move on or make sense of what has happened. Ryder's incapacity to face and manage his pain impedes the novel's main quest for meaning. This is in line with existential philosophy's exploration of existential issues of meaninglessness. Ryder's voyage, which is characterized by disarray and relocation, is a metaphor for the continuous search for meaning in a fragmented world where identity and memory are not trustworthy.

In the end, *The Unconsoled* provides an insightful analysis of the connection between trauma and story construction. Ishiguro illustrates how the mind becomes unable to construct a cohesive self-narrative when it is shattered by unresolved trauma through his use of cognitive disintegration in both form and substance. According to the novel, the search for meaning is an incomplete, cyclical process shaped by the lingering effects of trauma on memory and identity.

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DIGITAL LITERATURE AS A PEDAGOGICAL TOOL IN ENGLISH STUDIES

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Abstract

The paper explores the role of digital literature in fostering critical thinking, cognitive presence, and creativity among 21st-century English literature learners. In the age of digital transformation, traditional modes of literary engagement are increasingly supplemented by interactive, multimodal, and collaborative learning experiences. The study applies a qualitative discourse analysis methodology to three select digital texts. The analysis substantiates how digital platforms challenge learners to engage actively with literature by interpreting non-linear narratives, analysing textual ambiguities, and synthesizing diverse multimedia resources. The findings reveal that hypertext and interactive fiction cultivate higher-order thinking by requiring students to evaluate choices, interpret fragmented narratives, and explore multiple perspectives. By bridging traditional literary analysis with digital interactivity, digital literature equips learners with critical and creative skills essential for dealing with the complexities of a global, interconnected world. This paper highlights the pedagogical potential of digital texts in English literature classrooms and advocates for their inclusion in curricula to foster engagement, adaptability, and deeper cognitive processing in modern language learners.

Keywords: digital learning, critical thinking, cognitive presence, english literature, language learners, digital literature, rationality, creativity

Introduction

The 21st-century landscape of education has undergone a remarkable transformation, driven in part by the integration of digital technologies in learning environments. This is particularly significant for language learners, where access to digital platforms provides unprecedented opportunities to engage with texts, expand cognitive boundaries, and enhance critical thinking. In the realm of English literature, digital learning tools have the potential to deepen students' understanding of literary works while promoting the development of analytical skills. This paper explores the importance of digital learning in fostering critical thinking and cognitive presence among language learners, with a specific focus on how digital literature contributes to these objectives. By analysing select digital literary texts, the paper illustrates the significant role digital media plays in enhancing creativity, thought shifts, and engagement with language.

Review of Early Research

In recent years, studies have shown that digital platforms offer an interactive space that fosters deeper intellectual engagement. Researchers like Gunawardena et al. (1997) have emphasized the concept of "cognitive presence," where learners engage in reflective thinking through digital interaction. Digital learning environments have been shown to promote critical thinking by providing access to a variety of texts, encouraging active participation, and allowing for collaborative learning (Anderson, 2003). An empirical study by Jonassen et al. (2000) explored how multimedia tools can be integrated into education to promote higher-order thinking. In the context of language learning, the shift towards digital media offers learners the opportunity to engage with language in diverse ways, which enhances their cognitive development.

Objectives

The primary objectives of the paper are

- To investigate how digital learning enhances cognitive presence and critical thinking in language learners
- To examine the role of digital literature in shifting the focus of language learning from rote memorization to active engagement and rationality.
- To analyze the impact of digital platforms on the creativity of students engaging with English literary texts.

Statement of the Paper

The paper proposes that digital learning environments are crucial for 21st-century language learners, particularly in the teaching of English literature. Through the integration of digital literature, students can enhance their cognitive skills, develop critical thinking skills, and foster creativity. Digital literature, with its interactive features and multimodal content, offers a transformative approach to traditional literary studies, encouraging learners to apply rationality and engage in deep analytical thinking.

Methodology

This study employs a qualitative approach to analyze the impact of digital literature on critical thinking and cognition. A discourse analysis is carried out to identify how students interact with the texts and the digital platforms. This framework includes elements such as textual complexity, interactivity, multimodal engagement, and collaborative discourse. The focus will be on three digital texts, namely "Afternoon, a story" by Michael Joyce, "Zork" (interactive fiction), and the digital version of "The Canterbury Tales" with multimedia features. Michael Joyce's "Afternoon, a story" is considered one of the earliest hypertext fiction works, challenging traditional reading practices with its fragmented, non-linear narrative. The text requires readers to actively choose links to navigate the story, meaning that no two readers will have the same reading experience. This pattern creates an ample ground for critical thinking and cognitive engagement. The non-linear structure forces readers to reconstruct meaning by piecing together disparate narrative fragments. Readers must analyse each hyperlink choice, interpret its implications, and hypothesize how the fragmented storylines relate.

For example, in one study (Landow, 1992), students reading "Afternoon, a story" exhibited higher-order thinking as they debated which links to follow and why certain narrative fragments were prioritized. This act of interpretation parallels how literary critics analyse layered meanings in traditional texts. The hypertext format enables exploration of different perspectives simultaneously, encouraging readers to evaluate and synthesize conflicting viewpoints within the story. This contributes to the development of critical thinking by requiring students to make informed decisions about narrative progression and analyse alternative possibilities. Cognitive presence is enhanced as readers reflect on their choices and the consequences of their navigational paths. The process of actively engaging with the text, rather than passively consuming it, promotes deep learning. Students engaging with hypertext fiction like "Afternoon, a story" are likely to develop critical thinking skills akin to those used in academic research—such as formulating hypotheses, testing ideas, and analysing evidence

"Zork" is a popular example of text-based interactive fiction where players read descriptive narratives and input commands to progress through the story. As a literary medium, it combines narrative elements with decision-making and problem-solving. Players are required to analyse textual clues and make decisions to navigate the narrative. This promotes analytical thinking as students evaluate the consequences of their choices. For instance, when faced with a puzzle or an ambiguous choice, players must use deductive reasoning to determine the most logical course of action.

The branching narrative structure fosters creative thinking by allowing players to imagine alternative scenarios and outcomes. Students can experiment with different commands, observing how minor changes in language or actions alter the story's trajectory. Interactive fiction requires constant reflection on past actions and their outcomes. This iterative process mirrors critical reflection in academic contexts, where students evaluate their interpretations of a text against new evidence or insights. Using interactive fiction like "Zork" in literature classrooms can train students to approach texts as active participants rather than passive readers, fostering skills in critical thinking, logical reasoning, and creativity.

The digital version of Geoffrey Chaucer's "The Canterbury Tales" includes multimedia annotations, hyperlinks to historical and cultural contexts, and collaborative discussion tools. These features enhance the traditional study of this medieval text by making it more interactive and accessible. Multimedia elements (e.g., audio readings of the Middle English text, video analyses of medieval society) provide students with diverse entry points for understanding

the text. For example, listening to an audio recording of the Prologue in Middle English can help students grasp the phonetic nuances of the language, while visual aids like illustrations of pilgrimage routes enrich contextual understanding.

Online platforms associated with the digital text, such as discussion forums or shared annotation tools, encourage collaborative discourse. Students engage in debates over interpretations of Chaucer's satire, using textual evidence to support their arguments. This collaborative aspect enhances cognitive presence as students co-construct knowledge and refine their critical thinking through interaction. The inclusion of hyperlinks to historical references (e.g., feudalism, the Church) enables students to explore the socio-political context of the text independently. This encourages rational thinking, as students must critically evaluate these external sources and relate them to Chaucer's themes.

Cross-Textual Insights and Implications

The analysis of these texts highlights recurring themes in how digital literature fosters critical thinking and cognitive presence: All three digital texts require students to actively engage with the material, whether through making choices in interactive fiction or exploring hyperlinks in a digitalized text. This active participation fosters critical inquiry and reflective thinking. The use of multimedia elements in texts like "The Canterbury Tales" enriches the learning experience by appealing to multiple senses and learning styles. This multimodal approach enhances comprehension and encourages creativity. Discussion platforms and shared annotation tools associated with digital texts provide opportunities for collaborative learning, where students engage in critical discourse and build on each other's ideas.

The decision-making processes inherent in hypertext fiction and interactive narratives train students to think rationally and analytically. This aligns with the skills required for literary criticism, where multiple interpretations must be weighed and evaluated.

Summing Up

The analysis reveals that digital literature provides unique opportunities to enhance critical thinking, cognitive presence, and creativity. By challenging students to actively engage with texts through multimodal, interactive, and collaborative tools, digital learning fosters a deeper understanding of literature while preparing learners for the critical and creative demands of the 21st century. By promoting interactivity and multimodality, digital texts provide learners with diverse perspectives, empowering them to explore complex ideas while simultaneously developing their analytical and creative capacities. This transformative approach shifts students from passive consumers of literature to active participants in meaning-making, equipping them with essential skills for navigating the complexities of the modern world.

In conclusion, the study of digital literature is not merely a supplement to traditional pedagogy, it is a vital component of contemporary education. Its ability to engage students intellectually, emotionally, and creatively makes it a powerful tool for fostering critical thinking and preparing learners to thrive in an increasingly interconnected and digitalized global landscape. Future research could expand on these findings by incorporating quantitative data on student outcomes and exploring other forms of digital literature.

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MORTALITY NARRATIVES: INTEGRATING DEATH STUDIES INTO LITERARY SCHOLARSHIP

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Abstract

This study explores the relevance of death studies to literary scholarship by cross-referencing literary and non-literary texts that engage with themes of mortality, grief, and existential meaning. By analysing works such as Hamlet, The Death of Ivan Ilyich, Waiting for Godot, and Beloved, alongside theoretical frameworks from Kübler-Ross, Ariès, Becker, and Kastenbaum, this research highlights the interplay between emotional resonance in literature and analytical insights in death studies. The study reveals how death serves as a universal yet culturally specific experience, offering both individual and societal critiques. It also underscores the importance of memory and ritual in processing death while examining the philosophical dimensions of mortality. Ultimately, the study demonstrates the value of interdisciplinary approaches in enriching both the understanding of death and literary analysis, encouraging further exploration of cultural, gendered, and technological perspectives on mortality.

Keywords: grief and mourning, existential themes, cultural representation of death, interdisciplinary approaches

Introduction

Death studies is an interdisciplinary field that examines the multifaceted aspects of death, dying, and bereavement. It explores the cultural, psychological, social, philosophical, and literary dimensions of how humans experience and interpret death. Scholars in this field analyse death as a universal phenomenon while investigating its varied representations across cultures, time periods, and media. Philippe Ariès, a French historian, in *Western Attitudes Toward Death: From the Middle Ages to the Present* (1974) examines the cultural and historical evolution of attitudes toward death in Western societies. He categorizes Western approaches to death into phases, such as the "tamed death" of the Middle Ages and the "invisible death" of the modern era. His work highlights the societal and ritualistic changes surrounding mortality over time. His study is path-breaking for its historical depth, offering a clear trajectory of how death rituals and perceptions have evolved. However, critics note that his focus on Europe limits its cross-cultural applicability (Walter, 1999 & Cacioppo, 2014).

Elisabeth Kübler-Ross in *On Death and Dying* (1969) introduces the five stages of grief—denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance—based on her work with terminally ill patients. Her framework provides a structured way to understand emotional responses to death and bereavement. This work revolutionized the understanding of grief and dying, making it accessible to medical professionals, caregivers, and the general public. Critics, however, argue that the stages are not universal and oversimplify the complexity of grief (Corr, 1979 & Costello, 2001). Meanwhile, Ernest Becker in his *The Denial of Death* (1973) explores the existential fear of death and argues that much of human behaviour is motivated by the desire to deny mortality. He posits that cultural and religious systems serve as mechanisms to manage this fear. His work is profound in its psychological and philosophical insights, linking individual behaviour to societal constructs. However, his theories have been critiqued for their lack of empirical evidence (Kearney, 1998 & Solomon, 2004).

Moreover, Geoffrey Gorer's seminal work, *Death, Grief, and Mourning in Contemporary Britain* (1965) examines how modern societies, particularly Britain, have medicalized and privatized death, leading to a cultural "taboo" around discussing mortality. He likens the contemporary treatment of death to the Victorian-era taboo on sex. His sociological perspective sheds light on modern

attitudes toward death and mourning. Critics argue that his focus on Britain limits the universality of his conclusions (Mitford, 1998 & Walter, 1991). Besides, Tony Walter in *The Revival of Death* (1994) challenges the narrative of death as "hidden" in contemporary society, arguing instead that it has undergone a revival in public discourse. He highlights the role of media, memorialization, and the personalization of death rituals. His work is praised for its nuanced understanding of death in a postmodern context. However, some scholars argue that the "revival" is uneven across different cultures and socioeconomic groups (Howarth, 2007 & Hockey, 2010).

Further, Michel Foucault in his *The Birth of the Clinic* (1963) analyses how institutions like hospitals and prisons have shaped societal discourses on death. He links the medicalization of death to broader systems of power and knowledge. His work is influential for its critical analysis of how societal structures influence our understanding of mortality. However, his dense theoretical approach can be challenging for readers unfamiliar with poststructuralist concepts. However, Zygmunt Bauman in *Mortality, Immortality, and Other Life Strategies* (1992) explores how modernity has influenced the ways people cope with the inevitability of death, focusing on societal strategies to achieve symbolic immortality. Bauman's sociological approach provides a unique perspective on how individuals and societies confront mortality. Critics note that his work is highly theoretical, which can limit practical application (Giddens, 1991 & Tester, 2004).

Interestingly, Robert Kastenbaum's *The Psychology of Death* (1972) examines the psychological aspects of death, including fear, grief, and the construction of meaning. He also develops models to understand how individuals cope with death at different stages of life. His work is comprehensive, bridging psychology and cultural studies. Some critics find his broad scope lacks focus on specific cultural or demographic groups (Kübler-Ross, 1974 & Corr, 1996). In contrast, Allan Kellehear in *A Social History of Dying* (2007) provides a sociological history of how societies have understood and practised dying across time periods and cultures. He emphasizes the interplay between societal structures and individual experiences of death. His global perspective and emphasis on the sociology of dying are invaluable. However, his focus on historical patterns may overlook contemporary nuances (Walter, 1991 & Field, 1997).

Finally, David Morley and Kevin Robins' *Spaces of Identity: Global Media, Electronic Landscapes, and Cultural Boundaries* (1995), though broader in scope, includes discussions on how digital and media technologies have transformed perceptions of death and mourning, especially in a globalized world. Their analysis of the digital mediation of death is forward-looking and relevant to modern death studies. Critics argue that it lacks detailed case studies of digital mourning practices (Hall, 1997 & Silverstone, 1999).

Theoretical Framework

Theoretical frameworks in death studies are indispensable for the study of literary texts. They offer diverse lenses to interpret and critique representations of mortality, grief, and the human condition. By grounding literary analysis in these frameworks, scholars and readers can deepen their understanding of how literature reflects, shapes, and questions the multifaceted realities of death.

Theories in death studies offer systematic approaches to analysing how death is depicted in literature. They help uncover the psychological, social, and cultural layers embedded in narratives about mortality. Elisabeth Kübler-Ross's Stage Theory of Grief allows readers to examine characters' emotional arcs in texts dealing with loss. In Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, the titular character's vacillation between denial, anger, and acceptance of his father's death reflects these stages. Frameworks like this enable a deeper understanding of how authors portray the human experience of death and mourning.

Death studies theories, such as Philippe Ariès's Historical Perspectives, reveal the evolution of cultural and societal attitudes toward death. Literature often reflects or critiques these changing norms. His concept of "forbidden death" in modernity helps analyse texts like *The Death of Ivan* Ilyich by Tolstoy,

where death is medicalized and isolated from public view. By contextualizing death within specific cultural or historical frameworks, readers can understand the sociocultural commentary in literary works.

Frameworks like Bowlby and Parkes's Psychological Theories of Bereavement or Kastenbaum's Biopsychosocial Model help examine the psychological dimensions of characters' responses to loss and mortality. In *A Grief Observed* by C.S. Lewis, grief and mourning are deeply personal yet universal experiences. Psychological theories help decode the emotional and cognitive struggles Lewis describes. Such frameworks enable a nuanced reading of the psychological complexities in texts that grapple with grief and loss.

Theories like Ernest Becker's Existential Theory open avenues for thematic exploration of mortality, fear, and the quest for meaning. These themes often underpin major literary works. In Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*, characters confront existential despair and the inevitability of death, resonating with Becker's insights on how fear of mortality drives human behaviour. Existential and philosophical theories enhance the thematic depth of literary analysis, revealing the underlying questions about life and death.

Death studies theories help unpack the symbolic and metaphorical uses of death in literature. For example, death often represents endings, transitions, or rebirth. In *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald, Gatsby's death symbolizes the collapse of the American Dream. Kastenbaum's concept of "death systems" can be used to analyse the societal structures that precipitate this symbolic demise. Theoretical frameworks provide the tools to decode layers of meaning in literary symbolism, enriching textual interpretation.

Death studies theories also intersect with disciplines like philosophy, sociology, psychology, and history, offering interdisciplinary perspectives that are valuable for literature. Tony Walter's Social Constructionism emphasizes how media and rituals influence mourning, which can be applied to analysing digital mourning practices in contemporary literature or modern novels like *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close* by Jonathan Safran Foer. Interdisciplinary connections expand the scope of literary studies, enabling a more comprehensive understanding of death-related themes.

Finally, death studies highlight the universal experience of mortality while acknowledging personal and cultural variations. This duality is essential in analysing texts that bridge the individual and collective aspects of death. In *Beloved* by Toni Morrison, death is a deeply personal experience but also a reflection of collective trauma. Theoretical frameworks help analyse how individual grief intersects with historical and cultural memory. This perspective enables readers to engage with the universal and particular dimensions of death in literature.

Method

Cross-referencing literary and non-literary texts to explore the relevance of death studies to literary scholarship involves a comparative and interdisciplinary method. This approach integrates literary analysis with insights from psychology, sociology, philosophy, and cultural studies, allowing for a deeper understanding of how death is represented and conceptualized across different genres and contexts.

Step 1: Establishing Thematic Framework

The study started by identifying key themes or questions related to death studies. These included:

1. How is death portrayed in different cultural or historical contexts?
2. How do grief and mourning influence character development?
3. How do societal attitudes toward death shape literary and non-literary narratives?

Step 2: Selecting Texts for Cross-Referencing

The researcher chose a combination of literary and non-literary texts that provide diverse perspectives on death and ensured the selection represents different genres, periods, and cultural backgrounds.

Literary Texts

Fiction: *The Death of Ivan Ilyich* by Leo Tolstoy, *Beloved* by Toni Morrison

Drama: *Hamlet* by William Shakespeare, *Waiting for Godot* by Samuel Beckett

Poetry: "Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night" by Dylan Thomas

Non-Literary Texts

Psychological studies: *On Death and Dying* by Elisabeth Kübler-Ross

Sociological works: *The Revival of Death* by Tony Walter

Philosophical treatises: *The Denial of Death* by Ernest Becker.

Step 3: Applying a Comparative Methodology

The study compared and contrasted how literary and non-literary texts address similar aspects of death, and focused on points of convergence and divergence in themes, interpretations, and cultural implications. It looked for recurring motifs like fear of death, and mourning rituals in both types of texts. Then, it assessed how characters' experiences in literary texts reflect or deviate from theoretical insights in non-literary texts. Finally, it examined how the portrayal of death aligns with or challenges societal attitudes during the time of writing.

Step 4: Using Interdisciplinary Tools

It leveraged interdisciplinary theories and frameworks to enhance analysis: 1) Application of grief theories to understand characters' emotional arcs (Psychology). 2) the use concepts like "death systems" to explore societal responses to mortality (Sociology). 3) Examination of existential themes and the search for meaning in literary texts (Philosophy).

Step 5: Developing Cross-Referential Insights

It synthesized findings from both literary and non-literary texts to draw broader conclusions about death studies' relevance to literature by considering how non-literary theories illuminate the psychological, social, or philosophical dimensions of literary works, and literary texts provide narrative, emotional, and symbolic depth that enrich non-literary theories.

Step 6: Highlighting Practical and Scholarly Implications

It discussed the value of combining literary and non-literary perspectives for enhancing the understanding of death as a universal yet culturally specific phenomenon, offering fresh insights into literary texts through theoretical frameworks, and contributing to fields like comparative literature, cultural studies, and death studies.

The aim of the study is to explore the relevance of death studies to literary scholarship by examining how literary and non-literary texts represent and interpret themes of mortality, grief, and existential meaning, and to highlight the interdisciplinary connections that enrich these analyses. The whole study was guided by the following objectives:

1. To analyse key literary texts such as *Hamlet*, *Beloved*, and *The Death of Ivan Ilyich*, focusing on their portrayal of death, grief, and memory.
2. To incorporate insights from non-literary theories in death studies, such as Kübler-Ross's stages of grief and Becker's existential philosophy, into literary analysis.
3. To identify thematic and conceptual overlaps between literary works and non-literary frameworks, demonstrating their mutual contributions to the understanding of death.
4. To investigate how different cultural and historical contexts shape attitudes toward death and its representation in literature.
5. To emphasize the significance of interdisciplinary approaches, showing how death studies can bridge literary criticism with psychology, sociology, and philosophy.
6. To propose areas for future exploration, including cultural variations, gendered perspectives, and the role of technology in narratives of death.

Literature has long served as a mirror to humanity's deepest fears, desires, and reflections, with the theme of death standing as one of its most pervasive and profound explorations. Hence, the thesis statement is as follows: This article contends that the integration of death studies into English literary research is not merely an enriching framework but an essential lens through which the universal yet

deeply personal experience of mortality can be interrogated. By examining how literary and cultural texts reflect, contest, and reshape societal attitudes toward death, this approach exposes the dynamic interplay between literature and the evolving human understanding of grief, mortality, and existential concerns, thereby redefining the critical boundaries of literary scholarship.

Results

The analysis of death studies theories as a research tool reveals their profound potential to uncover nuanced perspectives on mortality, grief, and existentialism within literary texts, thereby enriching both interpretation and critical discourse.

1. Developed by Kübler-Ross, the Stage Theory of Grief outlines five stages of grief that individuals experience when faced with terminal illness or the death of a loved one. People experience these emotional stages when faced with a terminal illness or the loss of a loved one: 1) Denial: Refusal to accept the reality of the situation. 2) Anger: Feelings of frustration and resentment. 3) Bargaining: Attempting to negotiate with fate or a higher power. 4) Depression: Deep sadness and mourning of the loss. 5) Acceptance: Coming to terms with the loss or impending death.

2. Becker's Existential Theory posits that much of human behaviour is driven by the fear of death. He argues that individuals create cultural systems (religion, art, fame) to achieve symbolic immortality and deny the finality of death. Terror Management Theory (TMT), derived from Becker's ideas, explores how fear of death influences behaviours, worldviews, and relationships. People strive to leave a lasting mark on the world to defy mortality. His death denial theory argues that humans have a tendency to deny or avoid thinking about death, with can lead to a range of psychological and social consequences, including anxiety, fear, and aggression.

3. Tony Walter's Social Constructionism challenges the notion of universal attitudes toward death, arguing that views on mortality are socially and culturally constructed. His work *The Revival of Death* (1994) emphasizes the personalization of death and the role of media in shaping mourning practices. Contrary to the "hidden death" thesis, death is now openly discussed through personalized funerals, memoirs, and digital mourning spaces. Besides, mourning practices have shifted from communal rituals to individual expressions.

4. Kastenbaum's Biopsychological Model examines death as a complex phenomenon involving biological, psychological, and social dimensions. He emphasizes the life-death interplay and how death awareness shapes behaviour across the lifespan. Societal structures, such as laws, rituals, and healthcare, regulate attitudes toward death. Responses to death depend on age, culture, and personal experiences.

5. Ariès traces the evolution of Western views (historical Perspectives) on death through phases such as "tamed death" as in the Middle Ages, when death was familiar and ritualized, and "forbidden death" as in modern times, when death became medicalized and hidden from public view. Ariès's work demonstrates that attitudes toward death are not universal but shaped by historical and cultural contexts. He highlights the transition from collective mourning to individual and private grieving.

6. Psychological Theories of Bereavement, based on attachment theory, Bowlby and Parkes examine grief as a response to the disruption of attachment bonds. Their phases of grief include 1) Shock and Numbness (Initial disbelief and emotional paralysis); 2) Yearning and Searching (Intense longing for the deceased); 3) Disorganization and Despair (Acceptance of the permanence of loss); and 4) Reorganization and Recovery (Gradual adaptation and the formation of new attachments). They highlight the interplay of love and loss in grief. Grief is not linear but influenced by individual differences and external factors.

Analysis

The analysis section presents an interdisciplinary comparison of selected literary and non-literary texts, integrating theories from death studies to illuminate the multifaceted ways in which mortality and its cultural implications are represented and interrogated.

1. The theory by Kübler-Ross helps us understand characters' responses to loss in literature. For example, Hamlet's vacillations in Hamlet reflect denial and depression. It has been widely applied in counselling and end-of-life care, though its universality has been critiqued.

2. Literature often reflects these struggles, as in *Death in Venice* by Thomas Mann, where the protagonist grapples with aging and mortality. Becker's insights help analyse how characters and societies construct meaning in the face of death.

3. Social Constructionism helps contextualize works like *A Grief Observed* by C.S. Lewis, where personal loss is central. It reveals how changing societal norms influence representations of death in literature.

4. Literary texts like *The Death of Ivan Ilyich* by Leo Tolstoy illustrate how societal systems shape individual experiences of dying. Biopsychological Model underscores the intersection of personal and cultural narratives in death studies.

5. Ariès's framework aids in analysing shifts in death representation in literature, such as the communal mourning in Beowulf versus the isolated grief in modern works like *The Bell Jar* by Sylvia Plath. It bridges literature and cultural history, revealing how societal norms influence literary depictions of death.

6. Psychological Theories of Bereavement inform readings of texts like *Middlemarch* by George Eliot, where Dorothea's emotional journey after loss illustrates these phases. It aids in exploring the psychological dimensions of mourning in literature.

Discussion

In English literature, death has been a central theme across genres and periods, symbolizing endings, transitions, and existential enquiries. The study of death in literature provides a lens to examine the following themes:

Death is a universal human experience that literature exp lores to portray a wide range of emotions such as grief, fear, love, acceptance, and despair. Through these narratives, readers gain insight into how individuals and societies cope with loss. In *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Brontë, the intense grief and obsession over death are central to Heathcliff's character, reflecting the destructive potential of unresolved mourning. "Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night" by Dylan Thomas captures a son's desperate plea for his dying father to fight against death, showcasing raw human emotion in the face of loss. Thus, literature provides a space for readers to confront and process their feelings about death. By examining emotional responses to death in fictional and poetic works, readers can explore the shared and individual aspects of human grief and resilience.

Literature serves as a mirror of cultural attitudes toward death, reflecting and shaping societal beliefs, practices, and taboos. Different societies approach death in unique ways, and these variations are vividly depicted in literary texts. *The Burial at Thebes* by Seamus Heaney (adaptation of *Antigone* by Sophocles) reveals the clash between individual duty to the dead (Antigone's burial of her brother) and state laws, reflecting cultural and ethical dilemmas surrounding death.

The God of Small Things by Arundhati Roy captures Indian cultural rituals of death and mourning, exploring how societal expectations influence personal grief. Through literature, readers gain insight into how cultural norms and rituals influence perceptions of death. It provides a platform for cross-cultural understanding of mortality and its rituals, revealing the diversity of human responses to death.

Literary works often examine philosophical questions about life, death, and existence. These reflections prompt readers to consider mortality not

merely as an end but as a means to understand the human condition. In *Hamlet*, the famous soliloquy "To be or not to be" questions the nature of existence, suicide, and the afterlife, making death a central theme for philosophical exploration. *Tuesdays with Morrie* by Mitch Albom, memoir-like narrative, reflects on the meaning of life and death, emphasizing the importance of relationships and authentic living. Literature serves as a medium to engage with philosophical debates about mortality. It challenges readers to confront existential fears, grapple with the inevitability of death, and reflect on what gives life meaning.

In literature, death often functions as a metaphor for broader themes such as endings, change, renewal, or transformation. Symbolic representations of death allow authors to convey abstract ideas and evoke powerful emotional responses. In *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald, the death of Jay Gatsby symbolizes the collapse of the American Dream and the disillusionment of an era. In *The Road* by Cormac McCarthy, death is both literal and metaphorical, representing the destruction of humanity and hope in a post-apocalyptic world. The symbolic use of death in literature enriches storytelling, providing layers of meaning that resonate with readers. It encourages interpretation and critical engagement with the text.

Death studies in literature intersect with other fields, such as psychology, history, and ethics, to offer multidimensional perspectives on mortality. These interdisciplinary connections deepen our understanding of death's role in shaping individual and collective identities. *Beloved* by Toni Morrison intersects with history, psychology, and trauma studies, exploring the haunting legacy of slavery through the death of Sethe's child. *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley connects ethical questions about life and death with scientific exploration, foreshadowing debates in bioethics and morality. By connecting literature with other disciplines, readers can explore the broader implications of death in areas like trauma, history, and ethics. This interdisciplinary approach reveals how literature transcends its boundaries to engage with pressing human concerns.

Next is a comparison and contrast of selected literary and non-literary texts to explore the relevance of death studies to English literature. This analysis examines how these texts represent and conceptualize death, grief, and mortality across genres and frameworks.

Kübler-Ross outlines the five stages of grief (denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance) as a universal framework for understanding responses to terminal illness and loss.

In *Hamlet*, the titular character exhibits several of these stages. For example, Hamlet initially struggles to accept the reality of his father's death and its implications (Denial). His rage manifests in his interactions with his mother and Claudius (Anger). Hamlet's existential soliloquies reflect profound despair, especially in "To be or not to be" (Depression). At the same time, Kübler-Ross's work is a clinical framework for understanding real-life grief while Shakespeare dramatizes grief as part of a broader narrative involving revenge, political intrigue, and existential questioning. Hamlet's grief is intertwined with themes of morality, duty, and justice, which are less emphasized in Kübler-Ross's model.

Both Ariès's *Western Attitudes Toward Death* and Tolstoy's *The Death of Ivan Ilyich* explore the alienation surrounding death in modern society. Ariès discusses how death has become medicalized and hidden from public life, a trend mirrored in Tolstoy's novella. In *The Death of Ivan Ilyich*, Ivan's terminal illness is treated clinically, with little emotional support from his family or doctors, reflecting Ariès's concept of "forbidden death." At the same time, Ariès's work is a historical analysis of societal attitudes while Tolstoy's novella provides a deeply personal, character-driven narrative. Tolstoy humanizes the dying process by delving into Ivan's inner turmoil and eventual spiritual awakening, which Ariès does not address in his sociological analysis.

Becker's *The Denial of Death* and Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* explore existential themes, particularly the fear of mortality and the search for meaning in life. Becker argues that humans construct illusions to cope with the terror of death, while Beckett portrays characters trapped in a meaningless

existence, waiting for a resolution that never comes. In contrast, Becker's analysis is philosophical and rooted in psychological theories, while Beckett's play uses absurdist elements to dramatize the existential void. While *The Denial of Death* suggests mechanisms for transcending the fear of mortality, *Waiting for Godot* offers no such resolution, emphasizing absurdity and futility.

Walter's *The Revival of Death* discusses the role of rituals in processing grief and maintaining societal bonds. Morrison's *Beloved* similarly portrays rituals and memory as central to confronting collective trauma. In *Beloved*, the act of storytelling functions as a ritual to keep the memory of the dead alive, echoing Walter's emphasis on the social significance of mourning practices. However, Walter focuses on contemporary mourning practices and their revival in Western societies while Morrison situates death and mourning within the specific historical context of slavery and racial trauma. *Beloved* intertwines personal grief with collective memory, offering a layered perspective absent in Walter's broader sociological analysis.

Kastenbaum's concept of "death systems" examines how societal structures (e.g., law, media, and rituals) shape the experience and perception of death. The Great Gatsby portrays these systems subtly, such as through the legal and social implications of Gatsby's death. Both texts emphasize how societal values influence individual experiences of death. For example, Gatsby's demise reflects the disillusionment and moral decay of the American Dream. In contrast, Kastenbaum's framework is analytical and descriptive, aiming to understand societal mechanisms while Fitzgerald uses narrative and symbolism to critique those mechanisms. The novel's poetic exploration of mortality contrasts with the structured, academic approach of Kastenbaum's theory.

Thus, key insights from cross-referencing are that non-literary texts provide frameworks (e.g., grief stages, societal attitudes) that deepen the understanding of literary representations of death, whereas literary texts humanize and dramatize theoretical concepts, making abstract ideas tangible and emotionally resonant. Combining these perspectives offers a holistic approach, connecting the universal and particular aspects of death. Cross-referencing literary and non-literary texts in the study of death studies reveals valuable insights into the representation, understanding, and impact of death across different contexts.

Both literary and non-literary texts emphasize death as a universal human experience but also explore its culturally and contextually specific manifestations. Literary texts, such as Morrison's *Beloved* or Tolstoy's *The Death of Ivan Ilyich*, humanize the abstract concept of death through particular characters and settings. Non-literary texts, like Ariès's *Western Attitudes Toward Death*, provide a historical lens that situates these representations within broader societal patterns. This dual lens enriches our understanding of death by connecting individual narratives to larger cultural and historical frameworks. It highlights how literature serves as a mirror to society's evolving attitudes toward mortality.

Literary texts evoke emotional responses to death and mourning while non-literary texts analyse these responses systematically. For example, Hamlet dramatizes grief and existential questioning, making these experiences relatable and vivid. Kübler-Ross's *On Death and Dying* categorizes such responses into defined stages. This interplay demonstrates the value of integrating affective and analytical approaches in death studies. Literary texts make theoretical insights accessible and emotionally impactful while theories provide tools to interpret the depth of literary expressions.

Death often serves as a vehicle for critiquing societal values and structures. Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* critiques the moral decay of the American Dream through Gatsby's tragic death. Kastenbaum's 'Death Systems' explains how societal frameworks, such as laws and media, shape individuals' experiences of mortality. This highlights the potential of death studies to uncover societal inequities and contradictions. It suggests that studying death in literature can offer profound critiques of cultural norms, ethics, and institutions.

Both literary and non-literary texts explore the importance of memory and rituals in processing grief and maintaining connections with the dead. Morrison's *Beloved* portrays storytelling as a ritual for coping with trauma and preserving the memory of the enslaved. Similarly, Walter's *The Revival of Death* examines the resurgence of rituals in contemporary mourning practices. This underscores the therapeutic and societal significance of rituals and memory. It demonstrates how literature can serve as both a record and a tool for exploring collective and personal healing.

The existential themes of mortality, meaning, and the human condition are central to both literary and non-literary texts. Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* dramatizes the absurdity of waiting for an inevitable yet incomprehensible event—death. Becker's *The Denial of Death* philosophically explores the human need to create meaning in the face of mortality. These works show how literature and theory address fundamental human questions. They also reveal the ways in which literature amplifies the philosophical and existential dimensions of death studies through narrative and metaphor.

Cross-referencing fosters a dialogue between disciplines, creating a richer and more nuanced understanding of death. For example, psychological frameworks like Kübler-Ross's grief stages can deepen the analysis of characters' emotional journeys in literary texts such as *Hamlet* or *A Grief Observed*. This synergy emphasizes the importance of interdisciplinary methods in academic research. It encourages scholars to use diverse tools to analyse the complex phenomenon of death in literature.

The overall implications for death studies and literary research are that cross-referencing allows for a deeper exploration of how death is represented, experienced, and understood in literature and society. It bridges the gap between the emotional richness of literature and the structured insights of theory. The interdisciplinary nature of this approach highlights the relevance of death studies to various fields, including psychology, sociology, history, and philosophy. Finally, cross-referencing reveals how attitudes toward death are shaped by specific cultural, historical, and societal contexts, enriching comparative studies.

Summary of Key Findings

1. The study highlights how both literary and non-literary texts view death as a universal experience while also exploring its cultural, historical, and contextual variations. Literary works humanize death, providing individual and emotional depth, while non-literary theories like Ariès's *Western Attitudes Toward Death* offer broader societal and historical contexts.

2. Literary texts evoke deep emotional responses to death, while non-literary texts analyse the psychological, social, and philosophical implications. This interplay between emotional resonance in literature and systematic analysis in non-literary texts enhances our understanding of grief, mourning, and death.

3. Death is often used as a critique of societal norms, values, and structures. For example, Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* uses death to critique the moral decay of the American Dream while Kastenbaum's *Death Systems* illustrates how societal frameworks shape individual experiences of death.

4. Both literary and non-literary texts highlight the importance of memory and rituals in coping with death. Texts like *Beloved* and Walter's *The Revival of Death* show how memory and ritual are essential for emotional healing and the preservation of cultural identity in the face of mortality.

5. Existential themes in literary texts like Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* align with philosophical inquiries into mortality and meaning in works like Becker's *The Denial of Death*. The study reveals how literature explores the human confrontation with death in ways that theoretical texts can only conceptualize abstractly.

6. The cross-referencing of literary and non-literary texts emphasizes the importance of interdisciplinary approaches. Psychological, philosophical, and sociological theories offer frameworks for interpreting literary portrayals of

death, enriching both literary analysis and the understanding of death studies.

Suggestions

In the light of the study and its implications, here are some avenues for further research:

1. Future research could focus on comparing how death is represented in different cultural literatures, such as Indian, African, or Latin American, and cross-reference these with non-literary theories from those respective cultures.

2. Analysing the role of death and memory in post-colonial literary works such as *Beloved* and *Wide Sargasso Sea* could provide new insights into how colonial histories and trauma shape death narratives.

3. With advancements in medical technology and digital life, future research could explore how modern narratives, both in literature and non-literary texts, address the technological mediation of death, such as through euthanasia or virtual legacies.

4. Investigating the representation of death in relation to gender could reveal how societal norms around masculinity and femininity influence grief, mourning, and the portrayal of death in literature.

5. In light of environmental crises, researching how death is represented in relation to ecological destruction in contemporary literature could reveal connections between personal and planetary mortality.

Conclusions

In conclusion, the study of death within English literature, enriched by cross-referencing non-literary theories, offers profound insights into the universal and culturally specific dimensions of mortality. By intertwining emotional narratives with analytical frameworks, death studies reveal how literature serves as a powerful medium for exploring grief, memory, societal critique, and existential meaning. This interdisciplinary approach not only deepens our understanding of death but also highlights its centrality in shaping human experience and cultural expression. The ongoing dialogue between literary and theoretical perspectives underscores the relevance of death studies in addressing timeless questions of life, loss, and legacy.

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PEDAGOGY FOR GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP TEACHING THROUGH RECEPTIVE ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS AT TERTIARY LEVEL

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Abstract

In the global trotting environs, an indomitable human spirit after successfully completion of under graduation exploring various avenues, encounters with varied aspirations and passions across the globe that has uncommon lingua franca. To negotiate, interact and communicate with such human amalgamation in heterogeneity, a common link language is inevitable for the graduates. To equip with creative and communicative language sensibility in English among the heterogeneous people, a moderate communicative skill oriented global graduates are to be primed through a proper pedagogy for the said level teaching English Receptive language skills. This paper aims at framing such English Language Teaching Pedagogy that ladders the learners of English language to attain the Receptive English language skills in a multilingual-consumer-driven-market environment. Then, it focuses on using different literary genres to teach the kills through selection and gradation of pedagogical modules having objectives and outcomes of the frame work. It also suggests Four Pedagogical Modules to attain the said skills at tertiary level.

Keywords: pedagogy, lingua franca, lpg, multilingual, receptive skills, artificial intelligence, LSRW

Introduction

English Language Teaching has been the phenomenon due to the impact left by the then colonial reign in India, though India has become an independent Nation that has been the cradle for multi-religions and multi-ligualism. The subsequent reigns have also accepted the significance of English language for the people. Hence, teaching and learning English language at all levels of learning has been in the full swing in the Indian academia. It is so due to the agreements and decisions made by the subsequent governments on Liberalisation, Privatisation and Globalisation (LPG) that led to global trotting of the people for their indomitable various aspirations and adventures. In such an environment, there is a need for common lingua franca among these people. So, English language teaching gains a momentum in Indian Academia.

English language teaching at tertiary level has been continued for a period of two years. Initially, it has been taught to the students using canonical representations through selection and gradation from different literary genres. Later on, along with the canonical representations, native literatures and translations are added to the pedagogy. The aim of teaching English language is to teach the students who can communicate properly with the rest. To equip with a creative and communicative language sensibility in English among the heterogeneous people, a moderate communicative skill oriented global graduates are to be primed through a proper pedagogy to attain the Receptive English language skills such as Listening and Reading skills. Due to the advent of Artificial Intelligence and other communication devices, English language learning scenario is changed in India. In this scenario to teach English language, a moderate language teaching pedagogy is the necessity at present situation. What Richards and Rodgers stated on pedagogy and methods of teaching has to be quoted here- "an overall plan for the orderly presentation of language material, no part of which contradicts, and all of which is based upon, the selected approach" (Richards and Rodgers, 2001) is quite evident here. Then, the concept of '*technique*' (Richards and Rodgers, 2001) referred by them to "the actual implementation in the language

classroom" (Richards and Rodgers, 2001), "a particular trick, stratagem, or contrivance used to accomplish an immediate objective" (Richards and Rodgers, 2001) is also worth mentioning here. They saw techniques "as being consistent with a given method and by extension, with a given approach" (Richards and Rodgers, 2001). Hence, pedagogy and method to teach English Language and the same to make the learners Global citizens should correlate each other. Meanwhile, any pedagogy should have objectives and outcomes of the course. Hence, the following objectives and outcomes of the course are preconceived to make the learner a global citizen attaining Receptive English language skills.

Objectives and Outcomes of the Pedagogy
Pedagogical objectives:
- To enhance Communicative capability in students.
- To refine the language structure, usage of English with reference to Receptive skills.
- To train the learners with language skills needed in their professionalism.
- To provide them an insight into the significance of language, its operation in Print media and to give them practical exposure in the classroom.
- To inculcate objectivity among the learners with the help of Listening and Reading different literary genres.
- To mend the students with Receptive skills to take on the challenges of communication skill in the corporate sector.

Outcomes
- Effective communication in different social situations.
- Listening and Reading proficiency in varying tones.
- Intuition for the functional usage of language in the media.
- Understanding an active role of language in media and society.
- Linguistic intuition for entrepreneurship like planning the business, negotiating in an organization and challenges in framing business policies.
- Knowledge of Listening and Reading English components for proficiency tests in competitive examinations.

Keeping the above objectives and expected outcomes of the course in mind, the following pedagogical modules are prepared and graded into four consecutive semesters or may be extended upto six semesters at tertiary level to attain the target.

Pedagogical Modules
At the outset of the 1st semester where the students get admission for tertiary level with an intuition about English Language for more than 12 years, they are intended to further exposure to English language learning through the following pedagogical frame work to attain Listening and Reading skills that cater to the needs of the LPG driven environment where the tertiary level students need to negotiate in the corporate environment may be acquired through the frame work that is labelled as 'Course Book' that hones the creative and critical sensibilities of the learners with the literary components. These literary components may be taught for 20 hours to assess the said skills for 30 marks. The 'Work Book' that helps the learners to equip with linguistic competence of English teaching them for 20 hours and to assess the language skills for 30 marks. Another 10 hours of guidance and evaluation process to assess their said skills for 40 marks may be used during the Formative Assessment in the form assigning Project writing, Report writing, TEDx talks that help them to attain the skills. The same frame work with different literary genres and the language components may be used in the subsequent three semesters as shown below Pedagogical Modules 1 to 4 that include 'Receptive Skills' (Reading and Listening Skills).

In this paper, an attempt is made to frame the pedagogy to attain the Receptive English language skills teaching and facilitating the students with literary genres selected and graded from canonical and native literature. To begin with the Frame work 1 as shown below, the 'Receptive Skills' are acquired through teaching the following units with the

minimum intervention of the teacher roping in the process of active involvement of the learners. Each unit listed in the Course Book is to be taught with 'Brain storming activity' where the learners' mood is set to achieve the target goal and gradually paving way to the biographical information of the author with the intension of exposing them to the units not only to the language skills but also to develop the creative and critical sensibility through varied human predicaments that may recur in the journey of their professionalism. At the end of each unit listed below, the learners' attention is drawn to recapitulate what has been taught and learned through Glossary, Local and Global comprehension. Even not letting the learners at that point of language learning process, their attention is also set to the 'Extended Activities' like Field visit, Report writing, Collage making, Role play, Story writing, Skit writing etc., that help them to develop the creative sensibility. Then, their attention is drawn towards the 'Extended Reading' where a relevant reference books and websites are enlisted so that the learners can refer and gain the furtherance of the skills.

Pedagogical Module 1 (Imprints I, 2020 and Lingua Franca I, 2021).
Course Book

Chapter	Receptive language Skills (Listening and Reading Skills)	Teaching hours and Marks (20hrs/20marks)
1	When Free Speech is Truly Free - Sundar Sarukkai	3hrs/5/10 marks
2	Democracy by Langston Hughes	3hrs/5/10 marks
3	Farewell Address at Chicago by Barrack Obama	3hrs/5/10 marks
4	The Unknown Citizen by W H Auden	3hrs/5/10 marks
5	The Golden Dream by Poornachandra Tejaswi	4hrs/5/10 marks
6	From a German War Primer by Bertolt Brecht	4hrs/5/10 marks
	Work Book	**(30hrs/40marks)**
1	Comprehension passages - Skimming and Scanning	10hrs/10 marks
2	Data Interoretation – Bar graphs, Pie Charts, Tree Diagrams	10hrs/15 marks
3	Listening vis-à-vis hearing, kinds of Listening	10hrs/15 marks
4	Listening Activity : Listening to the recorded audios of conversations and interviews in the class room	Internal Assignment
	Activities for Formative Assessment: Discussion/Testing/Projects/Guidelines for experiential Learning during Assessment	10 hours/ 40 marks
	Summative Assessment	
	Question Paper Pattern	
	Model Question Paper	

Pedagogical Approach to Course Book

The units may be taught using an 'approach to the text / pre-reading activity/brain storming' technique given at the outset of each chapter whereby the learners are asked to deliberate over the topic. For instance, while teaching an article, "When Free Speech is Truly Free by Sundar Sarukkai" (Lingua Franca – I, 2020), the following brain storming questions may be instigated in the minds of the learners at the outset of the class – Have you ever been told not to intervene in a conversation and felt hurt by it? Did you think why you were told to keep quiet? This kind of teaching questions may be indicative. Teachers can create their own questions using the given hints based on the needs of their class. Thus, each unit may be taught using 'pre-reading' teaching technique or else, the teachers can use their own strategies to attain the target while teaching the remaining units in the Course Book. As the learners' mood is set towards the goal, the title of the topic may be introduced. Then learners may be asked to read certain paragraphs sequentially involving all the students across the class room thereby the learners are exposed to reading as well as listening skills simultaneously. While teaching each unit shown in the list, the learners' attention may be drawn towards the thematic rationale of the author paving way to inculcate the spirit of creative and critical sensibility among the learners. After the conceptualisation of the unit, the learners' attention may be drawn towards the glossary to furtherance of their intuition on the taught unit. If any doubts raised by the learners, may be clarified by referring to the text. Thus, the learners' language learning zeal may be

diverted towards the local and global comprehension questions set in each unit. While discussing both local and global questions, if any doubts vented, may be inferred to the lines or words of the text. Towards the end of teaching the unit, the learners' quest for language skills may be further galvanised towards the **'extended activity' and 'extended reading' to broaden their 'Receptive Skills'. This teaching and learning process may** be seen as sustainable approach throughout the four semesters.

Pedagogical Approach to Work Book

Based on the exposure to the teaching materials that are framed in the Course Book, the Work Book is designed progressively from 1st semester to the 4th semester aiming to inculcate the language skills rather '**Receptive Skills'** that include Reading and Listening Skills. To equip the learners with language skills, the teaching materials are patterned in the Work Book by teaching comprehension passages, Data interpretation activities, listening vs. hearing particularly listening the activities based on the daily conversations and interviews in audio as well as video formats.

While teaching 'Comprehension passages', the desired target is that the students are to be set to read the passages to acquire the skills such as 'skimming' and 'scanning'. It enriches comprehension capability for the students. Teaching 'Data Interpretation' skills helps the students to achieve the ability of analysing different data shown in bar graphs, pie charts and tree diagrams. It would improve the ability of the students to think critically and to write creatively. The topics listed in Chapter 3 and 4 may be used to teach the student to expose to Receptive skills. These chapters would help the students to make the differences in the nuances of listening and hearing. These topics also help the students to face the interviews and to understand the listening and hearing discourse. Based on these concepts, teachers can design a few exercises as role play and mock interviews in the classroom. To expose the students to the Receptive skills, audio and video links can be provided at end of the chapter. The teachers can ask the students to create a few audio and video conversations and mock interviews using modules being taught in the classroom.

To test process of learning at I semester, the following Question Paper pattern may be used to assess and evaluate the learning process of the language.

Pattern of the Question Paper

Time: $2^{1/2}$ Hours   Max. Marks: 60

Section - A (Workbook - 40 Marks)

Question number	Receptive Skills	60 Marks
I	Comprehension passages - skimming and scanning	10
II	Data Interpretation: Bar graphs, Pie Charts and Tree Diagrams	15
III	Listening versus hearing: Kinds of Listening	15
	Chapter 4: Listening Activity: Listening to recorded audios and videos of mock interviews and conversations: A class room activity	10
Section-B: Course Book - 20 Marks		
IV	Answer any 5 of the following questions.	**5 x 1 = 5**
V	Answer any one of the following questions (one from poem, story and essay)	**1 x 5 = 5**
VI	Answer any one of the following questions.	**1 x 10 = 10**

Model Question Paper

I Semester Degree Examination

LANGUAGE ENGLISH-I

Time - $2^{1/2}$ hours   Max. Marks – 60

Instructions:

1. Read all the instructions and answer.

2. Write the question numbers correctly.

Section – A: Workbook - 40 Marks

I Read the given passage and answer all the questions

$$10 \times 1 = 10$$

(A short unseen passage about 600 words may be given and 10 questions may be set to test their comprehension skills).

II Write a paragraph on each of the following three diagrams using cohesive devices.

(Here a Tree diagram, a Pie chart and a Bar graph may be given)   3 x 5 = 15

III Answer any THREE of the following in a paragraph each   3 x 5 = 15

1. Write briefly about the kinds of listening.
2. State the difference between hearing and listening.
3. Who is a real listener?
4. Name three kinds of listening.
5. Define hearing.

Section-B: Course Book - 20 Marks

VII Answer any 5 of the following in a word or phrase or sentence each.   5 x 1 = 5

1. Name who wants war in 'From a German War Primer'
2. Ramesha is _____ in 'The Golden Dream'.
3. Define Free Speech as stated by Sarukkai.
4. Who gives the constitution its power, according to Obama?
5. State the interest of the speaker in the poem 'Democracy'.
6. The Unknown Citizen was found _____ with his mates.

VIII Answer any one of the following questions in a page.   1 x 5 = 5

1. Explain Freedom as stated in the Speech.
2. Consider 'From a German War Primer' as a poem on anti-war.
3. Explain the significance of Hatthur bus stop.

IX Answer any one of the following in two pages.
                                       1 x 10 = 10

1. Discuss the title of the poem 'The Unknown Citizen'.
2. State your views about the speech of Obama.
3. Comment on the main theme of the poem 'Democracy'.

After Teaching, Testing and Evaluation of the desired target of the students of 1st Semester, the Pedagogical Module 2 may be followed in the 2nd Semester.

Pedagogical Module 2 (Imprints II, 2021 and Lingua Franca II, 2021).

Course Book

Chapter	Receptive Skills: Reading and Listening Skills	Teaching hours and Marks (20hrs/20marks)
1	Britain Does Owe Reparations – Dr. Shashi Tharoor	3hrs/5/10 marks
2	Celebrity - Brad Paisley	3hrs/5/10 marks
3	A Question of English - Ramachandra Guha	3hrs/5/10 marks
4	Bankers are like Anybody Else, Except Richer - Ogden Nash	3hrs/5/10 marks
5	A Midsummer Night's Dream – An Excerpt by William Shakespeare	4hrs/5/10 marks
6	Hayavadana – An Excerpt by Girish Karnad	4hrs/5/10 marks
Work Book		**(30hrs/40marks)**
1	Reading skills : Types of Comprehension : Global, Factual and Inferential Comprehension	8hrs/10 marks
2	Vocabulary Building Activity: Synonyms, Antonyms, Affixes, Homonyms, Homophones and Collocations	8hrs/10 marks
3	Cloze Test: Articles, Prepositions, Verbs, Adverbs, Linkers	8hrs/10 marks
4	Tenses: Time and Tense	6hrs 10marks
	SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT	
	Question Paper pattern	
	Model Question Paper	

Pedagogical Approach to Course Book

The units may be taught using an approach suggested in module 1. For example, while teaching a speech, "Britain Does Owe Reparations by Dr. Shashi

Tharoor" (Lingua Franca II, 2020), the brain storming question may be asked at the outset of the class – "At home, have you ever been forced to move out from your room to accommodate guests and they take over your room? And how will/did you feel?" (Lingua Franca II, 2020). Teachers can create need based questions using the given hints. As the learners' mood is set towards the goal, the title of the topic may be introduced. Meanwhile, the learners may be asked to read certain paragraphs sequentially involving all the students thereby the learners are exposed to reading as well as listening skills simultaneously. Towards the end of the teaching of the unit, the learners' quest for language skills may be further galvanised to the 'extended activity' and 'extended reading' to broaden their 'Receptive Skills'. This kind of teaching and learning process may be seen as sustainable approach in the due course.

Chapter-1 may be used to teach types of Comprehension like Global, Factual and Inferential comprehension. It would help the students to understand the passage in terms of its theme. They can also add a title to the passage. In Chapter – 2, the students can be exposed to acquire the ability to develop Vocabulary Building process through the activities on synonyms, antonyms, affixes, homonyms, homophones and collocations contextually. This chapter will help the students to enlighten with language register and competency. Chapter-3 may be used to teach and expose them to Close Test. The basics of Articles, Prepositions, Linkers, Verbs and Adverbs are taught to them to make them involve in practical usage of the language. Chapter - 4 may be used to teach the students the difference between Time and Tense through teaching Tenses focusing on their significance in daily interaction. Thus, the activities incorporated in evry chapter may be used to test the students' Receptive skills. Moreover, each topic is conceptualised and defined with examples. A few exercises are solved in each chapter making teaching and learning the language naturally. Towards the end of the course, the teachers have to fulfill the language needs of the students by preparing need-based tasks so that the

students can solve the tasks. To check the learning process, a model question paper has been given here.

Question Paper Pattern

Time – 2½ hours   Max. Marks - 60
Instructions:
1. Read questions carefully and answer.
2. Write the question number correctly.
Section – A: (Workbook – 40 marks)

I Read the passage and answer the following questions
                    10 X 1 = 10
(A short unseen passage about 600 words may be given and 10 questions may be set to test their comprehension skills).

II Do as instructed (Answer 5 of the following)
                    5 X 2 = 10
1.   Select the right synonym for the words given
2.   Select the right antonym for the words given.
3.   Use an appropriate affix to the words given in the brackets.
4.   Construct two sentences using the given homonym.
5.   Fill in the blanks with a right homophone in the given sentences.
6.   Choose the proper collocation in the following pairs.

III Do as directed.   5 x 2 = 10
(Five questions should be set on Cloze Test for 10 marks)

IV Fill in the blanks with suitable tense forms
                    5 x 2 = 10
(Five questions on the chapter Tenses for 10 marks should be set)

SECTION-B (Course book - 20 marks)
V Answer any five of the following in a word or phrase or sentence each   5 x 1 = 5
VI Answer any one of the following in about a page
                    1 x 5 = 5
VII Answer any one of the following in about two pages   1 x 10 =10

Model Question Paper

II Semester Degree Examination

LANGUAGE ENGLISH - II

Time–2½hours   Max. Marks - 60

Instructions:

1. Read the instructions carefully and answer.

2. Write the question number correctly.

SECTION - A: (Work book - 40 marks)

I Read the given passage and answer the following questions   **10 x 1=10**

(A short unseen passage about 600 words may be given and 10 questions may be set to test their comprehension skills).

II Do as directed (any 5 of the following)
                                    5 x 2=10

1. Choose the right synonym for the given words.

1. Fast a. Move   b. Speedy

          c. Leisurely   d. Sluggish

2. Last a. Loose   b. Previous

          c. First   d. Lust

2. Choose the right antonym for the given words.

1. Decrease   a. Prepare   b. Diffusion

               c. Collect   d. Increase

2. Disease   a. Death   b. Illness

               c. Live   d. Stop

3. Add an affix to the words given in the brackets and complete the sentences.

1. There are many _____ people in the conference. (love)

2. The crowd may be _____ (manage).

4. Frame two sentences using the given word as homonym.

1. Fast

5. Fill in the blanks with a suitable homophone.

1. She _____ (scent/sent) you all the messages yesterday evening.

2. He _____ (leaves/lives) in Kochi now.

6. Frame two sentences using the following collocation:

1. Handsome

III Do as directed   5 x 2 = 10

1. Beena met ___ youth and asked for ____ help. (Use the suitable articles)

2. Seema travels __ the train ___ Monday. (Use the suitable prepositions)

3. Mathematics ___ a logical subject that __ be understood easily. (Use the suitable verb forms)

4. Love the child ____ hate the child, ____ accept truth. (Use the suitable linkers)

5. Mohan walks ____ the road ___ with his friend. (Use the suitable prepositions)

IV Fill in the blanks choosing the suitable tense forms given below   5 x 2 = 10

1. Sham _____ (meet) her mother yesterday.

2. They _____ (be) dancing last night.

3. Sunal _____ (come) to market today.

4. Nishu _____ (smile).

5. Tabu ____ (has read) reading the novel.

SECTION–B (Course book - 20 marks)

X Answer any five of the following in a word or phrase or sentence each 5 x 1 = 5

1. Name the language Gandhi spoke to his children.

2. What do tabloids do to celebrities?

3. Slavery was abolished in _____

4. Who did oppose Lohia?

5. The banks treat _____compassionately.

6. What are the two hard things that Quince saw?

7. Name the virtue possessed by Devadutta.

XI Answer any one of the following questions in about a page.   1 x 5 = 5

1. How do bankers treat rich people?

2. How did the speaker handle his celebrity status?

3. India described as Britain's 'Cash cow', Comment.

XII Answer any one of the following in two pages
                                    1 x 10 = 10

1. Write briefly about the views expressed by Tharoor on reparations to India.

2. Explain Gandhi's views on English.

3. Discus the tone of the poem 'Celebrity".

The Pedagogical Module 3 given below may be used in the 3rd Semester.

Pedagogical Module 3 (Lingua Franca III, 2021).

Contents

Chapter	Receptive Skills: Reading and Listening Skills	Teaching hours 50 and 60 Marks
1	A Play for Reading skills: The Life of Galileo – Bertolt Brecht.	20 hours 30 marks
2	Persuasive Speeches for Listening Skills: 1. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's Constituent Assembly Speech of 17th December 1946. 2. My Vision for India – A. P. J. Abdul Kalam. 3. Sachin Tendulkar's Farewell Speech at Wankhede Stadium. 4. Mala Yousafzai's Nobel Peace Prize Acceptance Speech. 5. The Speech of Chief Seattle.	20 hours/ 30 marks
	Formative Assessment Activity : Tests/Discussions/Guidance for Experiential Learning.	10 hours 40 marks
	Summative Assessment	2½hrs/60 Marks
	Question Paper Pattern	2½hrs/60 Marks
	Model Question Paper	2½hrs/60 Marks

Pedagogical Approach to Course Book

The units may be taught using pre-reading activity where the learners are asked to think over the topic. For instance, to teach drama, *The Life of Galileo* by Bertolt Brecht, the following brain storming questions may be asked in the class room. Do you know about Ptolemy and Copernicus theories? or Conflict between Theology and Science leads to the death of truth. Debate. or Do Scientists and Individuals need Freedom of thought, research and expression? Teachers can frame questions based on the needs of the class room. Thus, each unit may be taught using "pre-reading" teaching technique during teaching subsequent units**.** Thus, the title of the topic may be introduced. Meanwhile the learners may be asked to

read selected scenes sequentially drawing their attention towards the thematic rationale of the drama. Gradually, the learners' attention may be drawn towards the glossary to furtherance of the institution on the taught unit. Their attention may be set towards the local and global comprehension questions set in the unit. So, the learners' quest for language skills may be further galvanised towards the 'extended activity' and 'extended reading' to broaden their 'Receptive Skills'**.**

In the Work book, in order to help the students to gain the ability in the Receptive skills through Listening skills**,** a few selected Persuasive Speeches delivered on different occasions are incorporated here. The learners should listen to the speeches prior to their arrival to the classes. Then, they will have a discussion session that would enrich their listening skill and their debating skill. To test their learning process, a question paper model is included in the Text Book for the teachers and the students.

Question Paper Pattern

Language English - III

Time - $2^{1/2}$ hours

Max. Marks - 60

Instructions:

1. Answer all the questions

2. Write the question numbers correctly.

Receptive Skills: Reading and Listening Skills.

I Answer the following in a page (any 2 questions out of 3 based on play)   2 x 5 = 10

II Answer the following in 2 pages (any 2 questions out of 3 based on play)   2 x 10 = 20

III Answer the following in a page (any 2 questions out of 3 based on Speeches)   2 x 5 = 10

IV Answer the following in 2 pages (any 2 questions out of 3 based on Speeches)   2 x 10 = 20

Model Question Paper

III Semester Degree Examination

LANGUAGE ENGLISH-III

Time - $2^{1/2}$ hours

Max. Marks - 60

Instructions:

1. Read the instructions and answer the questions.

2. Write the question numbers correctly.

Receptive Skills: Reading and Listening Skills.

I Answer any two of the following in a page each.

$$2 \times 5 = 10$$

1. 'The cities are narrow and so are men's minds' says Galileo. Discuss.

2. State the reactions of Sarti about teachings of Galileo to her son.

3. Consider Virginia as loyal daughter.

II Answer any two of the following in two pages each.

$$2 \times 10 = 20$$

1. Explain the views of Little Monk on an astronomer and Astronomy.

2. State the circumstances that led to Galileo's recantation.

3. sketch the character of Andrew.

III Answer any two of the questions in a page each.

$$2 \times 5 = 10$$

1. Write briefly about the speech made by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar on 17th December 1946.

2. Discuss any one important vision of A.P.J. Abdul Kalam.

3. Comment on Malala's views on education for the girls.

IV Answer any two of the questions in a page each.

$$2 \times 10 = 20$$

1. Discuss the three important visions of A.P.J. Abdul Kalam.

2. Summarise Malala's speech.

3. Comment on the speech of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar dated 'Dec 17th, 1946'.

The module given below may be used in the 4th semester. This pedagogical module is prepared progressively having kept in the mind what had been taught in the previous semesters and what has to be taught to make the learners global citizens with Receptive English language skills.

Pedagogical Module 4 (Lingua Franca IV, 2021).

Chapter	Receptive Skills: Reading and Listening Skills	Teaching hours 50 and 60 Marks
1	A Novella for Reading skills: Siddhartha by Hermann Hesse.	20 hrs/30 marks
2	Listening skills through Decoding 1. Caged Bird - Maya Angelou. 2. The Force that through the Green Fuse Drives the Flower – Dylan Thomas. 3. Exploring Ableism-An Invitation to create an inclusive society-Gagan Chhabra-TEDxOsloMet https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EFhL9Bf6a_I 4. School strike for climate - save the world by changing the rules-Greta Thunberg-TEDxStockholm https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EAmmUIEsN9A	20 hours and 30 marks
	Formative Assessment Activity: Tests/Discussions/Guidance for Experiential Learning.	10 hours and 40 marks
	Summative Assessment	2½hrs/60 marks
	Question Paper Pattern	2½hrs/60 marks
	Model Question Paper	2½hrs/60 marks

Pedagogical Approach to Course Book

The graded units may be taught using pre-reading activity or brain storming technique where the learners are asked to discuss over the topic. For instance, to teach a novella, Siddhartha by Hermann Hesse, the following questions may be asked to the students, what do you read? or Discus the importance of enlightenment, inner peace, Nirvana, fulfilment and happiness in life or The life begins when one leaves his/her comfort zone. Thus, each unit may be taught using "pre-reading" technique. Then, the title of the topic may be introduced. Meanwhile, the learners may

be asked to read certain paragraphs sequentially involving the students. While teaching each unit, the learners' attention may be drawn towards the thematic rationale of the author. Then, the learners' attention may be drawn towards the glossary to furtherance their institution on the taught unit. Thus, the learners' attention may be drawn towards the local and global comprehension questions. The learners' quest for language skills may be further galvanised towards the 'extended activity' and 'extended reading' to broaden their Receptive Skills write creatively. To improve their Receptive skills through decoding, two poems and two TEDx talks are incorporated in the framework. The learners should listen to the poems and TEDx talks before coming to the class. Then, they can have a discussion session to enhance the listening skills and the debating skills. Each topic under **Receptive Skills** may be explained through examples. A few modules are to be worked out in the class room to attain the target.

A model question paper given here helps the teachers and students to prepare for the summative assessment. Activities like discussions/guidance for experiential learning would help the teacher to assess the learning process during the Formative Assessment.

Question Paper Pattern

Language English-IV

Time: 2½ hours

Max. Marks-60

Instructions:

1. Answer all the questions.

2. Write the correct questions number.

I Answer any two questions in a page each (based on the Novella). 2 x 5 = 10

II Answer any two questions in 2 pages each (based on the Novella). 2 x 10 = 20

III Answer any two quotes in a paragraph. (one from poetry and Tedx talks each) 2 x 5 = 10

IV Answer any two questions in 2 pages (One from poetry and Tedx talks each) 2 x 10 = 20

Model Question Paper

IV Semester Degree Examination

Language English-IV

Time: 2½ Hours

Max. Marks - 60

Instruction:

1. Answer all the questions.

2. Write the correct question number.

I Answer any two of the following in a page each. 2 x 5 = 10

1. How does Hesse describe the setting in Siddhartha?

2. Describe an "average" Brahmin with reference to Siddhartha.

3. Why is Siddhartha dissatisfied?

II. Answer any TWO of the following in about 2 pages. 2 x 10 = 20

1. Write briefly about Siddhartha's family life with reference to the novella.

2. What did Siddhartha learn from the Samanas?

3. Comment on the religious practices as stated in 'Siddhartha'.

III Answer any two of the following in a page each. (one from the poetry and one from Tedx talks) 2 x 5 = 10

1. How does disability happen, according to the speaker?.

2. Explain on the meaning of freedom presented in 'The Caged Bird'

3. Discuss the repetition, 'I am dumb'

4. What does the speaker mean, 'climate change or global warming?

IV Answer any two of the following in 2 pages each. (One from poetry and one from Tedx talks) 2 x 10 = 20

1. Discuss the title "The Caged Bird"

2. Write a TEDx on any one of the following in about two pages.
   A) Schizophrenia / Alzheimer's Disease/Bipolar Disorder**.** B) Ableism.

3. Explain the force that contradicted with nature and eternity in the poem by Dylan Thomas.

Conclusion

As stated at the outset of the paper, to make an undergraduate student a global citizen through teaching Receptive English language skills that makes the undergraduate so competent to take on the challenges while negotiating with varied human amalgamations in the global trotting environs with an indomitable human spirit, the suggested four Pedagogical Modules on Teaching Receptive English language skills and the same to attain by the undergraduate may be periodically and meticulously taught to the students by the dedicated and trained faculty. These modules would give a positive result to achieve the target as the selection and gradation of teaching units comprise of varied literary genres and linguistic intricacies that ladder to attain the target. As stated by S. Mohanraj is worth to quote here. "So language learning is a complex process, and our claim to teach language using a variety of methods and materials, though well in place, may not achieve all the goals of language teaching. It is for this reason, CLT advocates creating opportunities in the class to allow children to interact, or simulate life-like situations in the classroom" (Mohanraj. S. 2024). Hence, it is suggested here to create the teaching modules with the learners' need based analysis at Tertiary Level across Indian academia to attain the desired target.

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SOCIAL REALITY OF MANIPUR IN THE SELECT SHORT STORIES OF LINTHOI CHANU

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Abstract

Manipur one of the Northeastern states is recently known for ethnic violence and clashes between the tribes. Since the 1960s many militant groups have been fighting for their separate homeland which has resulted in the loss of human lives, migration, displacement and uneven development of Manipur. Linthoi Chanu a young writer from Manipur is known for reintroducing Manipuri mythology to the new generation. Chanu has authored three books namely short story collection titled The Tales of Kanglei Throne (2017), Wari (2019) and Wayel Kati: The quest of the seven guardians. In the short story collection titled Wari (2019) Chanu has written how insurgency and ethnic violence have led to uncertain bandhs, lack of infrastructure in Manipur causing disruption to daily activities of common people. The present paper analyses the social reality of Manipur as narrated in the selected short stories of Linthoi Chanu.
*Keywords***:** *social reality, bandhs, queue, ethnic conflicts*

Introduction

*Linthoi Chanu's Wari i*s a collection of ten stories where the author introduces readers the socio-cultural beliefs of Manipur in the form of legends and myths and shares with other people the stories that had long been remained buried. Though the stories in the collection range from mythological tradition to the contemporary reality of Manipuri people, the present paper focuses on social reality of Manipur as narrated in the select short stories of Linthoi Chanu.

'Amity in Queue'

The short story 'Amity in Queue' is based on Blockade a regular phenomenon in Manipur. Manipur being a land locked state, essential commodities are brought in by trucks through the National Highways. Manipur state is completely under siege due to the stranding of vehicles along the National Highways when various organizations resort to such measures as political stand offs. There are occasions when 'blocades' and bandhs have enforced for three or four months in Manipur. During such blockades, stocks like petrol and LPG prices in shops and markets gradually runs dry even as a black market with hiked prices thrives. The short story 'Amity in queue' portrays with one of the most typical scenes during such blockades wherein hundreds of vehicles would

line up at any petrol pump, with people staying overnight in their vehicles to be first in the queue.

Adibha Faiyaz in the book review of "Wari: A collection of Manipuri short stories" rightly observes that though many Manipuri short stories deal with issues of class, caste, community, discrimination, dominance, hardships and exclusion, in recent times many writings concentrate on the social pattern of life depicting the struggle for survival. In recent trends of Manipuri stories one would notice a clear and blunt depiction of every social and lived reality of the people of the region. He further adds the earlier depiction of the spirit of romanticism in Manipuri short stories soon has been replaced by themes abounding in everyday fear and anxiety. All such cries and pressure that emerge in the realm of socio-politico-economic turmoil of the place find recognition in the short stories.

Then story unravels as Dinesh, nephew of sakhi confirms the news that NRL petrol pump was dispensing fuel that day to his aunt. Sakhi immediately hops on to her Activa and rides her Activa like race cars and reaches the petrol pump. Though the queue was long one, the hope of getting petrol makes the sight glorious. It had been two weeks since dispense of petrol had stopped. As she was in queue a lanky woman apologises for jerking sakhi's

two-wheeler. As both of them wait in the long unending queue they develop friendship and a bondage exchanging their personal stories. Through their dialogue it is revealed that sakhi's husband who was a teacher is dead three years back and now she has daughter who is facing board exam, whereas Thabalei has come from very far off place around 3 am in the morning asking her elder little daughter to take care of younger children, whereas her husband is a truck driver who is stuck up in the Highway blockade. While conversing with each other they move their vehicles an inch forward after every twenty or thirty minutes.

Thabalei shares her painful story of how she is finding difficult to sell pickles during the past few weeks since the blockade. As the sun ruthlessly bakes the road, Sakhi and Thabalei take shelter under a billboard, once in a while they return back to the queue to move their vehicle a bit forward. As the lunch time approaches many of them go home and swap their turns in the queue. Hoping that by evening before it gets dark they get the petrol. The people in the queue were jealous of two ladies coincidental meeting which seemed more like a reunion.

When seven vehicles were ahead of them both of them exchange their smile as they were nearing their destination. The streetlights begin to glow one by one; Sakhi opens the cap of the petrol tank and fills it with the petrol her world also begins to revolve again. She happily pushes her vehicle to wait for Thabalei on the other end, but Thabalei is with teary eyes as all the people are thronging around the staff of petrol pump who said "petrol is over, Next time folks sorry" (chanu 67). Though Sakhi tries to drive her vehicle towards Thabalei there was already chaos breaking around the petrol pump. She could no longer see Thabalei in the midst of angry mob, she returns home knowing she might never get to meet Thabalei again.

Preeti Gill in the article titled 'Women in the time of conflict: the case of Nagaland' argues that the growth of insurgency has been aggravated by common problems of economic underdevelopment, exploitation of natural resources, environmental degradation and changing demographic profiles in the states of the region. There is a widespread perception of neglect and exploitation by the governments at the centre (Gill 213-21).

Faiyaz comments in the book review of Wari:

> "Sakhi and her new acquaintance, Thabalei, struggling really hard to fill the petrol tank of their Activa, give us an insight into the life and happenings of the people of Manipur. Essential commodities were often brought by trucks and they would get over very soon. Chanu goes on to depict one such typical scene of the road blockades. Surviving with such limited means with hiked prices throws light on the everyday struggle".

Regarding the chaos and uderdevelopment of Northeastern region Sanjib Baruah in the book *Durable Disorder (2005)* writes

> the redrawing of maps in postcolonial Northeast India was a 'failure' because it was done without considering the pre colonial boundaries of various ethnic communities. Matters became worse as territories were categorised as 'excluded areas or 'unadministered areas' were brought under cartographic design and were made 'borderlands.' Barua further points out that although insurgency, the negligent attitude of the centre, ethnic clashes contribute to the 'durable disorder' in the Northeast, the root cause of the disorder is the Northeast territory itself (Baruah 35).

Chanu who has witnessed her own mother facing lots of hardships during these blocades has alluded how women negotiate during humanitarian crisis.

Floating Dreams

Ethnic conflicts in the Northeast region have adversely affected the developmental activities of the region. As a result, many states of the Northeastern do not have infrastructure and road facilities. The story 'Floating Dreams' highlights backwardness of the village and teacher's reluctance to work in the remote part. The story revolves around the lives of three children Senyenbi, Sarif, and Phajabi of Phumdi (a miracle found floating only in the Loktak lake of Manipur which is made of piled up biomass) who eagerly wait for their teacher Likla to keep their

dreams floating. The story begins in a wedding party of a teacher called Likla who is sad that she most unlikely would never able to visit her school after her marriage. Chanu writes:

> The celebration did not sound right. Yes, she had hosted the party but she knew it was not right and she was sensitive enough to be at least guilty about everything and sat quietly with a pretended smile (Chanu 132).

Young Senyenbi violently washes her weather-beaten white tennis shoes in the middle of the vast Loktak lake, which she has bought in second hand pile in the market place. She has already hand-stitched the holes and now washing it with detergent powder. Senyenbi finally pulls up her shoes with a satisfied smile on her face, lays down her tennis shoes inside her boat and rows back to her floating home island one of the many phumdis floating around the vast lake. She enjoys her food with her mother saying how her friend Phajabi will be totally jealous of her tennis shoes. She shares her teacher Miss laika's words who had told them to try to put on a proper school uniform like other children in Imphal. Though her mother is skeptical of return of Miss Laika, Senyenbi is confident that her special teacher would definitely return and teach them of new things.

Next morning Senyenbi sits on the ferry boat wearing her new tennis shoes, a dull white oversized collar shirt and a faded green school shirt. The boatman too enquires about the new tennis shoe. Senyenbi replies:

> "Miss Likla told us to try to put on a proper school uniform. You know what? In Imphal, it seems that all schoolchildren wear school uniforms. They wear tennis-shoes like the one I have for summer" (Chanu 135).

Phajabi another girl too boards the ferry boat observes Senyenbi's new shoes. As they see a tattered long cottage run towards their school. The mud walls of the classroom were well ventilated with several holes. Senyenbi proudly flaunts her new shoe in front of her friend Serif. Senyenbi is confident of her teacher's return after the summer vacation. She replies to her mother:

> "Oh. She will for sure. She said we are going to learn about different types of flowers this summer. She is Miss Likla. Our Miss Likla is special" (Chanu 135).

The three children sit quietly they wanted to impress their teacher in the best way they could. They had not met their beloved teacher since the summer break and were anticipating the classes to resume. Sarif sits in the corner having escaped his aggressive father's rough commands for his errands every minute. He could even enjoy a meal at the end of the class at school. He did not have to hear the screams of his mother and sisters fighting over the deeds of his notorious brother-in-law.

Phajabi too sat quietly taking glance of Senyenbi's new old shoes. She was imagining how miss Likla would talk about the town that she grew up in. Phajabi wished her frequently disappearing father would one day bring her old tennis shoes like the one that Senyenbi wore. The thought of the new old shoes who had abandoned her and her mother to elope with another woman. The fact that she and her mother would be alone in the middle of a lake did not feel unpleasant anymore. Now a new and pleasant event was looming nearby. For the first time, she was wearing the complete school uniform. And their miss Likla was going to notice it. The children did not have any watch seldom see one around them and knew their teacher was late. The three children waited till noon without afternoon meal.

> It was the teacher who betrayed them, who made them believe that she came for them. She was the one who occupied their minds. She was the one who told them about another world, another place that sounded much better than their floating houses. They felt deceived now (Chanu 141).

As Khura ibo rowed them back uttered 'Not one of them ever stayed on. They don't want to stay here. They feel trapped to serve their posting here in a place' (Chanu 141). The giggling girls in the morning now sit silently. As the boat glides through the quiet water ripples, Senyenbi throws off her shoes one by one in the lake. Phajabi begins to weep. Khura ibo knew his words would not be able to console their broken hearts.

"The struggles in the North Eastern states of India are largely based on not only the claims of ethnic superiority, cultural imposition, but also caused by lack of development. The northeastern region is secluded geographically from the mainland of India because of poor infrastructure and lack of transportation as the governments lack vision to establish dependable infrastructure in the hostile mountainous terrains. This makes it as one of the underdeveloped regions of India" (Nongzaimayum 18).

These problems act as great hindrance in the growth and progress of the region. Remoteness from the rest of the country in terms of geographical demarcations is also a drawback for the development and progress of this region. The tension among the tribes of the region in order to preserve their disntict identity, which has adversely affected the developmental activities of the region and has posed a serious threat to the political stability and national integrity of India. The feeling of national mainstream has ignored the North east in terms of providing sufficient economic resources for their development has led to unrest in the region.

In the wake of ongoing ethnic conflict between the Kukis, a Scheduled Tribe and the Meities (who are the majority) over tribal status for the latter. Chanu opines in phone interview "Those in power have failed us. When you have power you can bring so much change. But we feel a sense of betrayal". Internet shutdown imposed in the Manipur from May to December, the world's longest cyber blackout in 2023 has silenced many voices like Chanu. Commenting on the ongoing violence in Manipur Chanu writes that what people really need amidst violence is to return to their stories. Chanu writes:

"Because in our stories, especially our folklore, we are not divided. These tales are about the triumph of good over evil; about nature and the actual dangers that lurk around people-the monsters and other supernatural events that one cannot comprehend, It never pits people against people, and our stories never demonise a particular community. If we remember how we used to be, we will be able to save ourselves."

Conclusion

Linthoi Chanu's stories provide fresh insights into everyday struggle of Manipuri people during political protests and the pain of being in the marginal space in the times of global advancement. Her story 'Amithy in Queue' unfolds how two women who face similar problems during blocade blossom their friendship and thus they comfort each other and support each other during the crisis. 'The Floating Dreams' also highlight how northeast region is marginalised by the centre without any development in the region.

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REDEFINING INCLUSION: EXPLORING INTERSECTIONALITY, AGENCY, AND MENTAL HEALTH IN DISABILITY STUDIES WITH REFERENCE TO VIRGINIA WOOLF'S *MRS. DALLOWAY*

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Abstract

This paper investigates the evolving field of disability studies, emphasizing the intersectionality of disability with other identities such as race, gender, class, and sexuality. It explores how traditional frameworks often marginalize disabled individuals by overlooking the compounded layers of discrimination they experience. Drawing on critical disability theory and intersectionality, the paper examines the socio-cultural, economic, and political dimensions of disability, challenging normative assumptions and systemic barriers. The research highlights how disability is not merely a medical condition but a social construct shaped by ableist ideologies embedded within institutional practices. The focus shifts from perceiving individuals with disabilities as passive recipients of care to recognizing them as active agents with unique perspectives and contributions. By analyzing disability activism, media representation, and inclusive policy development, the paper advocates for a shift toward a more comprehensive and intersectional approach to inclusion. To ground this analysis in literature, the paper draws a parallel with Virginia Woolf's Mrs. Dalloway (1925). The character Septimus Warren Smith, a war veteran grappling with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), serves as a poignant lens to explore the stigmatization of mental health and disability. Woolf's portrayal of Septimus underscores how societal attitudes toward mental illness exacerbate alienation and dehumanization. His struggle with trauma reflects broader systemic failures to accommodate diverse experiences of disability, mirroring contemporary challenges. By integrating theoretical insights with literary analysis, the paper underscores the importance of inclusive narratives that embrace the multiplicity of disabled identities. It argues for a reconceptualization of inclusion that transcends tokenism and addresses systemic inequities. This approach not only enhances our understanding of disability but also fosters a more equitable and empathetic society. The discussion ultimately advocates for a transformative discourse in disability studies that centers on agency, dignity, and intersectional justice.
Keywords: disability studies, intersectionality, mental health and disability, inclusive narratives

Introduction

The field of disability studies has evolved significantly, moving beyond traditional frameworks that primarily viewed disability through medical and individualistic lenses. Disability has often been framed as a personal deficit, wherein the focus is on curing or rehabilitating the individual rather than addressing the broader societal factors that perpetuate exclusion. This approach, while addressing immediate medical needs, often isolates disabled individuals and overlooks the systemic barriers that contribute to their marginalization. Critical disability studies challenge this view, advocating for a paradigm shift that recognizes disability as a dynamic social construct shaped by societal attitudes, power structures, and institutional practices (Shakespeare 25). A pivotal aspect of this shift is the recognition of intersectionality, which examines how overlapping identities—such as race, gender, class, and sexuality—interact to create unique experiences of discrimination and privilege (Crenshaw 1245). For example, a woman with a physical disability may face

not only ableism but also sexism, while a disabled individual from a marginalized racial background might contend with racism in addition to ableism. These intersecting oppressions reveal the inadequacy of one-size-fits-all policies and underscore the necessity of tailoring inclusion efforts to address diverse experiences.

Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* provides a compelling literary exploration of these themes. Through the character of Septimus Warren Smith, a war veteran grappling with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), Woolf critiques the societal stigmatization of mental illness and its dehumanizing effects. Septimus's alienation, compounded by societal expectations of masculinity and the lack of understanding surrounding his condition, mirrors the systemic failures that disability studies seek to address. By anchoring this analysis in Woolf's work, this discussion not only illuminates historical attitudes toward disability but also highlights the ongoing need for inclusive narratives that embrace the complexity of disabled identities. This transformative approach to disability studies advocates for narratives that move beyond tokenism to foster meaningful systemic change. Such narratives can challenge entrenched stereotypes, promote empathy, and drive policy reforms that prioritize equity and dignity for all individuals. By reimagining inclusion through an intersectional lens, disability studies not only enhance our understanding of societal inequities but also pave the way for a more just and empathetic world.

Discussion

The traditional perspective on disability has often been rooted in the medical model, which perceives disability as a defect or pathology within the individual. This view not only marginalizes disabled individuals but also isolates their experiences from broader socio-political contexts. Recent scholarship in critical disability studies, however, highlights the social model of disability, which positions it as a construct shaped by societal attitudes, systemic barriers, and institutional practices.

The social model of disability shifts the focus from the individual's impairments to the societal structures that fail to accommodate diverse needs. As Shakespeare argues, disability is not an inherent limitation but a manifestation of environmental and social exclusions that prioritize normative abilities (32). For instance, the prevalence of architectural designs that lack accessibility features, such as ramps or elevators, reflects an ableist assumption that mobility is uniform. Similarly, workplace policies often fail to recognize the needs of neurodiverse employees, thereby perpetuating systemic discrimination. Such barriers highlight the intersection of disability with other axes of oppression, including racism, sexism, and economic inequality. A low-income individual with a disability, for example, may face compounded challenges due to limited access to healthcare, education, and social support systems. *"society's indifference deepens his suffering"*

Additionally, the portrayal of disability in media and cultural narratives plays a crucial role in shaping societal attitudes. Stereotypes that depict disabled individuals as dependent or as objects of pity reinforce the marginalization they experience. Conversely, inclusive representations that challenge these tropes can promote empathy and understanding. The social model's emphasis on dismantling systemic barriers calls for a reevaluation of these narratives, urging society to move toward practices and policies that prioritize equity and inclusivity (Shakespeare 45).In the context of Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*, the character of Septimus Warren Smith serves as a profound critique of societal attitudes toward mental health and disability. Septimus's struggles with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and his subsequent alienation from society illustrate how systemic failures exacerbate the challenges faced by disabled individuals. His experiences underscore the need for a shift in perspective that views disability not as an individual tragedy but as a collective responsibility to create inclusive environments.

Intersectionality, a term coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw, offers a critical framework for understanding how overlapping identities create unique experiences of oppression. In disability studies, this perspective reveals how race, gender, and

class compound the discrimination faced by disabled individuals. For instance, a Black disabled woman may encounter both racial and ableist prejudices, each intensifying the other. These compounded experiences highlight the multifaceted nature of marginalization and call for an intersectional approach that considers these intersecting factors simultaneously (Crenshaw 1250). Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* exemplifies this interplay of identities through the character of Septimus Warren Smith, a war veteran suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Septimus's experiences illustrate how mental health stigma intersects with societal expectations of masculinity, leading to his dehumanization and eventual breakdown. The post-World War I era, depicted in the novel, reflects a time when mental illness was not widely understood or accommodated, forcing individuals like Septimus into further isolation (Woolf 79).

Societal expectations often impose rigid norms of productivity and rationality, leaving little room for individuals who deviate from these standards. Septimus's internal struggles, compounded by his inability to conform to these expectations, underscore the systemic failures to address the needs of individuals with mental health conditions. Moreover, his interactions with medical professionals highlight the inadequacies of a system that prioritizes conformity and efficiency over individual well-being. These interactions echo broader critiques within disability studies, which advocate for a more inclusive and empathetic approach to understanding diverse experiences of disability.

By examining Septimus's narrative through the lens of intersectionality, we gain a deeper understanding of the compounded marginalization faced by disabled individuals. His story serves as a poignant reminder of the need for systemic change that addresses the unique and intersecting challenges of race, gender, class, and disability. Woolf's work underscores the urgency of creating inclusive environments that embrace diversity and foster equity for all individuals, regardless of their abilities or identities.

One of the critical shifts in contemporary disability studies is the emphasis on agency. Traditional narratives often depict disabled individuals as passive recipients of care or as objects of pity. This portrayal strips them of their autonomy and reinforces their marginalization. Historically, people with disabilities have been positioned as dependent, inferior, and in need of rescue, which negates their ability to make decisions about their own lives and contributions to society. In contrast, critical disability theory advocates for recognizing disabled individuals as active agents, each possessing unique perspectives and contributions to society. These individuals, through their lived experiences, challenge the assumption that disability automatically equals limitation. Rather than focusing on what disabled individuals cannot do, the theory suggests that society must focus on removing barriers and providing opportunities for them to thrive.

The media and literature play a significant role in shaping societal perceptions of disability. Representation matters, as narratives that center the experiences of disabled individuals can challenge stereotypes and foster empathy. By seeing disabled individuals not just as victims but as complex characters, the public can engage with their experiences on a more nuanced level. Virginia Woolf's portrayal of Septimus Warren Smith in *Mrs. Dalloway* is an exemplary critique of how society treats those with mental health conditions and disabilities. Septimus's internal struggles—stemming from his experiences in World War I—and his eventual suicide highlight the devastating effects of neglecting mental health and the lack of inclusive support systems for people with disabilities. Through Woolf's narrative, readers are invited to empathize with Septimus's anguish, illustrating how the social and medical environments exacerbate his condition. This representation questions the broader societal failure to address disability with care and respect. Woolf's work, therefore, serves as an important reflection on the consequences of marginalizing individuals with disabilities, particularly in a society that offers little support for their agency (Woolf 87).

Creating inclusive narratives requires moving beyond tokenistic gestures and addressing systemic inequities. Tokenism, often seen in media or employment settings, tends to reduce inclusion to superficial representation, which fails to challenge or transform the deep-rooted social, economic, and institutional structures that perpetuate exclusion. In many instances, tokenistic practices merely serve as a form of appeasement, allowing organizations or media outlets to appear inclusive without enacting substantial change. For instance, hiring a disabled employee without providing accessible infrastructure or implementing inclusive policies merely reinforces existing inequalities by ensuring that the individual's participation is limited, rather than fostering a genuinely equitable environment. True inclusivity requires systemic adjustments—such as altering policies, creating accessible spaces, and providing necessary accommodations—that allow for the active, equitable participation of disabled individuals. *"disability is not merely a medical condition but a social construct shaped by ableist ideologies"*

Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* offers a powerful lens to examine these issues, particularly in the way it critiques the medical and social systems' treatment of disability. Septimus Warren Smith, a war veteran with severe PTSD, becomes a tragic symbol of the inadequacies of a system that prioritizes conformity over individual well-being. His interactions with medical professionals in the novel underscore how the psychiatric system of his time treats him as an object of diagnosis rather than a person with agency and rights. The doctors in the novel fail to understand the depth of his psychological distress, prescribing him a treatment that aligns more with their own need to restore normalcy than with his actual needs. This mirrors contemporary challenges in addressing mental health, particularly the stigmatization of PTSD and the chronic lack of accessible, comprehensive mental health services. Woolf's representation of Septimus not only critiques the social and medical systems of her time but also reflects ongoing struggles that disabled individuals face in contemporary society, where mental health care and support systems remain often inaccessible and dismissive. By integrating literary analysis with theoretical insights, this discussion highlights the potential of inclusive narratives—those that prioritize the voices and experiences of disabled individuals—to drive systemic change that moves beyond tokenism and ensures genuine inclusion and equity for all (Woolf 91).

To foster a more equitable society, disability studies must embrace a transformative discourse that centers on agency, dignity, and intersectional justice. This approach requires not only challenging normative assumptions about disability but also recognizing the vast diversity of disabled experiences. Disability is not a monolithic condition but is shaped by factors such as race, gender, class, and culture, which affect how individuals experience and navigate the world. By adopting an intersectional framework, disability studies can highlight the compounded barriers that disabled individuals from marginalized communities face, advocating for a broader and more inclusive understanding of what it means to be disabled. This paradigm shift demands the dismantling of ableism, a pervasive form of discrimination, and calls for structural changes in policies and practices that create environments where all individuals can thrive, regardless of their physical or mental abilities.

One practical example of this approach is the advocacy for universal design, which seeks to create spaces, products, and services that are accessible to everyone. Unlike retrofitted accommodations, which are added to existing structures after the fact, universal design anticipates diverse needs from the outset, ensuring that accessibility is woven into the fabric of the built environment. Whether it is ramps, wider doorways, or user-friendly technology, universal design embodies a proactive and inclusive approach, benefiting not only people with disabilities but also the elderly, parents with strollers, and others with temporary or situational limitations. Additionally, incorporating disability studies into educational curricula is a vital step in fostering awareness and challenging stereotypes from an early age. Teaching students about disability history, culture, and theory can challenge preconceived notions and help

dismantle harmful attitudes before they become ingrained. By normalizing disability and highlighting the contributions of disabled individuals, education can be a powerful tool for transforming societal attitudes and advocating for more equitable policies (Siebers 110).

Conclusion

Disability is not merely a medical condition but a complex social construct influenced by intersecting identities and systemic barriers. As disability studies have increasingly emphasized, the experience of disability is shaped by societal structures that either enable or hinder full participation. This understanding challenges traditional notions of disability, which often position it solely as an individual medical issue. Rather, disability must be seen in relation to how society defines and responds to it. The marginalization of disabled individuals is not just a result of physical or cognitive impairments but is deeply intertwined with cultural, economic, and social forces that contribute to exclusion and inequality. Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* offers valuable insights into these dynamics, especially in its portrayal of Septimus Warren Smith, whose mental health struggles are compounded by a medical system that fails to recognize his humanity and agency. Woolf's depiction underscores how societal attitudes toward mental health and disability exacerbate the marginalization of those who are already vulnerable. Septimus's tragic fate highlights the urgent need for societal change in how disability is approached, particularly in regard to mental health, and points to the broader implications for disabled individuals who continue to face neglect and mistreatment in healthcare and social systems (Woolf 94). By embracing intersectionality and prioritizing agency, disability studies can drive a paradigm shift toward more inclusive narratives and practices. The intersectional approach recognizes that individuals with disabilities are not defined by a single identity but are shaped by multiple, overlapping factors such as race, gender, and class, each influencing their experience of disability in unique ways. This framework pushes beyond simplistic representations of disability and works to amplify the voices of those who have historically been silenced. Disability studies, when grounded in agency and dignity, can advocate for systemic change that not only improves the lives of disabled individuals but also fosters a society that is more empathetic and equitable. This transformative approach not only enhances our understanding of disability but also contributes to building a society rooted in equity, justice, and empathy (Garland-Thomson 112).

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ENHANCING SPEAKING SKILLS OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS THROUGH ROLE-PLAY

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Abstract

In today's globalized world, English has become the lingua franca, playing a vital role in international communication, education, science, technology, and business. For undergraduate students, proficiency in English is crucial for academic success, career advancement, and social mobility. English language skills are essential for accessing knowledge, participating in academic discussions, and expressing ideas effectively. Undergraduate students who possess strong English language skills have a significant advantage in their academic pursuits. They can better comprehend complex texts, participate in classroom discussions, and produce well-written assignments. Furthermore, English language proficiency is a highly valued skill by employers, making it a key factor in securing better job opportunities. Despite its importance, many undergraduate students struggle with English language skills, particularly speaking. This can lead to difficulties in communicating effectively, participating in academic discussions, and achieving academic success. This present article focuses on developing speaking skills of the undergraduate students.

Keywords: globalization, communication, education, proficiency, academic success, speaking skills

Introduction

Effective communication is the cornerstone of academic and professional success, and speaking skills are a vital component of this process. For undergraduate students, developing proficient speaking skills in English is essential for participating in classroom discussions, presenting ideas, and communicating with peers and instructors. Despite its importance, speaking English remains a significant challenge for many undergraduate students, hindering their ability to express themselves confidently and articulately. This study investigates the effectiveness of role-play as a teaching methodology to enhance the speaking skills of undergraduate students, with a focus on improving their fluency, accuracy, and confidence in communicating in English.

Adopting Role-Play for Undergraduate Students

Role-play, a dynamic and interactive teaching methodology, has emerged as a powerful tool for enhancing learning and development in undergraduate education. By simulating real-life scenarios, role-play enables students to develop essential skills, build confidence, and foster creativity, ultimately preparing them for success in their academic and professional pursuits.

Defining Role-Play

Role-play is a teaching methodology that involves immersing learners in simulated real-life scenarios, where they assume roles and interact with each other to achieve specific objectives. This interactive and engaging approach enables students to develop critical skills, such as communication, problem-solving, and decision-making, while cultivating confidence, creativity, and emotional intelligence.

Enhancing Speaking Skill

The role-play method offers numerous benefits for undergraduate students, including improved communication skills, enhanced critical thinking and problem-solving, and increased confidence and self-esteem. By participating in role-play activities, students can develop their ability to express themselves effectively, both verbally and non-verbally. Additionally, role-play enables students to practice active listening, respond appropriately, and engage in meaningful conversations. As a result,

students can become more effective communicators, both in academic and professional settings.

One of the key advantages of the role-play method is its ability to provide students with a safe and supportive environment in which to practice their speaking skills. By removing the pressure of real-life consequences, role-play enables students to take risks and experiment with different communication strategies, without fear of failure or embarrassment. This, in turn, can help to build students' confidence and self-esteem, as they become more comfortable and proficient in their ability to communicate effectively.

To implement the role-play method effectively, educators should provide clear instructions and guidelines, create a supportive environment, and encourage reflection and feedback. By doing so, educators can help undergraduate students overcome their fears and anxieties about speaking, and develop the speaking skills and confidence they need to succeed in their academic and professional pursuits. With its interactive and immersive nature, the role-play method has the potential to transform the way undergraduate students learn and develop their speaking skills.

Methods of Role-Play

There are several methods of role-play, each with its unique characteristics and applications:

1. **Improvisational Role-Play**: This method involves spontaneous improvisation, where learners respond to unexpected situations and scenarios.
2. **Scripted Role-Play**: This method involves using pre-written scripts, where learners follow a predetermined narrative.
3. **Simulation Role-Play**: This method involves simulating real-life scenarios, such as business meetings, job interviews, or emergency situations.
4. **Forum Theatre Role-Play**: This method involves using theatre techniques to explore social issues and promote critical thinking.

Role of Teacher

1. Setting Objectives and Context

Setting clear objectives and context is essential for a successful role-play activity. Before the activity begins, the teacher should define the learning objectives and outcomes, ensuring they align with the curriculum requirements. Providing context and background information helps students understand the scenario, their roles, and the expected language outcomes. This preparation enables students to focus on developing their language skills, rather than trying to understand the situation.

2. Preparing Students

Preparing students for a role-play activity involves more than just explaining the scenario. The teacher should ensure students understand their roles, the expected language outcomes, and the assessment criteria. Providing necessary vocabulary, phrases, and language structures supports students in achieving the learning objectives. The teacher can also encourage students to ask questions, clarify doubts, and seek feedback before the role-play begins. This preparation helps students feel confident and prepared, leading to a more effective and enjoyable role-play experience.

3. Facilitating the Role-Play

Facilitating the role-play activity requires the teacher to create a supportive and encouraging environment. As students participate in the role-play, the teacher should monitor their performance, providing guidance and feedback as needed. The teacher can also encourage students to take risks, experiment with language, and try new vocabulary and structures. By fostering a positive and inclusive classroom environment, the teacher enables students to feel comfortable, build confidence, and develop their language skills.

4. Providing Feedback and Assessment

Providing constructive feedback and assessment is crucial for student learning and development. During or after the role-play activity, the teacher should observe student performance, noting strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement. The teacher can provide feedback on language use, pronunciation, communication skills, and overall performance. Assessment can be formal or informal, depending on

the learning objectives and outcomes. By providing regular feedback and assessment, the teacher helps students identify areas for improvement, set goals, and develop a growth mindset.

5. Encouraging Reflection and Self-Assessment

Encouraging reflection and self-assessment helps students develop a deeper understanding of their language learning process. After the role-play activity, the teacher can ask students to reflect on their performance, identifying what went well, what didn't, and what they would do differently next time. Self-assessment enables students to take ownership of their learning, set goals, and develop a growth mindset. The teacher can also encourage students to peer-assess, providing feedback and suggestions for improvement. By promoting reflection and self-assessment, the teacher helps students become more autonomous, self-directed learners.

6. Managing Classroom Dynamics

Managing classroom dynamics is essential for a successful role-play activity. The teacher should ensure all students have an opportunity to participate, are engaged throughout the activity, and feel comfortable taking risks. To achieve this, the teacher can establish clear expectations, encourage active listening, and promote respectful communication. The teacher should also be prepared to adapt the activity if needed, making adjustments to accommodate different learning styles, abilities, and personalities. By effectively managing classroom dynamics, the teacher creates a positive, inclusive environment that supports student learning and development.

7. Using Technology and Resources

Using technology and resources can enhance the role-play experience, making it more engaging, interactive, and effective. The teacher can utilize video recording tools to record student performances, providing opportunities for self-reflection, peer-assessment, and feedback. Authentic materials and resources, such as videos, images, and realia, can add realism and context to the role-play scenario. The teacher can also incorporate online resources, such as language learning apps, games, and websites, to support student learning and practice. By leveraging technology and resources, the teacher can create a more immersive, interactive, and effective role-play experience.

Role of Students
1. Preparing for the Role-Play

Preparing for a role-play activity is essential for students to get the most out of the experience. Before the role-play begins, students should read and understand the scenario, their role, and the expected language outcomes. They should also prepare necessary vocabulary, phrases, and language structures to support their role. By doing so, students can focus on developing their language skills during the role-play, rather than trying to understand the situation. Additionally, students can ask questions and clarify doubts with the teacher before the role-play begins, ensuring they feel confident and prepared.

2. Participating in the Role-Play

Participating in a role-play activity requires students to be actively engaged and take risks with their language use. Students should use English to communicate and interact with their peers, experimenting with new vocabulary, phrases, and language structures. By doing so, students can develop their speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills in a meaningful and contextualized way. Students should also listen attentively to their peers and respond appropriately, using English to clarify and confirm understanding. This helps to build confidence and fluency in using English, as well as develops essential communication skills.

3. Collaborating with Peers

Collaborating with peers is a crucial aspect of role-play activities. Students should work together to achieve the role-play objectives, sharing ideas and providing feedback to support each other's language development. By collaborating with peers, students can develop essential teamwork and communication skills, as well as build confidence in using English in a social and interactive way. Students should also encourage their peers to take risks and experiment with new language structures, fostering a supportive and inclusive learning environment.

4. Reflecting on Learning

Reflecting on their own learning is essential for students to identify areas for improvement and inform future learning. After participating in a role-play activity, students should reflect on their own performance, identifying strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement. Students can set goals for future role-play activities and language development, using their reflection to inform their learning. By reflecting on their own learning, students can take ownership of their language development and develop a growth mindset.

5. Self-Assessing and Peer-Assessing

Self-assessing and peer-assessing are essential skills for students to develop, enabling them to evaluate their own performance and provide constructive feedback to peers. After participating in a role-play activity, students should assess their own performance, using criteria provided by the teacher. Students can also provide constructive feedback to peers, using the same criteria. By self-assessing and peer-assessing, students can develop essential critical thinking and evaluation skills, as well as build confidence in using English to communicate and interact with peers.

6. Using English in Context

Using English in context is essential for students to develop meaningful and effective communication skills. Through role-play activities, students can apply language structures, vocabulary, and phrases learned in class to real-life scenarios. By using English in context, students can develop an awareness of the importance of using English to achieve effective communication. Students can also build confidence in using English to communicate and interact with peers, preparing them for real-life situations where English is the primary language of communication.

7. Building Confidence and Fluency

Building confidence and fluency in using English is a primary goal of role-play activities. Through regular participation in role-play activities, students can develop confidence in using English to communicate and interact with peers. Students can also improve fluency in speaking, listening, reading, and writing, developing essential communication skills. By building confidence and fluency, students can develop a growth mindset, embracing challenges and viewing failures as opportunities for growth and improvement.

Benefits of Role-Play for Undergraduate Students

Role-play offers numerous benefits for undergraduate students, including:

1. **Improved communication skills**: Role-play enables students to practice communication skills, such as articulation, listening, and feedback.
2. **Enhanced critical thinking and problem-solving**: Role-play scenarios require students to think critically and develop problem-solving skills.
3. **Increased confidence and self-esteem**: Role-play provides a safe and supportive environment for students to take risks and build confidence.
4. **Developed teamwork and collaboration skills**: Role-play encourages students to work together, promoting teamwork and collaboration.

Conclusion

Role-play is a valuable pedagogical approach for undergraduate students, offering numerous benefits, including improved communication skills, enhanced critical thinking and problem-solving, increased confidence and self-esteem, and developed teamwork and collaboration skills. Additionally, role-play enables students to practice speaking in a simulated environment, developing essential speaking skills, such as articulation, fluency, and pronunciation. By adopting role-play, educators can create engaging, interactive, and immersive learning experiences that promote student learning and success, while developing essential speaking skills that will benefit them throughout their academic and professional careers. While its implementation can be challenging, educators can overcome these challenges by clearly defining learning objectives, creating a supportive environment, providing clear instructions and guidelines, and encouraging reflection and feedback.

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REVISITING MYTHOLOGY TO REDEFINE WOMEN IN KAVITHA KANE'S NOVELS

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Abstract

In contemporary literature, Kavitha Kane emerges as a significant voice, offering a fresh perspective on classical mythology through a feminist lens. This essay aims to deal with the multifold layers of Kane's narrative, foregrounding how she reimagines mythological tales from a distinctly feministic standpoint. This essay intends to explore how Kane's novels challenge and subvert traditional narratives that have historically portrayed women as passive objects, instead providing them with agency and a voice. Kane's work is particularly notable for its focus on lesser-known female characters from Indian mythology. By bringing these characters to the forefront, she not only revives their stories but also offers a critical commentary on the objectification and marginalization of women in these ancient narratives. Her novels serve as a bridge, connecting the age-old myths to contemporary feminist discourse, thereby redefining the portrayal of women in literature. The article will examine how Kane's storytelling dismantles patriarchal interpretations of mythology. It will explore the thematic elements of her novels, such as the reclamation of agency by female characters, the critique of traditional gender roles, and the highlighting of the systemic oppression inherent in these ancient tales. Through a close reading of Kane's texts, this study aims to uncover the nuanced ways in which she reconstructs female characters, transforming them from silent figures in the background to powerful agents of their own stories.

Keywords: Hindu tradition, patriarchal, women, Indian society

Introduction

The narrative of Indian society evolves, the trajectory of women's roles within it offers a profound study in contrasts. Historically, from the Vedic era to the early medieval period, the status of women in Indian society, particularly within the Hindu tradition, witnessed a marked regression. Initially, women enjoyed considerable autonomy, but over time, their freedoms diminished under increasing patriarchal constraints. Identifying the precise moment of this shift remains elusive, yet it is evident in the stark differences between various epochs of Indian civilization.

Kavita Kane's literary journey has been driven by a deep interest in mythological women who, despite their significance, languished in the shadows of mainstream recognition. Her novels provide a platform for these overlooked figures, offering a narrative of redemption for a community long scarred by patriarchal narratives. Kane's characters boldly diverge from traditional gender norms, challenging the very foundations of patriarchal glorification. From Uruvi to Ahalya, her protagonists are crafted as direct antitheses to conventional female archetypes. Rather than portraying women as mere victims, Kane's narratives suggest their agency in shaping their destinies, thereby subverting traditional narratives.

Gender Disparity

Gender roles in society, particularly those reinforced by physical appearance, have historically undermined women's self-perception and value. Kane's writing not only humanizes these characters but also elevates the moral dilemmas inherent in their experiences, maintaining a critical stance on patriarchal paradigms. The objectification of the female body within a sociocultural context, where a woman's worth is often gauged by her physical attractiveness and sexual

desirability, is a theme Kane challenges, contrasting starkly with male identity formation.

During the Vedic period, Manu's laws exemplified the stringent regulations imposed on women. The third wave of feminism, with its focus on introspection and personal narrative, resonates with these historical contexts. Epic tales, traditionally dominated by male perspectives, rendered their heroines silent and submissive. This skewed portrayal has propelled modern female authors, including Kane, to reinterpret these stories, infusing them with a newfound gender consciousness. Kane's work brings these sidelined epic characters to the forefront, allowing them to articulate their narratives and assert their significance.

In examining the role of women of color, Kane's narrative arc remains consistent.

From historical times to the present, the portrayal of women has largely been static, characterized by silent endurance from birth to death. Epics like the Mahabharata and Ramayana are testament to this. Kane endeavors to infuse these female characters with depth and dimension, acknowledging their courage, sacrifice, and resilience, traits often overshadowed in traditional narratives. Through her novels, Kane not only gives voice to these women but also paints their experiences in vivid, relatable hues.

Voice of Voiceless
Sita's Sister

In "Sita's Sister," Kavita Kane brings to life the often-overlooked character of Urmila, the Princess of Mithila and Janak's daughter, whose story has traditionally been eclipsed in the vast shadows of the epic's more prominent figures. The narrative has long extolled the sacrifices of Rama, Lakshman, and Bharat, yet Urmila's own sacrifices remain largely uncelebrated and unacknowledged. Kane's decision to focus on Urmila, a character familiar in name but not in depth, is a testament to her commitment to exploring the untold stories of these sidelined characters.

Urmila emerges in Kane's portrayal as a character of profound depth, marked by intelligence, beauty, and a balance of passion and pragmatism. The novel navigates through Urmila's complex emotional landscape, portraying her as a sister, a newlywed, a dutiful wife, a caregiver, and a critical observer of the unfolding events. Kane posits that the most compelling aspect of Urmila's journey is her sacrifice, a theme often sidelined in traditional narratives. However, this emphasis on sacrifice risks reducing Urmila to a one-dimensional figure, confined to the role of the dutiful woman making silent sacrifices.

Kane, however, counters this by crafting Urmila as a multifaceted character. She is depicted as delicate yet resilient, impatient yet wise, embodying a blend of strength and vulnerability. Urmila's adopted status only enhances her complexity, as she navigates her identity with grace, understanding the depth of her parents' love for her. She is pragmatic and secular, a pillar of strength for both her natal and marital families. Her narrative is not just about passive endurance but active engagement with her circumstances, often questioning and challenging the norms.

A pivotal moment in the narrative arises when Urmila confronts the traditional notions of dharma (duty). She questions the one-sided nature of these duties, highlighting the often-overlooked responsibility of a husband towards his wife. While Sita is portrayed as the epitome of the dutiful daughter and wife, Urmila is characterized as a lioness, fiercely protective and unafraid to challenge the status quo. Her confrontation with Rama about his duties to Sita exemplifies this courage, pushing the boundaries of traditional female roles in the epic. Through Urmila, Kane not only redefines the narrative of sacrifice but also asserts the importance of a woman's voice in questioning and reshaping societal norms.

Fisher Queen's Dynasty

In "Fisher Queen's Dynasty," Kavita Kane presents Satyavati, a character imbued with remarkable ambition, standing as the central figure of the narrative. The novel skillfully navigates the thin line between ambition and avarice, a recurring theme that adds layers of complexity to Satyavati's character. Unlike typical portrayals that often tie a character's actions to gendered expectations, Kane chooses to

juxtapose Satyavati with the male figures in her life, thereby highlighting the gender dynamics at play.

The men in Satyavati's story are not mere bystanders but pivotal in shaping her narrative. King Shantanu is drawn to her primarily for her sexuality, while her biological father, the king of Chedi, abandons her at birth due to her gender. Sage Parashara sees her as a means to an end, a vessel for his progeny. These experiences position Satyavati at the center of a web of male exploitation, casting her in various unflattering roles – from an evil temptress to a cold-hearted opportunist. However, Kane's depiction of Satyavati challenges these labels, showcasing her as a woman wielding control over her circumstances.

The narrative foregrounds the treatment of women as mere objects of desire right from the outset. The revelation that Satyavati's mother was sexually violated by Uparichar Vasu, the king of Chedi, and subsequently rejected, fuels Satyavati's ambition. This ambition is not just personal but a quest for justice, a redressal for the wrongs inflicted upon her and her mother. This theme is further echoed in the story of Amba, whose own quest for justice against Bhishma for his actions mirrors Satyavati's journey. Unlike Sita, who attributes her suffering to fate and past misdeeds, Amba and Satyavati externalize the blame, holding others accountable for their misfortunes.

However, Amba's path diverges tragically, leading to her own destruction, a stark contrast to Satyavati's narrative. Satyavati's journey in the novel thus becomes a commentary on the agency of women in a patriarchal society and the complexities of navigating a path fraught with exploitation and gendered expectations. Kane's portrayal of Satyavati as a figure of power and resilience, navigating through a society that often reduces women to mere objects, adds a compelling dimension to the age-old epic narrative, challenging traditional gender roles and perceptions.

Ahalya's Awakening

In "Ahalya's Awakening," Kavita Kane reimagines the story of Ahalya, a character traditionally portrayed as lacking agency over her life's events, both in her presence and in her absence. As per the Brahma Purana, Ahalya, crafted by Brahma as a figure of impeccable beauty, is given in marriage to the much older sage Gautam. Her narrative takes a turn when she succumbs to the deception of Indra, who disguises himself as her husband, leading to her transformation into a stone as a punishment for her indiscretion.

Kane's portrayal of Ahalya's story delves deeper into the dynamics of her relationships. The king of Indralok, Indra, becomes captivated with Ahalya, and upon learning of her loneliness and desire, he takes advantage of the situation. This leads to a moment of surrender between Ahalya and Indra, a decision that results in severe consequences from Rishi Gautam. In the aftermath, Kane's Ahalya embraces her existence as a stone, entering a state of profound meditation and introspection, reflecting on her situation as a woman scorned and ostracized by society.

Years later, after being freed from her curse by Ram, Ahalya encounters Sita at her ashram, who is in search of her sons. Kane weaves a poignant and hypothetical conversation between Ahalya and Sita, two figures emblematic of the victims of patriarchy and societal condemnation. In this interaction, both women, known for their respective tribulations – Ahalya for her alleged wrongdoing and Sita for her abandonment by her husband – find solace in their mutual experiences of suffering.

Kane reflects on the enduring relevance of these ancient stories, noting their resonance with contemporary men and women. She emphasizes that these tales, with their portrayal of human flaws and follies, are reflective of our own stories. The theme of status and subordination of women, as presented in these narratives, has traversed through ages, societies, and changing perspectives, maintaining its relevance and impact. Through "Ahalya's Awakening," Kane not only revisits a mythological tale but also offers a critical commentary on the enduring issues of gender and societal norms.

Karna's Wife: The Outcast Queen

In "Karna's Wife: The Outcast Queen," Kavita Kane introduces Uruvi, the daughter of the King of Pukeya, Vahusha, as a central character who defies societal norms with her choices and actions. Uruvi finds herself enamored with Karna, a figure marginalized by society. Kane suggests that Uruvi's attraction to Karna is not just a matter of the heart but also influenced by his masculine appeal and assertiveness. This attraction leads her to make the unconventional choice of marrying an outcast, breaking free from societal constraints and expectations.

Uruvi's decision is deeply rooted in her personal desires and her relationship with her father. Growing up close to her father, she yearns for a partner who embodies the masculine qualities she admires. Envisioning herself as a valiant princess, she actively engages in activities like horse riding and studying medicinal herbs. Despite her father's disapproval, foreseeing the challenges she will face marrying Karna, Uruvi remains resolute. Her choice is significant, considering the societal norms of the time, where defiance of such conventions was rare.

In Kane's narrative, Uruvi is depicted as an intelligent, courageous princess, determined to live life on her own terms. She confronts the patriarchal injustices of her society, including those from her husband, Karna, thereby redefining the concept of womanhood. Uruvi's character is portrayed not just as combative, but as a personification of justice, unwilling to tolerate discrimination against women or any injustice.

Kane describes Uruvi as inheriting her mother's beauty and her father's intellect, traits that manifest in her temperament. From belonging to an elite class, her marriage to Karna introduces her to new challenges and realities. Raised as an only child in affluence, her life was initially comfortable and privileged. However, her journey is not without its complexities. While Uruvi stands firmly against injustice, there are moments in the story where her perceived arrogance clashes with the expectations of a patriarchal society, underscoring the tension between her individuality and the cultural norms of her time.

Lanka's Princess

In "Lanka's Princess," Kavita Kane reimagines the life of Surpanakha, originally known as Meenakshi for her fish-shaped eyes. The novel traces Surpanakha's transformation from a figure of form – embodied in her initial innocence and beauty – to one of formlessness, shaped by the trials and tribulations of her life. This journey from Meenakshi to Surpanakha represents a shift from the physical to the metaphysical, encompassing her experiences and the evolution of her identity.

The narrative delves into the early years of Surpanakha's life, marked by a tranquil existence in her father's ashram, followed by the emotional turmoil of her mother's abandonment and rejection. Surpanakha's identity is further obscured when Ravana, her brother, overshadows her, leading her to find solace in the love of her husband. The story unfolds the highs and lows of her life, highlighting her metamorphosis from the beautiful- eyed girl to Surpanakha, known for her sharp, claw-like nails.

Surpanakha's life is portrayed as a constant oscillation between the influences of her mother Kaikesi and brother Ravana, symbolizing good, and the darker influences of her father Vishravas, husband Vidyujiva, and her other brothers Kumbhakarna and Vibhishana. She harbors deep-seated resentment, born from lifelong neglect and rejection, not just from her tribe but also from outsiders who physically and emotionally scar her. This desire for vengeance is intensified after her mutilation, which propels her transformation into a cunning, astute, and assertive woman.

"Lanka's Princess" delves into the complexities of human nature, exploring themes like the essence of life, the importance of learning, and the journey of self-discovery.

Surpanakha's story becomes a paradox, as her quest for vengeance leads to the loss of loved ones, including her son Meghnad and brother Kumbhakarna. Despite these losses, her thirst for revenge overshadows her familial love. She initially does not wish for the deaths of her loved ones but

ultimately sees Ravana, the last of her family, fall in battle. The culmination of her life's injustices and her unaddressed grievances fuel her transformation from the beautiful-eyed Meenakshi to the formidable, long-nailed Surpanakha, embodying both the victim and the villain in her quest for justice.

Radical Feminism in Kavitha Kane's Novels

Kavitha Kane's novels serve as a radical feminist critique of the pervasive objectification of women in mythological narratives. Through her reinterpretation of these stories, Kane challenges the traditional portrayal of women as passive entities, existing primarily for the fulfillment of male desires and objectives. Radical feminism, with its core belief in the systemic oppression of women in a patriarchal society, finds a resonant voice in

Kane's work. Her narratives are not just retellings but reimaginings that seek to dismantle the deep-rooted gender biases inherent in these myths.

In mythological tales, women are often depicted as objects of desire, their value tied to their beauty, purity, or relationship to male characters. Kane disrupts this narrative by giving these women their own stories, agency, and complexities. Characters like Uruvi in "Karna's Wife: The Outcast Queen" or Ahalya in "Ahalya's Awakening" are portrayed not as mere adjuncts to their male counterparts but as individuals with their own desires, struggles, and strengths. By focusing on these characters, Kane shifts the perspective from one that objectifies women to one that humanizes them.

Kane's narratives often highlight the consequences of objectification and the ways in which it contributes to the marginalization and suffering of women. Her characters are not passive victims; they confront and often subvert the patriarchal norms that seek to define and confine them. This is evident in how Surpanakha's story in "Lanka's Princess" is transformed from a tale of victimization to one of empowerment, despite the tragic elements. She is no longer just a demoness defined by her mutilation at the hands of a male hero but a complex character with motivations, emotions, and a quest for justice.

Through her work, Kane not only provides a platform for these overlooked female characters but also challenges the readers to reconsider and question the traditional narratives that have long shaped our understanding of these mythological stories. Her novels are a testament to the power of storytelling in redefining and reclaiming the narratives of women, aligning closely with the principles of radical feminism in their challenge to the patriarchal structures that have historically silenced and objectified women.

Conclusion

Kavitha Kane's novels represent a significant stride in the realm of feminist literature, particularly in their radical feminist critique of mythological narratives. By centering her stories around traditionally marginalized female characters, Kane not only challenges the historical objectification of women in these tales but also reclaims their narratives, imbuing them with agency, depth, and complexity. Her work serves as a beacon for contemporary feminist discourse, illustrating the transformative power of reimagining stories through a gender-conscious lens. Kane's novels are more than just retellings; they are a reclamation of women's stories, a call for a more equitable representation in literature, and a step towards dismantling the deeply entrenched patriarchal structures in both myth and reality. Through her storytelling, Kane not only pays homage to these characters but also contributes to a larger cultural shift towards recognizing and valuing the diverse experiences and voices of women.

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THE SILENT SCARS: VICARIOUS TRAUMA AND BATTERED WOMAN SYNDROME IN KRISTIN HANNAH'S *THE GREAT ALONE*

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Abstract

The study highlights the hidden scars of Cora and Leni, the family members of war veteran Ernt, who suffer from PTSD. Avoiding treatment for PTSD can lead to vicarious trauma, violent behaviour, and battered woman syndrome, creating a harmful cycle of abuse within the family. The aim of the study is to explore the effects of PTSD on the Allbright family and to analyse the experiences of Cora and Leni regarding their potential suffering from vicarious trauma and battered woman syndrome. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for addressing the broader effects of PTSD on family members.

***Keywords:** PTSD, vicarious trauma, battered woman syndrome, cycle of abuse*

Trauma refers to exposure to death, injury, or sexual violence, witnessing it, learning the experiences of relatives, or repeated exposure to traumatic conditions. If the trauma persists for a month or more, it is considered as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), as per DSM-5. PTSD is a mental illness that develops immediately after a traumatic event, often in combat veterans who witness a death or severe injury. It affects their daily lives through vivid memories. Stages of PTSD according to Vanderkolk are exposure to trauma, re-experience, avoidance, arousal, cognition, and mood changes.

In *The Great alone,* award-winning author Kristin Hannah explores the psychological traumas of her characters, highlights the unpredictable nature of Alaska and the experience of various characters. The diagnosis of Solomon indicates that war veterans often return home as altered individuals, suffering from PTSD. Their behaviour includes reduced social interaction, detachment, alienation, constricted affect, diminished sexual impulse, hypervigilance, sleep disorders, nightmares, survivor guilt, and difficulties controlling aggression. Ernt Allbright is a Vietnam war veteran and a prisoner of war. Leni briefly explains how the war has affected the behaviour of her father and the direct impact it has had on her family in the following passage.

> Before the war, they'd been happy… Dad had had a good job as a mechanic and Mama had laughed all of the time and danced… Then Dad went off to Vietnam and got shot down and captured…. When Dad had finally come home, Leni barely recognized him. The handsome, laughing man of her memory had become moody, quick to anger, and distant. He hated everything about the commune…and so they moved. Nothing ever worked out the way he wanted. He couldn't sleep and couldn't keep a job (Hannah 5).

Ernt has nightmares, unrest, hyper-awareness, alcohol abuse, family violence, and low self-esteem, showing symptoms of PTSD, as noted by Maloney. Despite suffering from PTSD for a long time, he dismisses the reminders of Cora that he needs help. Solomon suggests that when one spouse is ill, the other may feel distress, known as secondary traumatic stress disorder (STSD), vicarious trauma, or

showing symptoms of PTSD, as noted by Maloney. Despite suffering from PTSD for a long time, he dismisses the reminders of Cora that he needs help. Solomon suggests that when one spouse is ill, the other may feel distress, known as secondary traumatic stress disorder (STSD), vicarious trauma, or compassion fatigue. Maloney discusses the mental wounds of Vietnam war veterans and their wives. These veterans come home without proper diagnosis, forcing family members to help them heal. A wife of a combat veteran with PTSD may develop vicarious trauma, which is the indirect exposure to the trauma of someone else, impacting her emotionally by listening to their experiences.

Mathieu implies that the vicarious trauma can show physical signs like fatigue, insomnia or hypersomnia, headaches, increased illness sensitivity, somatization, and hypochondria. Behavioural signs are increased alcohol and drug use, absenteeism, anger, excessive responsibility, avoidance, decision-making issues, forgetfulness, and social isolation. Psychological symptoms involve emotional exhaustion, disengagement, negative self-image, depression, numbness, cynicism, resentment, loss of enjoyment, spacing out, intimacy problems, hypervigilance, hypersensitivity, and loss of hope.

Cora endures the PTSD of Ernt for a long time, as he refuses treatment, causing vicarious trauma for Cora and Leni. They are often physically drained, with Cora caring for Ernt during his nightmares and mood swings. The exhaustion of Cora is expressed as, "Mama [Cora] looked exhausted…she looked too fragile for the weather, In a week of rising nightmares and middle-of-the-night screaming, she wasn't sleeping well" (103). Cora has trouble sleeping at night, "Whenever Leni woke in the middle of the night, she invariably found her mother drifting through the house.... In the dark, Mama tended to talk to herself in a whisper" (13). She chain-smokes whenever she feels stressed. Consequently, she is diagnosed with fourth stage lung cancer and eventually dies due to her weakened health. Leni has headaches due to stress about her father's possible violent episode. and it is depicted as, "All day at school she battled a headache. On her bike ride home,

she started getting a stomach ache. She tried to tell herself it was her period, but she knew better. It was stress." (204)

Cora cannot express her true feelings to Ernt, as she worries it might worsen his violent actions. She shows anger towards her mother, who cares about Cora and Leni. Cora is also annoyed when Ernt drinks with Mad Earl and criticizes Tom Walker and discusses war, but she has not mentioned it to Ernt. Cora and Leni have avoided family, friends and social events before Alaska. In Kaneq, communication is essential in their small community. They reconsider their excuses for the violent actions of Ernt over the years due to their strong bond with the locals. Some of the justifications that Cora has created because of her exaggerated sense of responsibility are,

> He didn't mean to do that. He just …loves me too much sometimes… "We have to understand and forgive," Mama said. "That's how you love someone who's sick. Someone who is struggling. It's like he has cancer. That's how you have to think of it. He'll get better. He will. He loves us so much" … Dad was sick and sorry, that if they loved him enough, he would get better and it would be like Before. (Hannah 124-125)

Rosenheck emphasizes that children of war veterans with PTSD also experience secondary traumatization. Many children feel guilty for not being able to help their father and have nightmares similar to his because they are always aware of the dangers of war. Leni feels this guilt and also has nightmares, especially about the violent behaviour of her father due to alcoholism. One night, she has a specific nightmare described as follows: "she landed in a dreamscape on fire, a place full of danger-a world at war, animals being slaughtered, girls being kidnapped, men screaming and pointing guns. She screamed for Matthew, but no one could hear one girl's voice in a falling-apart world" (107).

Leni's vicarious trauma is treated as she learns the power of love through her best friend and lover, Matthew and the people of Kaneq. It is obvious through the phrase, "Mama was good at pretending everything was normal. Leni had lost that childhood

ability. What she thought, over and over and over again, was: We need to run" (278).

Leni disagrees with her mother's self-blame, knowing that their father manipulates them. Feeling trapped alone with Ernt in a small space during winter, "With no local police and no one to call for help. All this time, Dad had taught Leni how dangerous the outside world was. The truth was that the biggest danger of all was in her own home" (126). She decides they must escape. They attempt to run away several times but get caught. When Ernt locks their property, they try to escape as he leaves but get caught again. The inability of Cora to admit her abusive relationship with Ernt causes her physical and psychological suffering, leading to battered woman syndrome. Walker defines the battered woman as someone who is repeatedly subjected to forceful physical or psychological behaviour by a man without any regard for her rights.

Cora experiences learned helplessness, which is the feeling that her actions do not matter. It is considered as one of the symptoms of battered woman syndrome. Seligman proposes two reasons for this feeling; they are, passivity calms the abuser down and that nothing she has done mattered before. She wants to escape her abusive relationship with Ernt but has come to a realization that he will always bring her back. She repeats, "He'll never let me go," which causes her to accept the abuse. Leni comments on the relationship of her parents as follows, "Mama could never leave Dad, and Leni would never leave Mama. And Dad could never let them go. In this toxic knot that was their family, there was no escape for any of them" (159). Bancroft suggests that trauma can create emotional bonds between abusers and victims, leading to a cycle of abuse. Walker identifies three phases in this cycle: tension-building period, acute battering incident, and kind, loving and caring behaviour by the abuser. The third phase reinforces the cycle of abuse. Accepting this abusive cycle is a significant symptom of battered woman syndrome.

In an incident, Tom Walker is concerned for Cora and Leni after Ernt leaves them alone to handle a pack of wolves at night. Tom warns Ernt of potential family harm and is ready to attack him, if necessary, but holds back due to the plea of Cora. Ernt is more affected by his humiliation than by his family's near-death experience the night before. Leni notices his rage building throughout the journey home, observing his flared nostrils, flexed hands, and unspoken words, marking the tension-building phase as the concern of Tom fuels his rage. The second phase, the acute battering incident happens after arriving at their cabin and it is described as, "He grabbed Mama by the hair and punched her in the jaw so hard she slammed into the wall and collapsed to the floor… she [Leni] heard a crash, something breaking, and a scream…For the first time, Leni thought: He could kill her" (147).

While attempting to escape Ernt, Cora and Leni meet with an accident, leading to the hospitalization of Cora. The third reinforcement phase of the compassionate, loving, and repentant behaviour of Ernt towards Cora in the hospital is documented as follows: "Forgive me, baby. I'll kill myself if you don't…. Dad held Mama as if she were made of glass. So careful, so concerned for her well-being…. with tears in his eyes" (158-159) and Cora forgives him.

Years pass before Cora decides to break the cycle of abuse. Leni is attacked by Ernt after he finds out that she is expecting the child of Matthew Walker. Angela Browne exposes that battered women kill to protect their children. Cora kills her husband, realizing that the safety of her daughter is at risk. This decision is not rushed; it responds to the abuse she has endured in the name of protection, love, and care for many years. Instead of grieving for the death of her husband, she feels relieved.

In the light of the arguments presented, it is evident that Cora and Leni have been dealing with vicarious trauma, with Cora exhibiting most of the symptoms. Leni, who is protected from Ernt, gradually overcomes her trauma. The situation of Cora worsens, leading her to kill her husband. The refusal of Ernt to seek help results in the destruction of a family. Kristin Hannah skilfully highlights these in a realistic and thought-provoking manner in her novel, *The Great Alone*.

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PERLUSTRATING POSTMODERN RHETORIC

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Abstract

W.B. Yeats heralded the arrival of Postmodernism as a way of life nearly a century ago with his prophetic utterance "Things fall apart/ the centre cannot hold". Postmodernism entered as a new philosophical thought at the beginning of the 20th century and radically changed the thought process of the people. Ably initiated by Nietzsche in the philosophical front and by Saussure in the language aspect, fuelled by writers like Kafka and Camus, Postmodernism flourished. Questioning the existing, established truths and destabilising the taken for granted conventions with the help of the study of language as performance is the essence of postmodernism. This paper aims at perlustrating a few aspects of Postmodern Rhetoric to exemplify the movement with brief notes about three novels that are typically Postmodern. Though we have moved into the consolidation phase of Post-Postmodernism that endeavours to compromise the differences between Modernism and Postmodernism, Postmodern thoughts and practices still persist.

Keywords: post modernism, philosophy, fragmentation, magical realism, identity flux, feminist perspective, alternative history, satire

Introduction

Postmodernism is supposed to have originated in the field of philosophy. Friedrich Nietzsche and Jacques Derrida exercised their influence in a very big way to carry forward the movement. Nietzsche stressed the realities of the world we live in and the capacity of the people to revise and adopt according to the demands of the age and environment. He introduced "Postmodern thought" in his book "The Birth of Tragedy, Out of the Spirit of music". In this book, he criticized the way scholars viewed Greek culture. He pleaded for alternative ways of viewing and advocated for the importance of living outside the "modern". Jacques Derrida analysed language and established that meanings of words are not connected to the things they represent. He was for deconstructing human experience based on the words used to discuss it. He established that human experience is mostly shaped by language. Derrida introduced "Deconstruction" that challenges conventional understanding of meaning. Besides the above two, Baudrillard who propagated "simulacra" that unearths the connection between reality and simulation and Michael Foucault who stressed power dynamics that changes the common perceptions of truth and knowledge are important personalities associated with Postmodernism.

According to Stanford encyclopaedia of Philosophy, Postmodernism is "a set of critical, strategic and rhetorical practices employing concepts such as difference, repetition, the trace, the simulacrum, and hyperreality to destabilize other concepts such as presence, identity, historical progress, epistemic certainty, and the univocity of meaning". Postmodernism does not draw absolute conclusions. Questioning of universal truths is essential for Postmodernists. Postmodernism is wide in its application. It embraces various fields like Literature, Architecture, Cinema, Law, Culture, Religion, Science and so on.

Having defined postmodernism in brief, the article now moves on to perlustrate how the rhetoric operates in the following three novels that are typically postmodern: *Midnight's Children* by Salman Rushdie, *Like Water for Chocolate* by Laura Esquivel and *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard* by Kiran Desai.

Midnight's Children is a typical Postmodern Rhetoric as it is empowered with several distinctive rhetorical aspects. It upholds narrative fragmentation. It disrupts linear story telling with circular, non-traditional narration. Saleem Sinai, the protagonist, is

the narrator who situates the story in the background of true historical events. He skilfully blends his personal history with national history. The narration shifts between different generations and time lines. Saleem addresses the audience straight as it is a first-person narrative. Saleem is to be seen as a living allegory for independent India. Magical Realism is employed to explore India's post-colonial history. There are magical elements like the birth of 1001 children with special powers exactly at the midnight of Independence, the presence of the boatman Tai aged 500 years, supernatural occurrences like blood drops getting transformed into rubies, the metamorphosis of Saleem into a man dog and so on. The constant identity flux that Saleem faces is typically postmodern. It induces feelings of alienation and perpetual search for belonging in him.

Like Water for Chocolate is a novel about the life of Tita de la Garza and about her experiences with love, family and food. The novel abounds in magical realism. Tita uses food she cooks as vehicles to carry her emotions and experiences. She can influence people with the food that she cooks. The novel includes many recipes and folk tales. The novel is in Epistolary format that consists of twelve chapters, each representing a month of the year featuring a Mexican recipe. It is also a historiographic metafiction that rewrites the Mexican revolution. The alternative historical document in the form of a cook book subverts traditional male dominated historical narration. With history through a feminist perspective, the novel stands as a significant postmodern discourse. As Gertrudis, a character in the novel says, "the simple truth is that the truth does not exist". It gets modified according to the perception of a person. Like the water boils for the preparation of chocolate, emotions also boil.

Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard is spun around the life of Sampath Chawla, a hopeless youngster from Shakot, a small north Indian town. He suddenly disappears to emerge as a Godman atop a Guava tree. The novel is remarkable for its vivid imagery with sensory details about Kulfi's appetite, the torrential rains reminiscent of *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, the description of the guava fruit and the broth prepared underneath the tree. Events before and after Sampath's birth, Sampath's transformation from a hopeless weakling to a powerful Godman capable of clairvoyance and his existence with monkeys on top of a guava tree till his mysterious disappearance are full of magical realism. The novel abounds in humour and satire. It takes a dig at the crazy mob ready to indulge in any absurdity and the media devoid of ethics and ready to sensationalise any nonsense for its popularity.

Postmodern rhetoric critiques traditional approaches. It questions the origins and identities of speakers, audiences and messages. A brief note on the three novels highlights a few facets of the Postmodern rhetoric. Modernism advocated absolutes and social norms but not as rigid as Victorian era. Postmodernism subjected everything to scrutiny and thus led to subjectivism and individualism. But now we have moved into the post-postmodern era where we may not have either absolutes or multiplicity but we try to resolve conflicts arriving at consensus with an all-inclusive approach.

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THEME OF SUFFERING AND REDEMPTION IN PHILIP ROTH'S *PORTNOY'S COMPLAINT*

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Abstract

Philip Roth is one of the innovative and incomparable modern writers of Jewish American Literature. Being an illustrious novelist, he is distinguished for his ingenuously decisive, morally multifaceted and exceedingly intellectual work of art and literature. He is one of the prolific writers of our times who is endowed with the creativity, thoughts and compassion to explore in fiction what desires to be discovered and he accomplishes so, while sustaining the readability and center of attention. His fictions express a world of potentiality to extent superior status to his characters in moral standards. The theme of his fiction revolves around the painful experience and different atmospheres of various characters, agonized beings and anguished protagonists in the grip of self-destructive egocentric desires. Their miseries strengthen their moral character when they recognize their conscientiousness and prefer to endure and adjust for others. The extensive continuum of tormenting is incarcerated in the Jewish and individualistic perspective. Philip Roth's novels are basically concerned with the disproportionately temperamented, disenchanted and embittered men stumbling into their individual integrity and acceptance. The Jewish writers by virtue of their traditional roles as introspective intellectuals are gifted with the narrative skill to present "a truthful image of the moral anxiety obsessing the members of their generation"(1), in the context of the modern world in its flux of shifting values and the writers of fiction are deprived of a stock frame to represent the fundamental religious, ethical, philosophical, moral or even political ideologies in their literary creations. Aeons of expulsion and generation of unuttered sufferings together with their alienated life have gifted the Jews a poignant dimension to their unique response to the bitter realities of existence. In the process of their century's hardened sacrificial life, suffering has evolved a sound and valid pattern of ethical living which provides a splendid blue print to the conflict-ridden contemporary world.
Keywords: ethics, religion, philosophy and moral ideology

Roth's first and the only non-Jewish novel, entitled *Portnoy's Complaint* is the tale of the protagonist, Alex, an untrained, Judaist player with natural ability and his crucial rise and decline. Most of the incidents in the novel are traced to be grounded in historical incidents such as the shooting of Eddie Waitkus in 1949, Babe Ruth's stomach illness of 1925, the throwing of a crucial game with the White Sox in 1919. The novel attempts the imaginative transformation of history into myth-the myth of "the everlastingly crucial story of man" (1), and in the process becomes a curious mixture of myth, fantasy, symbolism and realism. In portraying Alex's quest for heroism in Judaist, Roth has drawn on the folklore of Judaist, the pastoral, Arthurian legend, Jungian psychology and Homeric epic. These elements have been analyzed by critics like Leslie Fiedler, Norman Podhoretz, James Mallard, Earl Wasserman and Robert Ducharme.

Peter Hays examines the entire works of Roth meticulously, including *Portnoy's Complaint* from the perspective of medieval literature, specifically Chretien de Troy's "Lancelot or the Knight of the Cart" (2). By drawing his material on various sources, Roth has set his novel "in a region that is real and mythical, particular and universal, ludicrous

melodrama and spiritual probing –Ring Lardner and Jung" (3). Despite the impressive experiment in combining the disparate elements by "the use of every imaginative resource at the writer's command", Roth accomplished to make the novel "more than the merely realistic" (4). Neither the Judaist nor all its mythic associations are important for Roth. Judaist has given him only an occasion to represent larger human issues and probe the "drama of moral issues" (5). The Arthurian legend and Jungian mythic psychology are used to interpret the ritual that makes Judaist into a symbol of "man's psychological and moral situation" (6). Roth's primary concern, therefore, is to probe "the comic-tragic paradoxes of modern existence", as reflected in the "progressive corruption of a basically honest professional athlete" (7). Alex Portnoy' career marks the typical Rothian protagonist's trial that transforms man into a menace. Compassion is the driving force behind such an act of transformation in all Rothian protagonists.

Portnoy's Complaint, Roth reveals, is inspired by the question "Why does a talented man sell out?" (8) which suggests a moral problem. The novel not only confronts the question but also serves as a pointer to the answer in Alex's moral ineptitude that talent and integrity need not go together. Alex, like his Jewish counterparts in the other novels, is a shlemiel destined to fail-a victim of fate and circumstances as well as a prisoner of his own prejudices and illusions. Alex's frenzied pursuit of money, fame and sex, his refusal to learn from suffering or experience, his inability to come out of the shell of egotism-all lead to his moral disintegration. Judaist or human relations call for a code of conduct based on felt responsibility for others. Alex violates the code and hence his failure both in human relations and Judaist. Suffering ultimately makes him realize the value of love and compassion- "the God-given fire of decency and determination, that enables him to overcome everything arrayed against him" (9). Compassion dawns on Alex very late and when is at the lowest ebb of moral degradation. The true love of Lina compels Alex to decide to win

the game he had intended to throw by being a "sell-out". Although the decision is too late to be of any avail, it gives him the moral courage to refuse the money given to him by the corruptors. He could also now realize his "tragic flaw" and be ready to face its consequences in further suffering. Alex like the protagonists Bernard Malamud's Frank Alpine or Seymour Levin proves that "Life consists of achieving good not apart from evil but in spite of it (10). The novel indicates better "the nature of forces against which his (Roth's) later heroes must struggle" and "the ritual gestures by which they must preserve themselves" (11). Thematically, thus, the novel fits into the pattern of Roth's later work notwithstanding its apparent dissimilarity. Alex becomes "an archetype for all Roth's small heroes, who like their larger Greek and Shakespearean counterparts-fall victim to a tragic flaw aggravated by misfortune" (12).

Bernard Roth's writings abound in humanistic concerns like responsibility, compassion, ethical issues and moral perspectives which, when placed in a world ruled by materialistic values characterized by speed and aggression face an ongoing struggle between the virtue and the vice and the resulting emergence of the human spirit in all its glory vanquishing the morally debased dimension of the individual. The various facets of his personality as a writer comprise "his concerns as a Jew, an artist, and a moral man" (83) which helped him evolve a style that fuses 'the fabulous and the factual, called "lyrical realism" by the Yiddish critic, Mayer Shticker' (83). It is analogous to the Chasidic belief that "the mystical connection to God is to be found not in ascetic isolation, but through man's participation in the ordinary activities and mundane events of daily existence" (83).

Alfred Kazin denigrates *Portnoy's Complaint* saying that it is based on fantasy and not rooted in Portnoy's Complaint artistic portrayal of the Jew's experiential reality. As Marcus Klein observes Alex's "adventure is precisely his frustration; the end of straining and the beginning of heroism, if achieved, is

the beginning of acceptance … Roth's characters' heroism is his hero's loss" There are critics who place Roth in his mythic context with an explicitly archetypal content, especially, in *Portnoy's Complaint* and its lively sense of mythic play. Roth has, however, shown through his fiction an undercurrent of awareness of the societal contexts where the themes of his stories are drawn. He is neither intended to describe the existing social edifice or the human bonds that nourish them but has rather been intent upon defining and dramatizing the underlying forces that form the warp and woof of the Jewish society that he knows very closely.

Roth has fictiously presented through his fiction the decline of the American dream, the nightmare of an entire civilization in decay, and the problems of a disintegrating culture. In his novel, *Portnoy's Complaint*, Roth portrays the frauds perpetrated on people by an established order, the bogus values and the fakery that seems to be as much a part of the American dream as its hopes and aspirations. The American dream paradox encompasses the two divergent perspectives which were poles apart- that of the statesmen whose vision embodied the Nation's idealism and that of the American citizens whose short-sighted vision was corroded by selfish materialism. Both these far reaching after effects were palpable during the 19th and 20th century American political, social and the literary landscape. The democratic framework of the society hailed the exiled communities while the individual self could explore the virgin possibilities of the future emerging from the narrow confines of the self to the broader perspectives of the world at large.

Despite these developments, the American culture's noble visions also engender the antagonistic elements that were the bedrock of alienation, loneliness, rootlessness, identity crisis of its pluralistic society, transience, the psychological and geographical mobility from roots and traditions to the survival instincts of the displaced communities, the morbid fear of being ignored and unaccepted in an alien soil by the native tribes- all have etched indelible imprints in the psyche of the marginalized Jews in particular and the diasporic communities in general. The American civilization in its formative years of growth had also been stumbled and had seen a stunted growth by defining its accomplishments in outwards things and success had been a yardstick to measure one's acquisitions. It mirrored failure as punishment, poverty as sin and the soul stirring instincts of love as merchandise which could be procured by materialistic vanities. But in Rothian epithets, to prosper in such an environment is to sell one's soul to the satanic agents of materialism. Failure, to Roth, is sweet nectar that preserves one's moral integrity and ethical values of the human race. The American Dream was the least understood phenomenon with a bundle of inchoate ideas. The masses caught the biggest dream in its peripheral perspective and hence the resulting desolation and depression.

Portnoy's Complaint paints the hero, Alex in a varied hue of the Naomi archetype. The archetypal cast of Alex is allowed to meander through his life's unchartered destiny in the shoes of a true democratic hero: self-created, faithful to his inherent talent and individual's fulfillment of wishes leading his life in the footprints of a middle-class man accepting the formula of middle class people's good life. The entire novel is a sustained and an elaborate allegory. Alex is a natural player; he plays with skill and ease. He is not groomed in the grooves of a professional golfer. He is neither taught and trained nor drilled in the competitive sport. He is compared with *Portnoy's Complaint* man who is not thrust upon a roller coaster of fame and fortune with influences of politics, advertisement etc., but he reaches his full potential naturally. His inborn gift has been captioned by the media as "an optical illusion to a feat of prodigious strength" (68).

The novel, *Portnoy's Complaint*, has two parts: part I captioned 'Pre-Game' captures the glorious entry of Alex in 30 pages. It is a brief section where the tragic flaw, the weakness in Alex is spotlighted

and his ego is observed to be too thick to be poked. The introductory pages capture this immature Alex in its stark stature. The hero, Alex comes from the west and is in the prime of his youth. He is brought to a Major League Judaist Training camp by a Scout, Sam. His egoistic proclamations to Naomi during their first meeting shocked and disappointed her: Alex cannot answer with clarity. "He felt curiously deflated and a little lost, as if he had just flunked a test" (25)

The second section, "Batter-up' is a bigger section' which deals in depth, the problems and sufferings of his tragic flaw. His obduracy and impertinence in not learning the lessons either from his sufferings or experiences in his life lands him in troubled water, too deep to surface to the reality. "Experience makes good people better" (136). In Iris Lemon's words, Alex is made to see the reality. "We have two lives Alex, the life we learn with and the life we live with after that. Suffering is what brings us towards happiness" (136).

But Alex is still immature in not seeing the value of either suffering or experience in his life. He merely says: "All it taught me is to stay away from it. I am sick of all I have suffered". (136). The final resolution comes in a dramatic way. Alex betrayed his true potentials by yielding to visible signs of material acquisitions like money, power, things, etc. that may sustain his fame as a Judaist celebrity. These transient symbols of reputation are represented by the red headed Memo Paris, his boss's niece and her accomplice, Goodwill Banner, the judge and Gus Sands, the supreme Bookie. Memo's dream for money and power has turned rapacious.

Money causes the destruction in the mythic American backdrop of *Portnoy's Complaint*. The greedy acquisition of wealth in a democracy only results in disparity, difference and inequality, thereby disrupting the peaceful coexistence of the stakeholders in a society. The hoarding of money and material abundance and the hankering after wealth and affluence as is seen in the life of Memo Paris who asserts, "I am afraid to be poor… I got to have a house of my own, a maid to help me with the hard work, a decent car to shop with and a fur coat for winter time when it's cold. I don't want to have to worry every time a can of beans jumps a nickel." (172-173)

Every character in the story is a symbolic representation of an inherent human trait. Goodwill Banner, the notoriously bad-tempered judge is the epitome of corrupt and power mongering America. He is quick to feel the pulse of the American mainstream that prefers things rather than people or ethical values. The illegally amassed wealth has given him the code that the spectators who throng his stadium to catch the game in its entire splendor are just viewed as coins. Pop Fisher is seen as an obstruction that can be bought by his money and power, while Alex is but a toy or a puppet who has to be roped in to acquire more wealth and more power. He has a fascination for darkness. The expressions, like, "Pardon the absence of light" (84) and "There is in the darkness a unity, if you will, that cannot be achieved in any other environment…" (85) are evocative of his diabolical character. His vision of America is that of a gullible innocence, which can be very easily traded for a lucrative offer.

Gus Sands, who acts hands in glove with Goodwill Banner, and deprived of vision in one of his eyes, is the 'embodiment of economic corruption and the decline of American capitalism'. He is a great exploiter who sees the people around him as an 'expendable commodity' and entices people in the web of their frailty and he has amassed great wealth. He is such an adept in reading the minds and feeling the hearts' throb of his countrymen that he is perceived by many critics as 'the serpent in Eden'. Alex calls him "wormy" to delineate his serpentine attribute. He is also portrayed in this context as an artful and suave tempter. He has another despicable dimension to his crafty personality that of a gambler and speculator who can risk anything for money. He bets on anybody or anything. He bets on strikes, balls, hits, runs, innings and full games. Though his prospects rely heavily on luck and chance, like an adroit entrepreneur he controls his betting business through bribery, seduction, dishonesty and trickery that are characteristic of American business practices.

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COLONIAL DOMINANCE AND EXPLOITATION IN THE AMITAV GHOSH'S NOVELS

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Abstract

In an Antique Land is a literary work by Indian writer Amitav Ghosh, which combines historical storytelling, anthropological analysis, trip journal, and personal memoir. Amitav Ghosh's In an Antique Land, is an anthropological record of his encounters in two Egyptian villages, Lataifa and Nashawy, during his time as a postgraduate student of cultural anthropology at the University of Alexandria. The story explores the transformations in rural Egypt due to industrialization and globalization, focusing on the impact on traditional family connections. Amitav Ghosh skillfully integrates historical, sociological, and anthropological perspectives to illuminate the experiences of marginalized individuals. Amitav Ghosh's research study in 1980, which lasted three years, revealed fascinating personalities such as Abu-Ali, Jabir, Ustaz Mustafa, Ustaz Sabry, Imam Ibrahim, and Shaik Musa. The Calcutta chromosome narrative that alternates between present, past, and future. Amitav Ghosh's trilogy of historical fiction novels, Sea of Poppies, River of Smoke, and Flood of Fire, set in the Indian Ocean region, focuses on the events leading to the First Opium War, the opium trade between India and China, and the trafficking of indentured laborers to Mauritius. These works have been praised for their meticulous historical research, intellectually stimulating issues, and demanding portrayal.

Keywords: alienation, historical, postcolonial, subaltern, imperialism

Introduction

Amitav Ghosh was studying social anthropology at Oxford University, he discovered a compilation of letters titled "*Letters of Medieval Jewish Traders*" by S.D. Goitein from Princeton University. S.D. Goitein gathered the letters from several synagogues throughout the Middle East, including an intriguing letter about an Indian slave named Khalaf ibn Ishaq, which he sent to Ben Yiju, an Egyptian businessman residing in Mangalore, India. Ghosh found this intriguing and decided to investigate the ancestry and existence of the Indian slave and his Egyptian owner. In 1980, Amitav Ghosh conducted research and visited two Egyptian communities, Lataifa and Nashawy, for three years. He encountered intriguing individuals such as Abu-Ali, Jabir, Ustaz Mustafa, Ustaz Sabry, Imam Ibrahim, and Shaik Musa. The narrative provides extensive insights into the history of Egypt, the lives and cultures of Jews, and the historical background of the Ben Ezra synagogue.

Amitav Ghosh also highlights the misinterpretation of Indian culture and customs by the Egyptians. He describes several western academics' visits to the synagogue and the transportation of priceless papers to various libraries in America, England, and Germany. In 1981, Amitav Ghosh departed from Egypt with gaps in his attempt to rebuild the narrative of the Indian slave. Subsequently, he meticulously examined several other texts authored by Goitein and other famous experts to locate the Indian slave in relation to Ben Yiju. In 1988, Amitav Ghosh returned to Egypt to further pursue his findings. Amitav Ghosh found significant disparities in lifestyle and the impact of young Egyptians' income in Iraq. He discovered that

the Indian slave likely originated from the vicinity of Mangalore, India.

In an Antique Land (1992) is a multi-genre work that explores the interconnections and divisions between medieval Indian Ocean commerce and the present day. The book combines narratives from Egyptian villages with his attempts to trace "The Slave of MS. H. 6." Amitav Ghosh connects his interest in the slave to his experiences in contemporary Egypt, examining the Arab tradition of blood feuds and the benefits and drawbacks of village relocation to Iraq. In 1996, Amitav Ghosh published his novel, *The Calcutta Chromosome*, receive the Arthur C. Clarke Award. The story takes place in two distinct urban settings: Calcutta and New York, during the 1990s, and in an unspecified future time. The narrative mostly centers around two characters, Antar and Murugan, and delves into the consequences of British colonization on the Indian subcontinent and its populace. Antar, an Egyptian programmer working for the Transnational Water Council, initiates the narrative by learning that his colleague, Murgan, is in charge of malaria research, under the guidance of Mangala and her team. Murgan claims the indigenous community distorted Ronald Ross's discoveries. Amitav Ghosh uses personal accounts to portray the impact of significant historical events on common people's lives, aiming to reevaluate history.

In An Antique Land is a comprehensive exploration of historical events in the Indian Ocean region, highlighting Western countries' impact and the importance of alliances and collaboration in defining the region's past. The narratives of Lataifa and Nashawy, which recount Bomma's account, demonstrate the shifting perspectives of the region towards cosmopolitanism. The relationship between Bomma and Ben Yiju is unique and diverges from the conventional master-slave dynamic. People saw the Indian Ocean as a pivotal hub for transportation and commercial linkages. In the context of international relations, the relationship between Bomma and Ben Yiju lacks unique importance. We examine the cultural dynamics of Ben Yiju's time period and contemporary culture, often exemplifying this discord

through Amitav Ghosh's interactions with local people.

Antar investigates further historical records and discovers that Murugan had uncovered the enigma underlying Sir Ronald Ross' groundbreaking investigation on malaria. He asserts that indigenous Indian mystics, who believed in the transfer of a chromosome from one body to another, assisted Sir Ronald Ross in his quest for immortality. This chromosome exhibits peculiar characteristics, such as being impervious to detection or isolation by conventional methods, not universally present in every cell, lacking a systematic pairing, and not experiencing transmission from one generation to the next. It is believed to evolve through a process of recombination that is unique to each individual and exclusively located in the brain, which can serve as a means of transmission. In *The Calcutta Chromosome,* Amitav Ghosh writes, "Raising her voice, the woman said to the crowd, in archaic rustic Bengali, 'The time is here; pray that all goes well for our Laakhan, once again." (144)

The novel revolves around Murugan's disappearance, which is a key element of the story, but there are also other subplots. The setting of *The Calcutta Chromosome is dynamic and changeable, transitioning from colonial India to New York and Calcutta in 1995, and ultimately ending in close proximity to New York City.* The novel's near-future premise highlights the characteristics of a globally interconnected and transnational future, emphasizing the dynamic nature and enduring presence of national boundaries and markers. The novel begins with Antar, an Egyptian citizen residing in New York City who works as a data analyst for the International Water Council, an international non-governmental organization that regulates global access to clean water resources. The Transnational Water Council is associated with issues pertaining to colonization, with LifeWatch and other independent institutions being assimilated into the extensive public health division of the recently established International Water Council.

The railroads in the novel serve as a representation of the dominance and control maintain by the British on the Indian population. The British

equipped the railroads with railway infrastructure, enabling them to reach even the most remote towns and villages. However, the railroads can have a detrimental effect on the environment, as they require coal for their steam engines to function. Wood is the most economical fuel option in India, but it is essential to use wood to the fullest extent while it is available and strive for renewable supply. Murugan, the protagonist of Amitav Ghosh's novel, the Subaltern, searches for his missing colleague in Calcutta. The subaltern group, led by Mangala and Laakhan, seeks immortality. The narrative, divided into three parts by an expert narrator, uses scientific and counter-science concepts, fiction and reality, to provide a historical account of neglected communities. According to Spivak:

The subaltern is all that is not elite, but the trouble with those kinds of names is that if you have any kind of political interest you name it in the hope that the name will disappear. That's what class consciousness is in the interest of: the class disappearing. What politically we want to see is that the name would not be possible. So what I'm interested in is seeing ourselves as namers of the subaltern. If the subaltern can speak then, thank God, the subaltern is not a subaltern any more. (158)

Amitav Ghosh's novels, *Sea of Poppies*, *River of Smoke,* and *Flood of Fire*, provide a comprehensive account of the historical events surrounding the opium trade between China and other nations. The narrative takes place in Fanqui town, a small locality where British merchants engaged in commerce with indigenous Chinese traders. The story begins twelve months before the initiation of the initial opium war, and Amitav Ghosh creates a dynamic group of people from different geographical, cultural, and historical backgrounds who come together to accumulate wealth through trade with China.

Amitav Ghosh's Trilogy is a 19th-century novel series that explores the opium trade between India and China. The first installment, *Sea of Poppies*, tells the story of multiple individuals who find themselves on the Ibis, a vessel used for transporting slaves. The story revolves around imperialism and colonialism, with themes of opium smuggling and human

trafficking orchestrated by the British in India and China. *River of Smoke* tells the story of two imprisoned individuals who escape captivity and travel to Guangzhou, China, to engage in the illicit opium trade, highlighting the parallel narrative of the Ibis vessel. The novel features a diverse group of people from different cultural and geographical backgrounds united by their interest in trading with China.

Flood of Fire, published in 2015, the First Opium War of 1839-42 between British India and China. The trilogy traces the opium traffic as it moves back and forth across the Indian Ocean, culminating in a deadly confrontation driven by political, military, and commercial interests. The novel offers a profound understanding of the socio-political dynamics of that time period. A realistic portrayal of colonialism and imperialism, focusing on the opium trade between India and China during the 19th century. *Sea of Poppies* depicts the British East India Company's systematic exploitation of Indian resources and residents, highlighting their forceful tactics to force Indian farmers to cultivate opium instead of necessary food crops, leading to widespread famine and poverty. Deeti's initial spouse, Hukam Singh, develops an opium addiction, sourced from the British, as a poignant representation of the deleterious consequences of colonialism on both individuals and families. The trilogy also emphasizes the forced displacement of Indians to foreign nations as indentured laborers, with the Ibis serving as a symbol of the forced removal and mistreatment of individuals during colonial domination.

The First Opium War, a literary work by Amitav Ghosh, is a significant event that shaped the history of the British Empire. The series revolves around a schooner transporting enslaved individuals along the opium trafficking route linking India and China. The novel explores the confrontations between local authorities and foreign traders, as well as the individuals on two other ships affected by the same storm. The climax of the series is the commencement of the First Opium War and its consequences in the Indian Ocean region, ultimately leading to the founding of Hong Kong. The novels feature diverse

characters from various cultures, races, socioeconomic backgrounds, and genders, and introduce readers to various pidgins, such as Chinese Pidgin English and lascar languages. Britain achieved victory over China and thereafter established unequal treaties that conferred dominion over Hong Kong. These treaties had far-reaching worldwide a development that complicates a situation and marked crucial milestones in the expansion of the British Empire.

River of Smoke takes place in Fanqui town, where Western merchants engage in commerce with native Chinese dealers. Three vessels, Redruth, Anahita, and Ibis, sailing from the Sea of Poppies, face a tempestuous storm at the coast of Canton, the Chinese harbor. Bahram Moddie, the owner of Anahita, exemplifies the existence of varied identities as he journeys between India and China. Neel Rattan and Ah Fatt successfully escape from the ship and reach Canton, where they try to change their identities by modifying their clothing and appearance. Amitav Ghosh analyzes the opium traffic as a catalyst for changing the trading dynamics between China and India. In 1839, China enforced a prohibition on the opium trade with India, leading the British Foreign Secretary to organize a military expeditionary force. The novel centers around Zachary Reid, an American trader specializing in opium futures, and Shireen, the widow of an opium dealer who is being pursued for her son.

Amitav Ghosh presents information regarding the origins of trade between India, China, and the Paris Community. The Parsi community played a leading role in important commerce endeavors in India. The English colonial rulers enforced a restricted selection of products and compelled farmers to acquiesce to financial loans and enter into asámi agreements. Amitav Ghosh's novels provide a comprehensive understanding of the global system, its relationship to the development of new cities, and the resulting effects. His work highlights the interdependence of cultures and the challenges faced by individuals impacted by opium trafficking. Amitav Ghosh stated in *Flood of Fire* that:

That was the ace hidden up the sleeves of the Jardines, Mathesons and Dents of the world. Despite all their cacklings about Free Trade, the truth was that their commercial advantages had nothing to do with markets or trade or more advanced business practices it lay in the brute firepower of the British Empire's guns and gunboats. (484)

Amitav Ghosh enthusiastically embraces this challenge and perspective on the concept of the subaltern. He questions the dominant Western authority in the fields of knowledge and science, and he presents an alternative narrative of India's past and its indigenous understanding of unconventional science and technology. Antar, an Egyptian protagonist, together with his advanced computer, Ava, to search for the rightful owner of a misplaced identification card associated with the International Water Council. Antar discovers that the ID card belongs to Murugan, who vanished on his trip to Calcutta in 1995. The corporation appears to have a keen interest in Murugan and his studies, specifically urging Antar to search for Murugan and unravel the mystery surrounding him. Murugan is studying Sir Ronald Ross, a British scientist who discovered malaria through mosquito bites in India. Ross's Memoirs, published in 1923, significantly influenced subaltern discourse. Claire Chambers suggests a text containing fragments from primary sources, including letters exchanged between Ross and his tutor, Patrick Manson, and entries from Ross's diary.

Conclusion

Amitav Ghosh's work presents the marginalized subaltern group, Sir Ronald Ross's Memoirs is a robust historical testament that enables Amitav Ghosh to explore India's history during the colonial era. The novel's plot depicts all of Muragan's evidence and events. Antar endeavors to uncover the enigma behind Murugan's abrupt disappearance in Calcutta and the veracity behind the incidents that occurred during Ross's investigation of the malaria pathogen. Murugan proposes that the published history of Ross's research on the malaria bug lacks some important details.

In An Antique Land examines the changes in connections that occurred beyond the boundaries of the Indian Ocean region. Amitav Ghosh's time in Egypt, initially moving from Lataifa and later to Nashawy, highlights the lasting influence of history on the present and the harmful consequences of Western powers' forceful manipulation of historical accounts on international communication. The region surrounding Nashawy has consistently exhibited a dynamic and transient character, as evidenced by the surnames of its inhabitants, which represent their lengthy history of migration and ties to various locations in the Arab world.

Sir Ronald Ross acknowledges that the individuals assisting him in the laboratory are atypical, possessing an exceptional ability to recall the names of all slides and their specific locations. He documents this phenomenon in his memoirs, but he possesses limited knowledge of Laakhan. Sir Ronald Ross willingly subjects Laakhan to numerous studies, which ultimately lead to the identification of the specific mosquito species, Anopheles that transmits malaria. The text delves into Ross's use of Indian individuals from lower socioeconomic strata as experimental subjects, a partial history that fails to fully capture the colonial era. Sir Ronald Ross depicts Murugan, a subaltern woman, as an erudite individual with knowledge surpassing that of contemporary Western scientists. The subaltern population chooses him to document their experiences and the story of Laakhan.

The Chinese government responds to the opium trade by closing British businesses and deploying military forces, leading to the First Opium War. The Ibis trilogy explores the impact of uncontrolled globalization and economic coercion on ordinary individuals, revealing the transformative consequences of decisions made by powerful figures in the global trade structure. Postcolonial refers to the period following colonialism and imperialism, which initially emphasized direct control and dominance. Imperialism, the global system of dominant economic power, places it within its context. Postcolonial signifies the significant historical events of decolonization and self-governance, but it also acknowledges the challenges faced by nations and peoples as they navigate a new era of economic and political subjugation under imperialism. This newfound sovereignty often fosters a postcolonial culture that reevaluates colonial government values and beliefs while redirecting independence movements towards national self-governance. The term "postcolonial" refers to the changing historical context and cultural formations that result from altered political circumstances in former colonial power.

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ARUN JOSHI'S INTERDISCIPLINARY INSIGHT FUSION OF LITERATURE AND ECOLOGY HIS NOVEL *THE CITY AND THE RIVER*

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Abstract

Arun Joshi's novel The City and the River is a profound exploration of societal structures and human relationships. Through his egalitarian approach, Joshi delves into the complexities of power dynamics, social justice, and the quest for equality. This article examines the key themes and innovative narrative techniques employed by Joshi to convey his vision of an egalitarian society. This novel interwines literary narrative with ecological theme, exploring the impact of human actions on the environment.

Keywords: egalitarianism, interdisciplinary approach s, social justice, ecocritism, exploration

Introduction

Arun Joshi's literary works, including "The City and the River," are deeply influenced by Eastern ethics, particularly the philosophical traditions of Hinduism and Buddhism. His narratives often reflect the principles of karma, dharma, and the quest for self-realization. Joshi's characters frequently grapple with moral dilemmas and the search for meaning in a world marked by materialism and existential angst. This focus on inner transformation and the pursuit of spiritual enlightenment is a hallmark of Eastern ethical thought, which emphasizes the interconnectedness of all life and the importance of living in harmony with the universe. At the heart of Joshi's novel is the exploration of human relationships within an egalitarian framework. Through his integration of Eastern ethics, Joshi offers a profound commentary on the human condition and the path to true fulfillment. Arun Joshi's *The City and the River* is a profound exploration of political and social themes, but it also subtly weaves in ecological ethics. The novel's setting—a city by a river—serves as a metaphor for the interconnectedness of human society and the natural world. The river, a vital source of life and sustenance, symbolizes the delicate balance between nature and civilization.

'The River' is a Powerful Symbol of Pure Divine Energy

In contemporary literature, ecological ethics often emphasize the responsibility of humans to protect and preserve the environment. Joshi's narrative reflects this by highlighting the consequences of human actions on the natural world. The degradation of the river in the novel can be seen as a critique of environmental neglect and a call for sustainable practices. By the integrating ecological themes into his story, Joshi encourages readers to reflect on their relationship with nature and the impact of their actions on the environment. This approach aligns with the broader trend in contemporary literature to address ecological concerns and promote environmental awareness. In Arun Joshi's *The City and the River*, the river is a powerful symbol of pure, divine energy. It represents the natural, untainted essence of life and the spiritual connection between humans and the divine. The river's flow signifies the continuity of life, purity, and the eternal presence of a higher power. It is a source of sustenance and a reminder of the sacredness of nature, obviously he potray 'the city' in the novel as a hub of corruption and moral decay. It symbolizes the human-made structures and systems that have strayed from natural harmony and ethical principles. The city's rulers, with their oppressive and tyrannical ways, embody the corruption that has

seeped into the fabric of society. The contrast between the river and the city highlights the tension between the purity of nature and the corruption of human institutions. Joshi profound this dichotomy to critique the moral and ethical degradation in contemporary society, urging readers to reflect on their own values and the impact of their actions on the world around them. The novel serves as a reminder of the need to reconnect with the natural world and uphold ethical principles in the face of corruption and injustice.

The Quest for Social Justice

In "The City and the River," Joshi meticulously dissects the power dynamics that govern the lives of his characters. The novel portrays a society where power is concentrated in the hands of a few, leading to widespread inequality and social unrest. Joshi's egalitarian approach is evident in his critique of these hierarchies, advocating for a more equitable distribution of power. Through his characters' struggles and aspirations, Joshi highlights the inherent flaws in a system that perpetuates inequality. Joshi's narrative technique is deeply rooted in the quest for social justice. The characters in "The City and the River" are often seen grappling with issues of fairness and equality. Joshi uses their experiences to underscore the importance of social justice in achieving a harmonious society. His egalitarian vision is reflected in the characters' relentless pursuit of justice, despite the numerous obstacles they face. This theme resonates throughout the novel, emphasizing the need for systemic change to address social injustices.

Arun Joshi's novel *The City and the River* is a fascinating exploration of political and social themes through the lens of a fable. The novel is set in a city ruled by a tyrannical Grand Master and depicts the struggle between the ruling elite and the oppressed citizens. Joshi's narrative delves into the existential and philosophical dilemmas faced by individuals in a corrupt and oppressive society. The novel is also a political allegory, reflecting on the state of the nation and the dynamics of power and resistance.

Arun Joshi Interdisciplinary Approach of Literature and Environment

In contemporary literature, the representation of ecology has become a significant theme, often explored through the lens of ecocriticism. This interdisciplinary approach examines the relationship between literature and the environment, highlighting how literary works reflect and influence our understanding of nature and ecological issues. Ecocriticism has evolved to include various perspectives, such as deep ecology, ecofeminism, and postcolonial ecocriticism, each offering unique insights into human-nature relationships and environmental concerns. This field of study emphasizes the importance of literature in raising awareness about ecological crises and promoting sustainability. In *The City and the River*, Arun Joshi masterfully intertwines mysticism and ecology to convey a powerful message about karma and divine retribution. The river, a symbol of pure and divine energy, serves as a conduit for the natural world's response to human actions. The city's eventual washout by the river can be interpreted as a manifestation of divine punishment for the collective bad karma accumulated by its corrupt inhabitants. Joshi uses the river to represent the natural world's inherent purity and its role as an instrument of divine justice. The city's corruption and moral decay, driven by the actions of its rulers and citizens, disrupt the natural balance. This imbalance triggers a response from the river, which, in its divine capacity, cleanses the city of its impurities. The flood serves as a metaphor for the purging of sins and the restoration of natural and moral order. This narrative reflects the principles of Eastern mysticism, where the natural world is seen as an extension of the divine, and human actions are intrinsically linked to cosmic justice. The river's destructive force is not merely a natural disaster but a divine intervention, emphasizing the importance of living in harmony with nature and adhering to ethical principles. In *The City and the River*, Arun Joshi portrays the boatmen as a community deeply connected to the river, which they revere as a divine entity. Their allegiance to the river is not just a matter of livelihood but a spiritual commitment. The

boatmen see the river as their macrocosm, a larger universe that encompasses their existence and guides their actions to enlighten microcosm. This profound respect for the river is reflected in their rituals and daily practices, where they bow towards the river, acknowledging its divine presence and seeking its blessings.

Boatmen's Spiritual Cult towards 'The River's

The headmaster plays a crucial role in guiding the boatmen's spiritual journey. He helps them understand the deeper significance of their relationship with the river, encouraging them to take vows that align with the principles of purity, respect, and harmony. These vows are not just symbolic but are meant to reinforce their commitment to living in accordance with the river's divine essence. Bhomi, a central character in the novel, embodies the principle of non-violence (ahimsa) and supreme compassion. Through her actions and teachings, Bhomi demonstrates that true strength lies in compassion and non-violence. Her approach to conflict and oppression is rooted in the belief that love and understanding can overcome hatred and injustice. Bhomi's journey towards achieving supreme compassion is a testament to the power of non-violence in transforming individuals and societies. By integrating these themes, Joshi highlights the importance of spiritual and ethical values in addressing the challenges of contemporary society. The novel suggests that a return to these principles can lead to a more harmonious and just world, where individuals live in balance with nature and each other.

Conclusion

Arun Joshi's "The City and the River" is a compelling narrative that challenges the status quo and advocates for an egalitarian society. Through his innovative storytelling and profound insights into power dynamics, social justice, and human relationships, Joshi presents a vision of a world where equality and fairness prevail. His novel serves as a powerful reminder of the importance of striving for a more just and equitable society. By connecting mysticism and ecology, Joshi underscores the idea that the environment is not just a backdrop for human activities but an active participant in the moral and spiritual dimensions of life. The novel serves as a reminder of the consequences of environmental neglect and the need for a harmonious relationship with the natural world.

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CENTRALITY OF MEMORY AND ORAL TRADITION IN THE FORMATION OF CULTURAL IDENTITY: AN ANALYSIS OF THE POEMS TEMSULA AO

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Abstract

The North eastern region of India is known for its ethnic diversity and unique cultural identity vastly distinct from the mainland regions. Temsula Ao the pioneering writer remained a powerful voice from that region and documented the ethno-cultural elements of the Naga people through her poetry. She has written novels, short stories and prose works also but her poetry consists of a powerful and authentic expression of the unique characteristics of the Naga Tribes, This paper attempts to analyse the factors responsible for the creation and establishment of Naga cultural identity in the poetry of Temsula Ao. For that purpose five poems from her anthology 'Books of Songs 'were selected. These poems were subjected to textual interpretation and analysed qualitatively. Findings of this paper revealed that Temsula Ao was overmuch influenced by the unique cultural identity of the Naga people which was lost in their transition to modernity and she had a strong desire to witness a revival of the cultural values and systems of the past.

Temsula Ao, is considered as one of the greatest storytellers of North East India. She documents the identity politics of Ao naga tribes in a cultural landscape prone to changes. Ao's works deal with the relationship of culture with the environment and the inseparable nature of this in the lives of Naga people. The conflict between the forces of modernisation and traditional cultural values occupies a dominant position in the writings of Temsula Ao. She remains to be a pioneer in writing about the culture of North East India. She focuses primarily on the culture and the interaction between cultural elements and the physical environment. Ethnographic diversity of North East India contributes to the difficulties in the experiences of cultural uniformity. North East region remains a distinct area not only geographically but culturally also. This paper in order to understand the portrayal of cultural elements in the poems of Temsula Ao, analyses five of her poems included in her anthology 'T*he Book of Song*s'.The poems chosen for the analysis are History, The Old Story Teller, The Leaf Shredder, Night of the Full Moon and Blood of other Days. The poems were subjected to textual interpretation to understand the portrayal of the elements related to identity formation and cultural

transmission. The centrality of memory in the reinforcement of cultural elements is also subjected to analysis.

The politics of identity remained to be the central issue of the North Eastern writings. The Naga people have politicised their cultural identity even before the independence of India. They had their own reservations about becoming a part of the newly established nation state of India. Their primary concern was that they may face a scenario of compromising their cultural values and traditional systems. Their fears continue to exist as there was no serious attempt from the political leadership of the newly established nation state. Instead, the political leadership attempted to use military might ignoring the fears experienced by the people of the region. This has caused unprecedented violence and bloodshed in the region resulting in chaos, lack of development and political instability. Apart from the cultural elements, these issues also find a significant place in the writings of Temsula Ao. Tilottama Misra in her introduction of the book T*he Oxford Anthology of Writings from North East India"* writes that,

> "Fiction An intense sense of awareness of the
> cultural loss and recovery that came with the

negotiation with 'other' cultures is a recurrent feature of the literatures of the seven north-eastern states. Each small community or linguistic group has responded through its oral or written communication to the majoritarian cultures from either mainland India or from outside the borders of the country, in its own distinctive manner." (qtd. in Kakoti, 2017)

Temsula Ao's poetry documents the survival of Naga identity even after dreadful struggles for a prolonged period of time. Her poems vividly portray the distinctness of Naga identity and its cultural rootedness. Temsula Ao glorifies the oral tradition of the Naga tribes and celebrates the emotional attachment of the Nagas with their culture and the environment. Her poetry documents the tensions that emerge from the encounters of modernity with the cultural patterns of the Naga people. The Naga people expected that their cultural patterns should not be disturbed. Eminent historian Verrier Elwin wrote, "the basic interest of every Naga is in his family, the clan, the khel, the village. This is what he regards as his culture which must not be interfered with" (Wouters, 2018, p.59).

The historical events like British colonisation, the creation of geographical borders in the region, the influence of the nationalist policies often find expression in the poetry of Temsula Ao as she believed that these are the factors that play a vital role in the cultural experiences of the Naga people. Her poetry records the struggles of the Naga people to overcome the feelings of alienation and turmoil. Her poem 'History' speaks about the destruction of the past She laments the loss of of their religious practices and ethnic traditions. She portrays that the younger generations tend to forget their past because they have lost the contact with the Naga tradition of story telling. In the poem she states the importance of oral tradition and necessity to preserve their identity as

They now resonate
In words of new
Discernment
To augment the lore
Of our essential core
(Ao, 239)

Temsula Ao uses the natural elements like mountains, stones, rivers, trees and animals as cultural symbols to establish her cultural identity through her poetry. She also insists on the necessity of establishing cultural identity through narratives of the past. Ao in her poetry records the significant moments that shaped and reshaped the cultural identity of the Naga people like the British colonisation, ethnic clashes, bloodshed and the arrival of christian missionaries. These are considered to be very significant moments in the history of North eastern region in general and Naga community in particular because they have drastically altered the essential characteristics of the Naga tribe and their attachment towards the natural ecosystem. The Historical past of the North East region witnessed unprecedented changes which had the potential to disturb the established notions of identity creation and community formation. In her poem Blood of other Days she states,

We believed that our Gods lived
In the various forms of nature
Whom we worshipped
With unquestioning faith (Ao, 296)

The Naga cultural identity is not defined by any singular characteristic feature but it emerged from the discourses of varying articulations on their conformity with the questions of national identity. The voices for a separate Naga identity originate from their desire to preserve their unique traditions and cultural patterns. Temsula Ao advocates that for reviving their glorious past they necessarily require a cultural recovery. In the poem Old Story Teller she states

Grandfather constantly warned
That forgetting the stories
Would be catastrophic
We could lose our history
Territory, and most certainly
Our intrinsic identity (Ao, 241)

Bargohain & Rohini Mokashi- Punekar (2020) in their article,"Poetry, identity and the geography of culture: representations of landscape in poetry in English from Northeast India" state that:

"Group identities among indigenous populations become intrinsically connected to a particular

landscape, attached as they are to the cultural, social, spiritual and political significance of the land."

In the same way Ao also attempts to explore the intrinsic relationship between landscape and cultural elements.

Temsula Ao's poetry attempts to express the hopes, aspirations, dreams, desires and demands of the Naga people who indulge in a never-ending struggle to reclaim their glorious past. In her own words Ao's poetry has similarities with the great story tellers of the great Naga literary tradition. She attempts to create continuity of the past through her poetry and communicate the essential values to the young generations. In the poem Old Story Teller she states

I have lived my life believing

Story - telling was my proud legacy (Ao, 240)

Ao's poetry is often filled with an air of lamentation for the injustice inflicted upon nature which was preserved and worshiped as almighty by their previous generations. The sacred kinship that was cherished by the Naga people was severely affected by the Neo liberal projects of commercialisation in the name of progress and development. Their control over the land and the natural ecosystem came to an abrupt end with the presence of the people from other regions who had no regard for nature or the natural ecosystem. In the poem The Leaf Shredder she Staes that

She remembers at times the vast forests

Where she roamed freely

Venturing into the darkest depths

Where even the bravest did not dare. (Ao, 253)

Temsula Ao states that the stories that she inherited from her ancestors we reinforced through her memory. The stories about their ancestral past, their relationship with the natural ecosystems, community life and co existence became irrelevant to the younger generations due to the onslaught of modernity. The natural elements like the sun, moon, stars, trees, rivers, mountains and animals were worshipped b the Naga people and were considered to be fundamental to their identity formation. But the arrival of modernity has ruined all these traditions and the younger generations negate these natural systems

as not part of their livelihood. In the poem The Old Story Teller she states,

When my time came I told stories

As though they ran in my blood

Because each telling revitalised

My Life force

And each story reinforced

My racial reminiscence (Ao, 240)

Ao's poetry portrays the stark contrast between the past and the present through the depiction of human behaviour. Her poems portray the unique elements of Naga myth, belief systems of the Naga people and the age-old traditions followed by them with reverence. Ao's poetry portrays that nature is worshipped as God by the Naga people but after the arrival of modernity and colonisation to their region shattered their belief systems and forced them to accept a new God and new ways of life. Ao in her work Identity and Globalization: A Naga Perspective" states that:

The cultures of North East India are already facing tremendous challenges from education and modernization. In the evolution of such cultures and the identities that they embody, the loss of distinctive identity markers does not bode well for the tribes of the region. (Ao, 7)

The mighty mountains which remained a symbol of strength in the past have become bald and lost their charm. The people of the present generation have no reverence for nature which is the real soul of human civilisation and they indulge in destroying natural elements without considering the possible repercussions. Through her poetry Ao insists that nature not only provides the sources of livelihood but also contributes to the creation of identity and strength. In the poem Night of the Full Moon she states that,

"Remember our primal custom,

Never let this spot of hollowed earth

Ever again lie lie follow on our sacred

Full moon nights

Like some abandoned jhum field

We may have altered our name

But our person remains the same". (Ao, 266)

Naga people used these natural elements to trace their ancestral roots in the past. She has strong faith that the Naga identity is primarily constructed by nature and the coexistence with nature. The destruction of nature which constitutes the very essence of Naga identity is seen by the poet as the destruction of civilisational traits. Nature which remained as the source for the extension of Naga identity and the root of their communal life is destroyed by the younger generation. They ignored the very fact that their lives were inseparably intertwined with nature and environment. Their failure to protect nature caused the loss of the sources of sustenance. Ao had a strong belief that the myths of the past still hold relevance and they cannot be ignored. She patly represents this in the poem Blood of other days as,

> But a mere century of negation
> Proved inadequate to erase
> The imprints of intrinsic identities
> Stamped on minds since time began (Ao, 298)

Ao's poetry attempts to revitalise the Ao Naga communal identity by turning it towards following their ancestral practices, ethnic value systems and traditions. Her poems portray the relationship between natural ecosystem and human civilisation in preserving the cultural identity of an ethnic group. Temsula Ao attempts to revive or revitalise the cultural identity of the Naga people through the authentic portrayal of their tradition, past history and ethnic systems. Through her poems she pictures the unique relationship that existed between humans the natural eco system in the Northeastern region. The cultural belief systems of the Naga people were transmitted through their oral tradition as storytelling occupied a significant place in their cultural transmission.

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THE INTERSECTION OF CHOMSKYAN THEORY AND FEMINIST DISCOURSE

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Abstract

Throughout history, women's voices have often been marginalized, with societal norms constraining their linguistic identity and agency. This paper explores the evolution of women's language from imitation and compliance to self-expression and empowerment, tracing its transformation through historical, cultural, and linguistic revolutions. The study examines how feminist movements and linguistic theories, including Noam Chomsky's Transformational Generative Grammar, have redefined language as a tool for self-expression and social change. Female writers such as Virginia Woolf, Sylvia Plath, Christina Rossetti, and Toni Morrison serve as case studies to illustrate how language has been reclaimed as a means of empowerment and resistance against patriarchal norms. By analyzing women's literature and sociolinguistic trends, this paper highlights the intersection of language, gender, and power, emphasizing how the journey from silence to self-expression symbolizes broader societal shifts toward equality and liberation.

Keywords: women's language, sociolinguistics, feminism, generative grammar, language transformation, linguistic revolution

Introduction

Throughout history, women's voices have often been marginalised, with their speech and language dismissed as trivial. Women have had a complicated relationship with language, often forced to use a voice that was not their own. Women's linguistic identity was imitative and shaped by societal norms, limiting their autonomy. The paper examines the evolution of women's language and its transformation in response to social, cultural, and linguistic revolutions, including the feminist movement and linguistic theories like Noam Chomsky's Transformational Generative Grammar (TGG). The shift from silence to self-expression symbolizes women's journey toward liberation and freedom, with reference to the contributions of female writers like Virginia Woolf, Sylvia Plath, Christina Rossetti, and Aphra Behn.

Review of Related Literature

Robin Tolmach Lakoff's research explores linguistic patterns historically attributed to women, such as the use of tag questions, hedges, and polite forms. Lakoff argues that these features stem from societal expectations that positioned women as subordinate, fostering a language that prioritized deference and compliance. Her research underscores how linguistic structures reflect and reinforce gender inequality (Lakoff, 2004).

A 2023 study titled, "Sociolinguistics and Women's Language" published by Xuejiao Leng in the American Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences Research examines how women's language has evolved in response to changing societal roles. The study highlights how writers like Virginia Woolf and Toni Morrison used language to assert authority and reclaim narratives. It critiques the historical perception of women's speech as emotional and illogical, contrasting it with current sociolinguistic trends.

While there is extensive research on gender and language, the intersection between linguistic theories like TGG and women's empowerment remains underexplored. Additionally, studies often neglect the transformative role of women's literature in redefining their linguistic identity.

Objectives

- To trace the historical silencing of women's voices in literature and linguistics.

- To examine how linguistic theories, particularly Chomsky's TGG, intersect with women's linguistic empowerment.
- To analyse how modern feminist writers used language to challenge patriarchal norms.

Hypothesis

The evolution of women's language from imitation to self-expression correlates with broader societal changes, including feminist movements and advancements in linguistic theory.

The Core Concept and Framework

Language is not merely a means of communication but a reflection of identity and power dynamics. Historically, women's language was dictated by societal norms, silencing individuality and reinforcing patriarchy. However, transformative movements in linguistics and feminism have redefined this narrative. This paper explores women's linguistic evolution within this framework, analyzing how writers like Virginia Woolf and Christina Rossetti redefined language as a tool for empowerment and self-expression.

Methodology and Analysis

This study employs a qualitative approach, drawing from textual analyses of primary and secondary sources, including seminal works on language and gender, recent research articles and literary texts by female authors. The methodology involves reviewing historical contexts and feminist theories to trace the patterns and shifts in women's language.

Historically, women's language was often characterised as repetitive and imitative, reflecting their limited agency within patriarchal societies. In the Neo-Classical era (1660-1798), despite the age's emphasis on reason and lgic, women were relegated to subordinate roles in both the family and society, and their language was constrained by patriarchal expectations. Female writers of the time, such as Aphra Behn and Elizabeth Carte, often portrayed women as lacking knowledge and striving to acquire virtues to attract suitors. In the Neoclassical and Victorian eras, women's language was constrained by societal norms that idealized modesty and silence. The lack of female authorship in these periods highlights the suppression of women's linguistic identity.

The Victorian era (1837-1901) saw a shift, with women being idealized as sacred figures in literature. However, this idealization masked the underlying control and discrimination they faced, including limited rights and societal expectations of modesty and silence. Female authors like Christina Rossetti and the Brontë sisters began to challenge these portrayals, using their works to subtly critique societal norms and express women's inner lives.

Virginia Woolf, in her seminal essay "A Room of One's Own," highlighted the systemic barriers that prevented women from writing freely. She argued that women needed financial independence and personal space to create literature, emphasizing the importance of having a language of their own to express their thoughts and experiences. The mid-20th century brought significant changes with the advent of feminist movements and linguistic theories.

Linguistic Revolution and Women's Liberation

The 20th-century feminist movement marked a turning point for women's language. Parallel to this, Noam Chomsky's Transformational revolutionized linguistic theory by emphasizing the generative and individualistic nature of language. Noam Chomsky's linguistic revolution, through his theory of Transformative Generative Grammar (TGG), redefined language as a cognitive faculty, emphasizing its creative and generative nature. By distinguishing between deep and surface structures, he demonstrated how humans produce and interpret infinite expressions using finite rules. Chomsky's focus on innate language competence challenged behaviourist views and laid the groundwork for modern cognitive science. His ideas also resonated with the women's liberation movement of the 1960s and 1970s, as both sought to challenge entrenched norms and advocate for transformative change. By

linking language to thought and creativity, Chomsky's framework empowered feminist linguists to critique linguistic sexism and advocate for inclusive language, highlighting how language evolution reflects and shapes societal progress.

The Women's Liberation Movement used language creatively as a tool of protest, empowerment, and transformation, paralleling Noam Chomsky's linguistic revolution As women challenged societal norms, they deconstructed and redefined gendered language, advocating for gender-neutral terms and reclaiming their voices from a patriarchal system that had historically silenced them. Writers, activists, and intellectuals like Gloria Steinem, Audre Lorde, and Bell hooks used rhetoric and creative writing to express their lived experiences and challenge dominant cultural narratives, reflecting the movement's larger goal of redefining women's roles in society. Similarly, Chomsky's TGG revolutionized the understanding of language by emphasizing its generative, cognitive nature, which allowed for infinite expression and creativity within a finite set of rules. Just as Chomsky's theory opened the door for language to be seen as a window to the mind, the feminist movement used language as a means of self-expression, freedom, and social change.

Transformative Role of Women Writers

The works of Sylvia Plath, Toni Morrison, and Virginia Woolf exemplify how women writers used language to reclaim their narratives. Plath's 'Ariel' is a powerful exploration of identity, trauma, and liberation, attributing the emotive and transformative potential of language. Toni Morrison's novels, including 'Beloved', highlight the intersection of race and gender, using language to challenge historical erasure and oppression. Recent research in sociolinguistics continues to explore how women's language challenges traditional norms. The feminist movement has inspired writers like Alice Walker and Audre Lorde to address issues of intersectionality, emphasizing the role of language in dismantling systems of oppression.

Summing Up

The intersection of language, literature, and women's liberation reveals a dynamic and evolving journey marked by resistance, resilience, and empowerment. From the struggles of women writers in the English literary tradition to the revolutionary insights of Chomsky's Transformative Generative Grammar, both movements sought to redefine boundaries, whether linguistic, social, or cultural. Women's creative use of language, particularly within the context of English literature, has played a crucial role in dismantling patriarchal structures, enabling women to claim their narratives, identities, and voices.

In India, the rise of English education further amplified this transformation, allowing women to critique, redefine, and reshape their societal roles through literature. Indian women writers, such as Sarojini Naidu, Kamala Das and Ismat Chughtai, used English as a tool of empowerment marking a significant shift in the portrayal of women in Indian literature. This shift was further supported by the growing feminist consciousness in India, which saw the role of language as essential in the fight for gender equality. As both feminist movements and linguistic theories continue to evolve, they underscore the power of language as a tool for personal and collective liberation, illustrating how words whether spoken, written, or imagined can break through silences and build new spaces for self-expression and change.

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KURUMBAS: GUARDIANS OF THE MOTHERLAND VERSUS SOCIO-ENVIRONMENTAL EVILS FROM WHITE AS MILK AND RICE

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Abstract

The research aims on exploring the human-nature connection, rich culture and socio-environmental struggles of the Kurumba tribes of Nilgiris from the selected short stories: The Kurubas of Nilgiris from Nidi Dugar Kundilia's White as Milk and Rice. The Kurubas of Nilgiris, elucidates the lifestyle of Kurumba tribes and the social struggles they face in their daily lives due to marginalization, racism and stereotypes. Mani being the central character of the short story drives the readers throughout the tribal livelihood, rich tradition, socio-political and ecological issues. The study explores their lives under eco-human context including: indigenous medicinal knowledge, ritualistic practices, music, dance and the inherited love for the protection of their rich environment. The study further analyses the power politics and influence of society imposed on the people of the land by the government; the post-colonial impact on the rich biodiversity turning the shape of the motherland and their repository of ideas, knowledge, talents and lifestyle of the tribal communities. The unexplored side of the Kurumba tribe is emphasized much on the work which opens up multiple avenues to ponder more into their human-nature connections which underscores their deep-rooted relationship with the land, flora, fauna and the entirety of which fills the existence.

Keywords: eco-humanism, socio-environmental, power-politics, stereotypes, exploitation, dogma

Introduction

Kurumbas being the indigenous people of the land face multiple challenges under power-politics, racism, stereotypes, dogmatism and environmental plunders. The study examines the socio-environmental fabric and the deep human-nature relationship the people share with their motherland. "Eco-humanism, a branch of ecocriticism, in contemporary literature, exemplifies fostering of an innate considerations, responsiveness and empathy towards the environment; portraying the intrinsic connection between the well-being of human being alongside the ecological health; and emphasizing intertwined ethical and emphatic connections of humans and nature" (Pokhriya 22). Eco-humanism refers to the understanding that human beings are a part of nature or an environment and should cater to the preservation and development of the bio-diversity/environment. The study examines the work under this view, analyzing Kurumbas and their oneness with the environment; class conflicts; exploits and imposition of power on nature by the authoritarians. The study explores the challenges they face in their daily life as subjected to premonitions of hearsay stereotypes, discrimination in education, social dogmas considering them as evils and hatred towards their physical features. The central character Mani, being a young Kurumba, identifies his purpose and deep-rooted connection with his affluent land on his short detour with a rebel named Siva. Furthermore, the research emphasizes on the riches of the motherland, the affluent culture of the Kurumba tribes and their medicinal knowledge. The work throws light on the limitless exploitation and power imposed over the motherland by various powers since colonial era for sheer pleasure and greed.

Analysis & Interpretation
Kurumbas' Human-Nature Connection

The Kurumba tribes have an extremely deep-rooted relationship with their motherland and it is revered where they remain barefooted all the time considering

the land to be their mother and it is viewed as divine. "Kurumbas always walk barefoot, a sign of respect they accord to Mother Nature" (Dugar 76). The work meticulously portrays the compassion the people have for nature. The rebel Siva involves in various adventures where he collects honey in a unique way considering the bees as one among them. "He pulls out a bugiri, a flute-like instrument, from his trousers, playing it to the bees and then singing prayers, so they would listen to his call for honey" (Dugar 78). The above lines clearly describe the way how Siva treats the bees as equally as they do with the motherland. His consciousness to not cause them harm makes his eco-humanistic nature visible. Similarly, there is an instance where Siva while extracting honey communicates with the bees and nature as he does with humans. "Some for the forest, some for me" (Dugar 78). These words of Siva emphasize the way how he treats the forest and the biodiversity in it. He reserves few honey for the forest instead of extracting it to the fullest. This shows their humane values towards nature. Siva can be seen as a representative of the marginalized group where he maintains equality even with nature contrasting to the authoritarian landowners and exploiters who desire to plunder the entire land for their personal gains. Kurumbas have a rich culture which is intertwined with nature including: the medicinal knowledge of Moopan (Mani's father), the healing tradition of Kurumbas, art, dance, music etc   Kurumbas also act as healers by curing ailments; they are especially good at curing piles, joint pain and even diabetes. Flowers, roots, leaves, dry bark, tender twigs, climbing tendrils, twining shrubs and seeds which they dare not reveal the names of, for the fear of reducing the Kurumba power and their knowledge: These plant materials are mixed with jaggery, breast milk, small onion, pepper, turmeric and oils. Moopan, though, has only half the stock of these medicines, which are mostly foraged from the forest. (Dugar 70)

Moopan is Mani's father, considered as the healer and doctor among the tribes who uses indigenous methods and natural medicines to cure people. It throws light on the way how their medicinal knowledge can diagnose the prevailing diseases like diabetes, piles and joint pain. This clearly describes their traditional knowledge over medicines. Similarly, their time passing moments include songs, music and dance.

Old grandmothers of the hamlet would sing songs in the village square about honey collection; interspersed would be songs on elopement with lovers, extramarital affairs, abnormal sex organs, jackfruits, cucumbers, etc. The men would have played tamabati, or the drum, to which the younger women would dance in circles, clapping their hands together below the waist. (Dugar 75)

These refer to their cultural significance in singing songs themed on their environment, nature, lifestyle, routines and courtship. *Tambati,* a traditional drum is mentioned which men would use and women will dance for it in circles. Siva using the *bugiri*, to make sure he does not mean harm to the bees and snake near it refers to their knowledge of using music as mode of communication with nature. "Berries, herbs, honey and tubers grow everywhere like weeds. That is why our people never learnt to work; they've never had to harvest and store food to survive" (Dugar 81). One of the eldest men of their village, Nagan glorifies the superfluous resources bestowed by the nature and marks the affluence of the land.

Kurumbas and the Socio-Environmental Evils
The work suggests various challenges the Kurumbas face as a result of racism, stereotypes, socio-cultural dogma etc. Mani, the young protagonist, faces discrimination in the society where he is racially disregarded by the villagers of their community when they identify him as a Kurumba. He hates going to school as he faces same issue there. "She made me sit in the back of the classroom, unlike the Badaga boys. In the interval, I asked her when I would be taught a job; she slapped me" (Dugar 69). This elucidates the dogma and stereotypes which influenced the society in marginalizing the Kurumbas. Even there are mentions where people few years ago feared Kurumbas as evil sorcerers and witches.

Alu in Kannada means milk, implying good and harmless, like the milk. It is quite possible that in order to clear out or impair the negative opinion

of them by the local people, developed due to their traditional practice of sorcery and witchcraft, the Kurumbas (of this part of the Nilgiris) themselves added the prefix of Alu to their general identity of Kurumba, for an improved status and wider acceptability. (Dugar 73)

This shows how the premonitions, stereotypes, dogma, racism etc. have made the indigenous Kurumbas to add the prefix 'Alu' to show themselves as pure as 'milk'. This depicts the extremity of discrimination they faced as a result to which they had to replenish their identity. Even the land faces multiple exploits since British era. "An agriculturist tribe, the affluent Badagas made immense progress in the 1850s when the British started turning large tracts of natural forests into coffee, tea, pine and eucalyptus plantations. The Kurumbas, however, still dwelt in the jungles" (Dugar 67). This portrays the way how they have been sidelined and their forest lands being trimmed and used for plantation purpose to extract money. Siva's agitation is visible in his words.

What will we grow here when all the water is taken by that thailam maram (eucalyptus), tea and silver oak planted by the British? Those bastards have made a tea farm beyond this patchof forest,' Siva sniffs. The shola trees which the bees love, are gone. They have machines now that throw pesticides and fertilizers for more produce. More produce, bah! What do they need more money for? (Dugar 75)

This depicts the authority imposed on the people and their motherland or nature by the landowners which has slowly started affecting their livelihood where Siva's lament on eucalyptus sucking all the water in their land, the tea plantations eradicating Shola trees, even Mani finds many species of flora and fauna deteriorated as a result the brutality of human greed. This is a serious issue where the natives of the land relying on it for their livelihood might face a huge threat when the situation escalates further. They will have to fall as daily wagers as many have started working as mentioned in the work. "For decades, the forest officials have falsely arrested us Adivasis on the slightest pretext, confiscated our knives, which we

need to hack through the jungles. Last week, they asked us to move out of here. Too close to the forest, they say, and took away our honey, meat and fruit" (Dugar 81). This depicts a decade long exploit and the hostility of landowners and forest officials in occupying vast forest areas implementing plantations, eucalyptus etc. This started deforming the entire geographical landscape and biodiversity including the tribes living in it. "They all want power. Them and the political organizations and the NGOs. All we want is to live peacefully in the forests" (Dugar 81). This captures the contrasts of Kurumbas and authoritarians towards nature. "Human being acts as a natural form of being, and the human being and nature are not opposed to each other as separate entities, as they are in the system of relations as "subject and object", "subject and subject" (Kopytin 9). The human-nature oneness makes them think they are a part of it and deterioration of it is a threat to all. Rise in such anti-environmental and anti-social activities will put the tribal lives and the environment at risk.

Conclusion

White as Milk and Rice by Nidi Dugar Kundalia is a collection of six short stories traversing into the unexplored side of the isolated tribes of India. *The Kurumbas of Nilgiris,* one among them, clearly depicts the landscape, deep human-nature connection of Kurumbas, socio-environmental struggles and exploitation of natural resources. The study critically analyses the richness the geography holds including: the culture of the inhabitants and resources; discrimination in all aspects like education, work and society; role of power and authority in deforming the land and lives of the Kurumba tribes. Therefore, the relationship of Kurumbas with nature, make them a part of it emphasizing the eco-human connection. In contrast to this the landowners and forest officials show their power over nature, viewing it as an object to extract money. This throws light on the way how such plunders and marginalization pose a threat to the tribal and environment as a whole.

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FAMILY AND PASSION: A CULTURAL READING OF ARAVIND ADIGA'S *SELECTION DAY*

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Abstract

This paper explores the father-son bond within the Indian context as depicted in Adiga's Selection Day (2016). Both fathers and sons find themselves torn between their personal ambitions and the pressures of societal and neighbourly expectations. They navigate a sense of cultural scrutiny, feeling constantly observed by relatives and neighbours. Adiga masterfully intertwines the voices of the Indian middle class with their passions for cricket and self-discovery. Through the characters of Mohan Kumar and his "Young Lions,"Manjunath Kumar and Radha Krishna Kumar, the novel highlights their journey of self-discovery amidst societal expectations, showcasing the internal and external struggles of the Indian middle class.
Keywords: *family, passion, culture, self-discovery, society*

Culture plays a significant role in a diverse land like India. It does not represent a particular practice and custom; however, it has varied cultures in every nook and corner of the Indian space. Adiga is one such writer who experienced multicultural perspectives in his writings; particularly, he is fond of Indian cultures. Selection Day is one such narrative because it recorded multiple voices perhaps the voices of unprivileged Indians in India. The narrative focuses on the Kumar family's dynamics, with Mohan Kumar, the father, being a dominant figure whose aspirations for cricket fame for his sons, Manjunath and Radha Krishna, drive the story within a constrained framework. "And then the Kumars stood before the Middle-Income Group (MIG) Cricket Club (26)." As a father, he aims to achieve societal success through his sons, compensating for his own lost opportunities due to various Indian socio-economic challenges. The family's background significantly influences their journey, reflecting Adiga's portrayal of cultural politics in and out of cricket. "Why must a boy not shave till he's twenty-one? Because the cut of the razor makes hormones run faster in his blood. And why must a boy not drive a car till his father allows him to? Because indiscipline will destroy anything, even a secret contract with God." (27) The pressures and conflicts they face mirror broader societal issues, underscoring the intense expectations placed on family members, particularly within the Indian middle class. Adiga presents,

> Making his sons wait by the gate, Mohan Kumar negotiated with the security guard. We were on the TV. Young Lions. We're here to see…' Tommy Sir doesn't come until ten o'clock.' 'He told us nine o'clock. We came all the way for him. My boys shouldn't miss a day's cricket practice (26).

The situation of Mohan Kumar is that of most Middle-class Indians. They wait till the end of their lives for a chance; finally, they won't get it unless they lose their lives. The imbalances between the poor and rich are a socio-political agenda. Time passes, leaders pass and the same remains for the poor ones. They wait and wait like Mohan and his sons in the middle of a birth politics.

The indispensable sport is cricket among the Middle-class families in India. Every street finds its group of people and forms a team against the same street in the locality or neighbouring village and town, particularly in ghettos. "Whistles and cheers explode all around – Ra-dha! Ra-dha! – fora young lion has just returned to the slum (18)." Cricket is the passion that fuels the characters' ambitions and dreams. Similarly, Adiga, depicted the true Indian players are the ones, who live in slums but never have a chance to attain or at least the recognition from the media that

helps them to fetch to the mainstream he says he here in India the pathetic situation is that they never ever attain to such a supreme positiona great deal of birth. Particularly one can comprehend that the true passion becomes passionless due to one's place of birth. It serves as both a unifying and divisive force within the Kumar family. Mohan's passion for the sport is infectious but also overbearing, leading to conflicts with the family and sons, who grapple with their love for cricket and the weight of their father's expectations as pressure from outside, both emotionally and psychologically. Adiga writes, "For all this work that I will do for the boys, I don't want any money, Mr Mehta. Not one rupee. But I have a simple question, Mr: tell me, what makes a great batsman great? Hard Work? Sacrifice? Mother's Prayers? Each is necessary, yet all together are the rest of the world (40-41)."

India, with its complex cultural background, makes and gives privileged do's to a few people. Perhaps, a significant number of unprivileged Indians get majoritydon'ts in their hands. India's culture, with its rich, complex traditions and societal norms, plays a major role in some people's lives. Adiga inscribes: For now I want you to repeat something aloud. When anyone says in response: "My life is not limited by your imagination. It is our motto here. Repeat it, please. Excellent. Now the second thing I want you to do is a mental exercise (160)." The novel explores the cultural expectations that shape the characters' actions and decisions. It delves into the concept of "cultural scrutiny," where the community's watchful eyes influence personal choices and behaviours, reflecting the intricate balance between individual desires and societal pressuresAdigamarks:

> Let's go to the police right now, Manju said, as he wiped his lips clean. 'he made me drink that. Right in front of you. And you did nothing.' Mohan Kumar said nothing; his shirt stuck to his body. Manju came close and examined his immobile father. He saw no eyes, no lips, no features; and he realised that for all these years, his father had not had a face. All these years, there had been so secret contract with God, no

scientific method, no antibiotics and no ancient wisdom: just fear (212)."

Selection Day, the novel describes the character's inner conflicts and their quest to comprehend themselves, their passions, and their place in the world. It depicts the anxiety of conforming to societal norms and the desire to achieve victory and gratitude. It emphasizes the challenges faced by the Indian middle class, who navigate an intricate web of aspirations, cultural expectations, and economic pressures. The novel offers a pivotal exploration of family dynamics, personal passions, cultural influences, the journey of self-discovery, and societal prospects, explaining a vibrantdepiction of the intricacies of life in contemporary India.

Adiga's nuanced portrayal of the characters provides a deep insight into the father-son bond. Mohan Kumar's authoritarian approach and high expectations for his sons create a complex dynamic. The sons, Manjunath and Radha, struggle to meet their father's demands while seeking their own identities. This tension is central to the narrative, revealing the emotional and psychological impacts of their relationship. Adiga writes:

> All his life Mohan Kumar had warned his sons about the danger from other talented boys: he had forgotten that the real threat was from the normal and average, like this smug shirt-ironer from the Shastrinagar slum. These were the people who had destroyed Radha: they and their normal sons, who had destroyed drugs, shaving kits, and sexual materials (223)."

Manjunath's journey is particularly significant, as he grapples with his own desires and the weight of his father's ambitions whereas Radha's was different. The talerevolves around the characters'inner conflicts, highlighting their search for meaning and purpose in a culturally constrained environment. It captures the tension between personal desires and societal pressures'; showcasing the challenges faced by the middle class in balancing their dreams with cultural expectations as a revolution in nature.

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THE PERINATAL TURBULENCE OF A TOKOPHOBIC PREGNANT BEING: ARTICULATING IDENTITY DISJUNCTION AS PORTRAYED IN AMBER MCNAUGHT'S *THE ANXIETY FILLED DIARY OF A PREGNANT HYPOCHONDRIAC*

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Abstract

It is very likely that in a pregnant being, chaos is experienced from the anxiety caused during the gestation period, gets compounded, further, by an agencylessness to control physical and mental health, and gets aggravated at an inability to practice naturality and come to terms with normality. Sometimes, chaos induction may occur due to specific conditions such as 'Tokophobia' and 'Labour Dystocia,' which bring out the ante-partum and post-partum vulnerability of a turbulent individual. The chaos caused as a result of the above-mentioned conditions, cannot continue and must be overcome through the exercise of some kind of agency which can even be the narratival revistitation of chaos or a scriptotherapeutic approach. Consequently, the narratival revisitation of the trauma of chaos and the urge for restoration coupled with a resolved vision for life and a lookout for quest can result in a physical and mental amelioration. In consequence, a disjuncture in the narrativised fabrication of the chaos may pave way for an alienation with the existing identity, since narratives and identities are inextricably bound together with one mirroring the other. The panacea for dealing with fragmented narratives can be got through the stabilisation techniques of progression from the past to the present and movement from the present into the future. When the narratives, thus, expand upon a comprehensible continuity, the sifting identity moves towards a reconfigured one. In short, by giving a close reading of Amber Mcnaught's memoir The Anxiety Filled Diary of a Pregnant Hypochondriac: One Ectopic, One Miscarriage, One Last Chance – this article brings out how distressed enceinte individuals revamp their disintegrated identities by the narratival (fragmented and stabilised) reconstruction of the subjectival anamnesis of the excruciating pain and focus on the sewing of disfigured temporal dimensions in narratival presentation, along with the aligning of dissociated identities.

Keywords: tokophobia, labour dystocia, narratival revisitation, fragmented narratives, dissociated identites, disfigured temporalities

The Liminal Space of Becoming a Parent and Not Becoming a Parent

"Dis-ease" is a state of not being at ease, both corporeally and cognitively. A sick, or rather, a distressed individual has his/her body and mind under disequilibrium with the physiological and psychological systems at imbalance. Any condition of affliction would subsequently lead to chaos and disorientation. But then, the keen focus here is spotlightted upon "being stuck in between the liminal space of becoming a parent and not becoming a parent." Giving birth is a defining and life-changing event. However, quite a number of women avoid becoming pregnant or giving birth, due to the fear of miserable pregnancy, dystopic childbirth, and past traumatic episodes of childbearing. "Tokophobia" and "Labour Dystocia" are how the above-mentioned anxieties are bio-medically termed. The National Center for Biotechnology Information (NCBI) loosely defines "Tokophobia" as the pathological and irrational fear of pregnancy and childbirth. Due to this, around 20% of the women avoid becoming pregnant or giving birth, though they wish to have children. Usually, Primary Tokophobia occurs in women who have never experienced childbirth and Secondary Tokophobia occurs in women who have previously

had a traumatic childbirth. They fear about birth-related complications, worry along the lines of past mishappenings and episodes of traumatic childbirth, or become anxious about the life of the infant. While it is completely normal to have fears and concerns about pregnancy, a debilitating anxiety would make the individual exhibit an avoidance behaviour towards her partner, exercise suffocating hypervigilance on not getting pregnant, and display reduced bonding with the fetus, incase of pregnancy. Interestingly, there are tokophobic men who have a severe fear over the health and safety of their partner and child. On the other hand, "Labour Dystocia," as defined by the National Center for Biotechnology Information (NCBI) is the onset of sudden pre-mature labour or difficult and traumatic delivery. The traumatised women process a looping memory of the labour trauma combined with any prior trauma, experience frequent physiological and psychological collapses, lose confidence in parenting, exhibit obssessive overprotection towards the infant diluting the parent-child bonding, share a distanced relationship with the partner, face failures in career, etc. Having said that, the above discussed conditions expose an expectant mother's vulnerability, prior and post pregnancy.

Life to Art and back to Life
It usually happens that in a troubled individual (or for that matter, any ill person), chaos shoots up due to the anguish caused by the infirmity, gets heightened, further, at the powerlessness to hold the physical and mental health under balance, and worsens at the incapacitation of exercising naturality and fulfilling normality. Thus, chaos can erupt due to various factors and be felt at different levels. But then, chaos cannot have a continued reign after the onset of an anxiety and has to be overpowered by exerting some sort of agency, which can even be the narrativised revisitation of chaos. In this way, when narrating control is introduced, the chaos being encountered begins to subside. Yet, it would be beneficial and wise to transform chaos into quest through the utilitarian exploitation of chaos itself, which narratively revisits the anguish-filled journey of an infirmity as a calling to determine the purposeful outlook of life and engage

in reflexive self-search. An amalgamate of the narratival expression of the trauma of chaos and the desire for recuperation, backed up by a sense of impetus and a value for quest can bring about both a physiological revival and psychological revitalisation (Ellis). In short, by giving a close analysis of Amber McNaught's *The Anxiety Filled Diary of a Pregnant Hypochondriac: One Ectopic, One Miscarriage, One Last Chance* (2019), a memoir on "Tokophobia" and "Labour Dystocia" – this article delineates how through narratological (fragmented and stabilised) expression of the subjective revisitation of chaos, distressed individuals claim control over chaos through the narrativization of a subjectival reconsideration of the trauma and construct a quest-driven redemption utility out of the expressed narratives, which allows the emergence of an enterprising panorama and a fresh perspective to the traumatising experience.

Literary Autopathography – A Background
In 2017, *The Anxiety Filled Diary of a Pregnant Hypochondriac: One Ectopic, One Miscarriage, One Last Chance* begins as a lifestyle blogger's online diary documentation of her hardships with Tokophobia and her anxieties over becoming pregnant again, after going through the agony of miscarriage and the misery of an ectopic pregnancy. Expecting compassionate comments as responses to her desolate diary entries, she is in for a shock, when a community of women identify with her after the metabolisation of her grief-filled narratives. She gives a raw and honest account about her unnecessary, yet, haunting fears over the terrifying process of conception, the anxious journey of pregnancy, the traumatising hours of childbirth, and the loaded responsibility of parenting, which had guided her to the decision of not begetting a child. Yet, driven by societal duresses and the guilt of untried attempts on this life-giving affair, McNaught forces herself to make some trial moves with pregnancy and childbirth. But, as powerful thoughts and anxiety-influenced beliefs shape life, things go haywire proverbially, leading to a miscarriage the first time and an ectopic pregnancy in the second, aligning with her worst fears. Though she

could desensitize herself from the phobia out of the experiences gained and the externalisation done, she gets ready for another pregnancy with only a pessimistic attitude, disbelieving any arrival of goodness. She, naturally, starts expecting the superlative deterioration with mindfulness and always looks for a yardstick to believe that things are fine. The narratival expression seems to be her only way to keep her sane and put the chaos, disbelief, and pessimism under control. Also, the subjectival rendering pushes her towards a child-bearing stance by connecting with other reader victims and, simultaneously, gives her the quest value that though there are many possibilities of succumbing to death while giving birth to a life, the satisfaction of procreation can numb the ante-natal and post-natal discomposures. Within a short span of two years, the frequently updated diary entries procured wide readership and went for publication in 2019. McNaught says, "By sharing my story, my hope is to do for other women what they did for me when I first started writing about my pregnancy - to help them feel a little bit less alone, and maybe even give them a bit of hope that it is possible to survive pregnancy, even when you're scared to death" (8). The documentation is sure to throw light on the balancing of chaos and control continuum, along with the channelising of chaos into an alternative way of well-being through narrativised construction of the pangs.

A Therapeutic Re-enactment
The research approach undertaken for this study is a theoretical application and intepretation to the analysis of the literary autopathography of McNaught. It is discussed as to how a scriptotherapeutic approach, suggested by Suzette Henke in her work *Scattered Subjects* (1998), helps in keeping the 'Chaos' and 'Control' under equilibrium. Frank, in his *The Wounded Storyteller* (2013), opines that 'Chaos' and 'Control' are the two ends of a continuum. In other words, they are like the two ends of a sea-saw, where when one goes up, the other comes down. Likewise, diminishing control leads to increasing chaos and vice versa. Usually, chaos exacerbates when the victim of a perturbation feels helpless in

keeping his body and mind at equilibrium, alongside pressures from the external world. So then, when an overload of chaos shoots up to a breaking point an alleviation or escapade is, in one way, achieved by the narratival expression of the chaos itself, through a subjective retrospection or anamnesis, in the mode of therapeutic re-enactment. Frequent revisitation of the chaos lessens and numbs the pain, by which the victim starts exerting control and the chaos starts subsiding. As a result, chaos and control can be brought under balance. To be precise, the initial step of exercising control over chaos is the subjective contemplation of chaos through narrativised construction, which is the therapeutic process of writing out and writing through the traumatic experiences, capable of providing a desensitisation and adding an uplifting significance and meaning to the bitter events of life. The same approach is found with McNaught, where she uses narrativised reconstruction as a tool to externalise and deaden all levels of her chaos.

The Continuum of "Chaos" and "Control"
Throughout her memoir, McNaught exudes fear and anxiety over pregnancy and childbirth. Her thought, "I grew up knowing that being pregnant didn't necessarily mean you were going to have a baby. Sometimes, it just meant you were going to go through some horrific ordeal, and possibly end up dying in the process," (McNaught 12) easily points perplexities, confusions and chaos over this issue. The infirmity of being childless as such, though it is a voluntary decision, pushes her to undergo chaos, everytime her thoughts wander to this indisposition. Her experience of chaos throughout the discourse is at different levels – chaos experienced as a result of pregnancy and childbirth phobia, chaos undergone as an aftermath of failed pregnancies, chaos endured due to the guilt of losing a child and irresponsible parenting, chaos suffered due to society's stinging comments on not entering the fruit bearing phase of womanhood, and finally, chaos tolerated due to the agencylessness in naturality and achieving normality. Certain levels of effectuating chaos are apparent in one of her statements, "Pregnancy terrified me; childbirth even more. I'd suffered severe health anxiety for over a

decade at that point: I knew I just couldn't risk the horrors that lurked down that nine month long tunnel - the one where the only light at the end came from the operating theatre lights they'd presumably have to cut me open underneath" (McNaught 13). Chaos is so gelled with her life and routinised that, at one point of time, where she is pregnant for the third time, she wants "to feel sick because atleast it would be a definite pregnancy symptom…" (McNaught 37). She goes to the extent of using chaos as a benchmark, rather a shield, to her well-being. But a prolonged exposure to chaos, will drive the victim crazy and it is necessary that chaos needs to be put in place. Deploying internal control over chaos is one way to its abatement. It has already been mentioned that "Chaos" and "Control" are the two ends of a continuum (Frank). Review and construction of the chaos, via a literary pathography, has been a chaos reduction exercise for her. She pinpoints that, "… for me it's (writing is) also a very natural one given the passion I've always had for documenting my life" (McNaught 175). Moreover, she sticks to revisiting and narrativising concurrent chaos, rather than going behind decades old chaos, through her diary updates. This sort of discursive production which takes in contemporaneous chaos for interaction is something that kept her marching towards quest than head back to the older self of being childless. In other words, due to the frequent interaction with the concommitant chaos she endures, she uses narratival reconstruction as an avenue for exerting control, and simultaneously, this creates a community of sufferers who have metabolised the victim author's pain and make her reconsider her slants over pregnancy and childbirth.

The Struggle, the Adaptation, and the Revitalisation

An illness narrative is not an externalised objective construct but an internalised subjective experience that the victim enters, through an interaction with the disease or the indisposition he/she suffers from (Frank). However, narratives on certain infirmities like that of Tokophobia and Labour Dystocia may carry a societal taboo pertaining to the expression and discussion of the condition, but a heightened control on the chaos and a complete revivification from the woe, can be deployed and achieved only by a reliable retelling of the trauma without giving a slant to the externally thrust stigmatised opinions. Moreover, the narrative construction, atleast to an extent, can follow some framework to achieve coherence, though fragmentation becomes unavoidable. It can fall under the structure of Chaos, Restitution and Quest or can be presented as a combination of any of the two or all of the three, supported by loose patterns (Frank).

A chaos representation of a narrative shows the progression of aching, from bad to worse to worst (Costello). Moreover, the sufferer is put in a place, where he/she is not able to exercise a minimalistic agency, either on his/her narrative, on his/her disease or on his/her tainted identity (Ellis). Frank's take on chaos narrative is that, "Its (Chaos) plot imagines life never getting better. Stories are chaotic in their absence of narrative order. Events are told as the storyteller experiences life: without sequence or discernable causality" (97).

A quest narrative aims to determine the profound meaning of suffering, the matured acceptance of temporality, and the inclusive learning for actuality, got from undergoing the taxing coporeal and cognitive anguish. Like it accepts illness and seeks to make the most of chaos, a quest narrative welcomes lack of narratival cohesion, narratival coherence, and the reality of disruption, as it can easily bring about narratival stitching through the edification obtained. It gives a breath of freshness from the slush of chaos, underscoring that things have altered and they need acceptance (Costello). Moreover, Frank is of the opinion that, "Illness is the occasion of a journey that becomes a quest," with the ill person believing, "that something is to be gained through the experience" (115). Therefore, illness is agreed to be discomforting but at the same time is educating, in a way of quest approach, where the victim can look for enlightenment from the chaos, wellness from the trauma, and an informed self from the tough reality (Nosek et al). Metaphorically, the chaos experienced due to illness, throws a challenge at the victim asking him/her to draw from itself a resuscitating utility value that yields a wholesome healing and explore with

quest an avenue that leads to a reformed self. In short, quest narratives can be called the voices of the transformed ill.

A restitution narrative focuses on renewing or setting right the interruption that has come to the normal functioning of the physiological and psychological health. Frank's diluted definition of restitution, as perceived by a sufferer is that, "Yesterday I was healthy, today I'm sick, but tomorrow I'll be healthy again" (77). It just focuses on believing that the body and mind can be restored to a state that existed before the illness, slipping away from acknowledging the journey of illness as a process of metamorphosis. Feelings of restitution, sometimes, doesn't provide the opportunity for individuals to realise the dissociation (experienced by the body and mind) caused by chaos or the reconfiguration (to the self) caused by quest.

The narratival structuring of McNaught's sick-lit can be analysed with the explored narrative patterns given by Frank. McNaught's memoir embraces a concoction of chaos, quest, and restitution narrativisation. She oozes chaos - because of her fears over pregnancy and later over episodes of a traumatic miscarriage and an ectopic pregnancy – when she says, "I wasn't just scared to death: I was scared of death - and it seemed to me that pregnancy and childbirth provided women with so many different opportunities to die" (McNaught 11). A gradual movement in the narrative, presents the structure of restitution, when she bounces back to avoiding pregnancy, due to a miserable impact of the chaos she underwent. She miserably laments after her miscarriage, in a state of giving up that, "I changed my entire world for nothing: and now I have to try to change it back" (McNaught 16). But in due course of the narration, she presents the understanding that restoration to the older self would do lesser good. Gradually, she heads to extract the quest value out of the chaos (by desensitisation); risks going through a third pregnancy (though with a negative attitude); and emerges a victorious survivor confident enough to tell, "After all, if I can do it, anyone can" (McNaught 8). On the whole, the victim author takes the partcipating reader on a roller coaster of struggle, refurb, and adaptation, which parallels Frank's chaos, restitution, and quest.

Conclusion

For a perturbed person, chaos shoots up due to numerous reasons and can be experienced at various levels, say, chaos caused by the infirmity, chaos built by the non-exertion of agency over his/her health, and chaos as a result of the disconcord between following naturality and achieving normality. Nevertheless, an extended exposure to chaos will only drive the person insane, so it is crucial that the chaos be quelled. One way to mitigate chaos is to implement internal control and the control can be deployed through scriptotherapy or the narratival reconstruction of the subjective anamnesis of the chaos itself. When chaos is revisited frequently, the pain becomes lessened and gets alleviated allowing the victim to exercise control over the chaos, which eventually leads to the dissipation of the chaos. By doing this, a balance between chaos and control emerges. Thus, in essence, narrativised reconstruction having patterns of chaos and quest is one avenue that would aid a traumatised individual to revamp himself/herself from agony to atonement, inject a resolute perspective to his/her vague life, and push him/her towards reconfiguring his/her charred identity.

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THE IDEA OF 'HOME' AND THE JEWISH HOMELAND

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Abstract

This passage from the book 'The Story of Philosophy' gives a gist of the history of the Jews and their cultural integrity. 'Diaspora' is an ancient term used almost exclusively to describe the dispersion of Jewish people worldwide. An interesting history of the term comes from the diffusion of Jewish and Greek populations in the ancient world. From the time of the Babylonian captivity, Jews had been divided between their Palestinian homeland and Babylonia. After they were freed from enslavement in Babylon, they spread from Mesopotamia to the Mediterranean shores. Jewish populations held onto their religion, but many adapted the Greek language, and thus it was that it was that the Greek-speaking Jews of Alexandria, the Great commercial city of the Egyptian coast, decided in roughly two hundred BCE to support a translation of the Hebrew Bible into Greek. This translation, the Septuagint, used the Greek term 'Diaspora' to translate several Hebrew terms that describe the scattering of Jews outside the Jewish Homeland.

Keywords: diaspora, cultural integrity, captivity, enslavement, scattering

'Diaspora' is an ancient term used almost exclusively about the dispersion of the Jewish people worldwide. An interesting history of the term comes out of the diffusion of Jewish and Greek populations in the ancient world. From the time of the Babylonian captivity, Jews had been divided between their Palestinian homeland and Babylonia. After they were freed from enslavement in Babylon, they spread from Mesopotamia to the Mediterranean shores. Jewish populations held onto their religion, but many adapted the Greek language. Thus, it was that the Greek-speaking Jews of Alexandria, the Great commercial city of the Egyptian coast, decided in roughly two hundred BCE to support a translation of the Hebrew Bible into Greek. This translation, the Septuagint, used the Greek term 'Diaspora' to translate several Hebrew terms that describe the scattering of Jews outside the Jewish Homeland.

As the term has proliferated, its meaning has been stretched to accommodate the various intellectual, cultural and political agendas in its enlisted service. This has resulted in what one might call a 'diaspora'- a dispersion of the meanings of the term in semantic, conceptual and disciplinary space (Brubaker, 119)

There is also a dilemma between the diasporic identity and the native identity. The idea of laments, a fellowship that powerfully echoes the past glory and distinctiveness of the native culture through literature and rituals, was born out of an anxiety to preserve the native identity in a foreign land. This is the secret behind the well-bound Jewish tradition that both preserved its integrity and sustained itself through multiple invasions.

After the exile, the people were scattered geographically, subject to various political authorities, and diverse in language. Religious tradition and observance assumed an ever-greater role in maintaining a distinctive identity. Even ethnic considerations were subordinated in importance in the case of proselytes and renegades. The problem of singing the song of the Lord in a foreign land was the problem of maintaining the identity of the people and its survival as a distinct entity. (Collins, 1)

When a native enters his homeland, he feels an unexplainable joy and security within himself resulting from the 'familiarity' and the environment, which led to the term 'homecoming'. His expectations and conception of what Rushdie calls 'Imagined Homeland' have been met.

The Book of Lamentations is also a diary of the exiles, a tool that reflects the Jewish identity and contrasts with the Song of Songs. It records the mental, physical, and spiritual sufferings of an exile.

The term 'Home' functions as a repository for complex, interrelated and sometimes contradictory socio-cultural ideas about people's relationship with one another, especially family and places, spaces, and things. It can be a dwelling place or a lived space of interaction between people, places, things; or perhaps both'. (Mallet 2004:84)

The word 'home' is derived from the Greek term 'oikos'. It is not a mere place to live in but a cultural, social and communal construct. One builds a house, made into a home by experiences, feelings, memories, and communion. Similarly, a homeland is a socio-cultural concept. The idea of home can be conceived as static and unstatic, permanent and changing simultaneously because though it is a concept and part of a system, it is also geographical. When geography or 'space' changes, its emotional attributes also change. It is more psychological than geographical. There is always an ideal homeland in the minds of an exile, which Rushdie discusses in his 'Imaginary Homelands'.

Thus, the homeland of the Jews is an inheritance from God himself. When analysed using the three elements of Homeland, i.e., space, place and sense of place, In the case of the native Jews and the homeland, space and place play a more important role. The land is considered as 'the Promised Land' the symbol of the covenant box is used throughout the Old Testament to denote the presence of God. Wherever the ark was, the people were, and after settling in the land, the Temple was built for the ark.

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IMMIGRANT EXPERIENCES AND THE PLIGHT OF INDIAN IMMIGRANT WOMEN IN SHASHI DESHPANDE'S *THE DARK HOLDS NO TERRORS*

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Abstract

Shashi Deshpande through her novels constructs the world of immigrant's experiences and represents the plight of Indian immigrant women. The emotional identification and affirmation of self anguish through their conflicts provide a rare authenticity to her narrative presentations in her novels. Deshpande has transcended boundaries negotiating two different worlds her country of birth, India and the adopted western country, America, from various perspectives. Through her writings, Deshpande projects the down-troddens' struggle to assimilate the culture of the adapted country and yet retain the cultural and traditional practices of the home country. Deshpande also speaks from the perspective of immigrants living in India. In her novel, Therefore, throughout the text, very rarely, any other national enters the store except for Mythic hero, the Indian Indian. Her works are studied essentially under five heads namely: Genderism; Identity Crisis in Indians, Phenomenon of Ghettoization, Trans-Culuration and Assimilation.

Keywords: trans-culture, identity crisis, plight of Indian woman, patriotism

Introduction

In Deshpande's novel, *The Dark Holds No Terrors*, Sarita and her friends are a witness to the gender attacks. The attack on the Kurma House in the aftermath of 9/11 is similar to what other women suffers in India. Manu, a second-generation Sikh, is mistaken for a Muslim. Muslims are often equated as terrorists the world over. He was attacked by the vandalizers despite his repeated pleas that he was also an *Indian*. Sarita is faced with the dilemma of hoisting an *Indian* flag at her shop to profess her patriotism. This act of exhibiting her nationality raises a few doubts in her. She found it odd that she has ''to convince somebody of her nationality and patriotic feelings while she has been an *Indian* throughout her life. Suddenly she is assailed by doubts at her reflection in the glass, "the brown skin, the Indian features, the dark eyes with darker circles under them, the black crinkles of my hair. It's familiar and yet, suddenly, alien" (27). Thus, a keen study of the novels by Shashi Deshpande shows not only the racism as practiced by the whites but al-so racism as practised by the Indian.

Sarita, the potagonist in *The Dark Holds No Terrors*, despite her urge to know the ethnic country her parents hail from, could master only the spoken form of the language. Therefore, she seeks her father's assistance in deciphering the Dream Journal written by her mother. Of course, the slowly disappearing proficiency of language eventually results in the widening of communication gap among the first and subsequent generation. The case of Sarita in *The Dark Holds No Terrors* is different though she is a second-generation migrant. Interestingly, her mother keeps her in ignorance about her culture and country unlike other Indians. Ironically, this leads to Sarita being inexorably drawn towards the mystic and ethnic India

Here history and myth go in the background and female voices assume central spaces with unconventional dimensions. The obsessive concern

with the predicament of women in Indian society, gives a new direction to her consciousness to synthesize past and present. All the stories of oppression are narrated in modern social context with the conclusion that 'silence' and 'subjugation' have been common predicament of women in all ages and all cultures. The feminist mood coupled with the idea of reconstruction of myths shifts and Deshpande explores the possibilities of unfolding the layers of forgotten past to strengthen the will of characters caught in the whirlwind of adverse conditions. The earthquake, the danger of life n voyage becomes a background to explore and to expose the earthquakes taking place within the consciousness of characters. The controlling of narrative at two levels becomes almost dramatic to visualize the realities associated with the life of these characters. For each novel, Deshpande selects a new narrative mechanism to cope up with her rambling imagination. This approach breaks the myth of "confined imagination" of women writers. With the expansion of the frontiers and breaking of boundaries in global era, women writers shattering the bonds of domestic spaces on moving in the direction of global perception of human conditions, is the cardinal core of the narrative creed of Deshpande.

Shashi Deshpande's fictional art radiates the various dimension and shades of the existence of woman in male dominated social order. Her world of feminine experiences is complex, delicate and dynamic inhabited by the women twisting in the contradictory shades of tradition and modernity sharing the burden of the practices of Oriental and Occidental simultaneously. In Deshpande's fictional world women can be appreciated in four distinctive categories (a) Woman in context of social order, (b) Woman in context of cultural constraints, (c) Woman in context of their own feminine sensibility, (d) Woman and the new paradigms of man and woman relationship. In all these four spheres, the emotional intensity, exceptional human sensitivity coupled with infinite zest for life with the undertone of protest and resistance marks, a distinction in the world of Shashi Deshpande.

Like Bharati Mukherjee, Deshpande inspite of her nurturing in the progressive and unconventional society of America, expresses her innate affinity with the traditional frame work of Indian life. Indian society sanctions little freedom to woman and she is expected to design the dreams of her life only in accordance to the paradigms set by the norms of patriarchy. Tilo in *Mistress of Spices* in her ability to administer the various spices to her customers distinctively, exhibits that a woman survives in a specific world of her own dedicated to food and spices. However, the comprehensive understanding of hidden properties justifies that even the limited vision affords the possibilities to a woman to design a comprehensive idiom of human predicament. In addition to that, Deshpande boldly takes up the issues of emigration in her works. She has chosen to write about the reversion in peoples' thinking after assimilation, trans-culturation and acculturation process that are major aspects in any migration is-sue.

She writes about the cultural preservation in the form of her works how women face the double burden of preserving the home culture and tradition as well as learn new cultures and tradition in order to integrate into their newly adopted country. In this context, the works of Deshpande hold interest as she falls under the classification of first generation down-troddens. She comes from traditional families settled abroad at a young age and took to writing after migration to the U.S.A. She portrays not only the down-trodden experiences of Indians but also the experiences of other nationals as down-troddens. Migrants are caught in the interstitial space between the home culture and the culture of the adapted world and their works capture the essence of it. The world of migrants thus becomes a contesting space for religion, culture, experience, home creating a hyphenated feminist identity.

The novel has been appropriately titled as *The Dark Holds No Terrors* based on the renowned palace that the Mythical characters built for her. It opens with three narrators Sarita, her brother, and her nurse. It presents dissimilar versions of the tale of Sarita's birth and fate. Her life as a child, her pride, her resentment, her expectations, her love, her passions, her dreams

and her inquisitiveness are obviously explained by the writer. She declares that she does not want to support the men around her. Old man warns her that she will not be able to control anything in the future.

As the days roll down, she grows into a young lady and the time of her marriage comes. Unlike other women, she is married to five men, all of whom love and respect her. When she sees her husband for the first time, she observes: "I was a woman. I had to use my power differently" (99). In spite of being granted in-dependence from her mother's house and especially her father and the status as queen, "her unconventional polyandrous marriage bears the risk of being seen as an insatiable whore" (118). She spends a year for each husband and her virginity restored each time when she enters bedroom of a new husband. She says that "I had no choice as to whom I slept with, and when" (120). She describes a soothsayer's verdict: "I would be wife to each brother for a year at a time, from oldest to youngest, consecutively. During that year, the other brothers were to keep their eyes lowered. In a postscript added that he would give me a boon to balance the one that had landed me with five spouses. Each time I went to a new place, I'd be a virgin again" (120). In the beginning, she has thought too much 'about other women, especially those who have one husband. But later on she changes her mind and thinks less about the surrounding women. She tells herself: "For better or worse, I was a woman" (139). She longs for her identity. Although she was married to five brothers, she loves her husband's enemy, the famous warrior Manu. It is that she wants to be from her internal and passionate struggle for sexual freedom but she is not supposed to make known whatever she feels about Manu. Like other Indian women writers like Arundhati Roy, Githa Hariharan, Jhumpa Lahiri, Kamala Das, Shobha De and Bharati Mukherjee, Deshpande too deals with the problems of women in her works. Her works make us think and re-think about the contemporary predicaments and troubles of women. Buley-Meissner Mary Louise says: "formal literary criticism addressing her work is rare, a situation likely to change as her novels are given more attention in educational circles" (43)

Conclusion

Deshpande gives a "voice to female Asian immigrants and portrays the struggle with hybrid identities in her fictions" (25). Once she says that she really wanted "to focus on women battling and coming out triumphant" (26). Though she has written about the problems and troubles of women, she personally wants to pen down about the winning women over men. Her works have the themes of women struggling for freedom and her female characters disparaging power and stunning beauty. She declares: "they remained shadowy figures, their thoughts and motives mysterious, their emotions portrayed only when they affected the lives of the male heroes, Deshpande holds that women are as equal as men in the society. She shows them to be more than just daughters, mothers and wives of great heroes of the epic Mahabharata. Although the story happened three thousand years ago, similar incidents have appeared in the society and there is no change in treating women as slaves in the present scenario. 'Sarita who is known as a powerful, strong and independent woman. She is very silent and mute character. She is seen as a victim of patriarchy. When her husband loses everything, he and his brothers gamble her. His opponents try to harass her by removing her sari. No one in the court tries to save her from this act of sexual harassment but she is saved by God. The comparable episodes recur in many places. After so many years, women are still suppressed by the male dominated society. There are hundreds of rapes and sexual harassments happening today. Suppression and oppression of women are very common in these days as in those days. Technically Indian writers are advanced and innovative for many things. But psychologically men follow the myth treating

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TASK-BASED SECOND LANGUAGE TEACHING FOR FIRST-GENERATION ARTS COLLEGE STUDENTS

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Abstract

This article examines the efficacy of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) for first-generation arts college students, highlighting its transformative impact on language proficiency, engagement, and motivation. By emphasizing authentic, real-world tasks, TBLT bridges the gap between academic language and practical application, empowering students to navigate complex linguistic and cultural contexts. The integration of digital devices revolutionizes TBLT, offering immersive experiences through language learning apps, virtual reality headsets, and multimedia software. Personalized feedback and real-time assessment enable targeted support, while online collaboration platforms foster peer interaction and autonomous learning. TBLT's student-cantered approach addresses unique challenges faced by first-generation arts college students, including limited prior exposure to academic language and technology. By leveraging digital TBLT, educators create inclusive, technology-enhanced learning environments that promote linguistic proficiency, cultural competence, and academic success. Key findings underscore TBLT's potential to enhance language skills, boost motivation, and cultivate collaborative learning. Recommendations for effective implementation include needs analysis, task design, teacher training, and continuous evaluation. Ultimately, digital TBLT emerges as a paradigm-shifting approach, empowering first-generation arts college students to transcend language barriers and thrive in academic and professional pursuits.
Keywords: task-based language teaching, linguistic, real-world tasks, learning apps, student-cantered

Introduction

First-generation arts college students often encounter distinctive language learning obstacles, including limited exposure to academic language, lack of prior learning strategies, and inadequate technological proficiency. Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) effectively addresses these challenges by focusing on authentic tasks that mirror real-life scenarios, thereby enhancing students' practical language skills and cultural competence. Digital devices significantly augment TBLT, providing immersive and interactive experiences through language learning apps, virtual reality headsets, audio/video editing software, online collaboration platforms, and learning management systems. These digital tools facilitate engaging tasks, personalized feedback, real-time assessment, authentic materials, and enhanced motivation. For instance, language learning apps like Duolingo and Babbel offer interactive lessons and instant feedback, while virtual reality headsets enable simulated conversations and cultural immersion. Audio/video editing software allows students to create multimedia presentations, promoting self-directed learning and peer review. Online collaboration platforms and learning management systems streamline communication, feedback, and assessment. By integrating digital devices into TBLT, educators can create inclusive, student-cantered, and technology-enhanced learning environments. This synergistic approach fosters autonomous learning, collaborative engagement, and linguistic proficiency, empowering first-generation arts college students to overcome language barriers and achieve academic success. Effective TBLT implementation involves needs analysis, task design, teacher training, classroom management, and continuous evaluation. By

embracing digital TBLT, educators can bridge language gaps, promote cultural understanding, and enrich the academic experiences of first-generation arts college students.

Authenticity: Real-world tasks

Authenticity in Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) is achieved through real-world tasks mirroring everyday language use. Examples include writing job application letters, conducting peer interviews, creating cultural presentations, debating current issues, and designing visual projects. These tasks reflect genuine communication needs, involving meaningful language use.

Incorporating real-world tasks fosters problem-solving and critical thinking, encouraging collaboration and interaction. Learners develop essential communication skills, analytical thinking, and creative solutions. TBLT enhances language proficiency, practical communication skills, learner engagement, and motivation. By engaging in authentic tasks, learners connect language to real-life scenarios, making learning relevant and effective.

TBLT's benefits extend beyond language proficiency. It develops:

- Practical communication skills
- Critical thinking and problem-solving
- Collaboration and teamwork
- Adaptability and flexibility
- Cultural awareness and understanding

By preparing students for real-life situations, TBLT makes language learning transferable to everyday life. This transformative approach equips learners with skills for academic, professional, and personal success. TBLT's authentic tasks bridge language learning gaps, empowering learners for everyday communication.

Effective TBLT implementation requires:

- Needs analysis
- Task design
- Classroom management
- Continuous feedback

Teachers should provide clear instructions, support, and guidance. Technology integration can enhance authenticity through:

- Real-world materials
- Interactive tools
- Virtual simulations

By embracing TBLT, educators can revolutionize language learning, making it engaging, relevant, and effective. Learners will develop language skills, confidence, and autonomy, preparing them for real-world challenges.

Task-based instruction: Learning by doing

Task-Based Instruction (TBI), a core principle of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), facilitates learning through hands-on experiences. This "learning by doing" approach engages students in authentic tasks like completing job applications, participating in debates, creating multimedia presentations, conducting interviews, and solving real-world problems. Through TBI, students develop practical language skills, making language learning relevant and purposeful. By taking ownership of their learning, students encourage collaboration and peer feedback, improving language proficiency and confidence. Effective TBI implementation involves needs analysis, task design, classroom management, continuous feedback, and technology integration. This student-cantered approach revolutionizes language learning, empowering students with essential skills for real-world challenges.

Benefits

1. Improved language proficiency
2. Enhanced confidence
3. Practical communication skills
4. Increased motivation
5. Better retention

Digital Devices: Immersive Experiences and Feedback

Digital devices in Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) provide immersive experiences and feedback, revolutionizing language learning. Interactive tools like language learning apps, virtual reality headsets, audio/video editing software, online collaboration platforms, and learning management systems offer engaging tasks, personalized feedback, real-time

assessment, authentic materials, and enhanced motivation. Digital devices facilitate simulated conversations, interactive role-plays, multimedia presentations, peer review, and self-directed learning, creating effective and enjoyable language learning experiences that prepare students for the digital age.

Challenges of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT)

1. Limited academic language proficiency

Limited academic language proficiency refers to the struggle to comprehend and utilize complex academic vocabulary, structures, and discourse. This challenge affects first-generation learners in arts colleges in Tamil Nadu, hindering academic success. Students face difficulties understanding nuanced linguistic cues, expressing ideas clearly, engaging with academic texts, and meeting writing and presentation standards. This limitation stems from prior educational experiences, socio-economic background, limited exposure to academic language, insufficient language support, and cultural and linguistic diversity. As a result, students require targeted support to develop academic language skills, including vocabulary enhancement, grammar instruction, reading comprehension strategies, and writing guidance. Effective interventions can foster academic confidence, participation, and achievement among first-generation learners.

2. Lack of prior learning strategies

First-generation learners in arts colleges in Tamil Nadu often lack prior learning strategies, hindering academic success. This deficiency stems from limited exposure to effective learning techniques, inadequate educational guidance, and unfamiliarity with academic expectations. Consequently, students struggle with time management, goal-setting, note-taking, active learning, critical thinking, and seeking help. To address this, educators can provide targeted support, teaching strategies like organization, active learning, critical thinking, and academic goal-setting. By equipping students with effective learning strategies, educators empower them to overcome academic obstacles, achieve academic milestones, and reach their full potential.

3. Inadequate technological skills

First-generation learners in arts colleges in Tamil Nadu often lack technological skills, hindering academic success. Limited exposure to digital tools, lack of access, and unfamiliarity with academic software pose significant challenges. Students struggle with learning management systems, digital presentations, online research, productivity software, and online collaborations. Educators can provide basic computer skills training, digital literacy workshops, online resource orientation, and technology-integrated academic support. By equipping students with essential technological skills, educators enhance academic productivity, accessibility, and success, fostering digital citizenship and competitiveness in the modern job market.

4. Cultural and socio-economic barriers

First-generation learners in arts colleges in Tamil Nadu face cultural and socio-economic barriers, hindering academic success. Limited financial resources, language barriers, cultural differences, social isolation, family obligations, and restricted access to educational resources pose significant challenges. These barriers impact academic performance, motivation, and engagement, making it difficult for students to adjust to academic expectations, access support, engage in extracurricular activities, develop social networks, and balance academic and family responsibilities. Educators can address these barriers through culturally sensitive support, financial assistance, language support, inclusive campus environments, and peer mentoring, empowering first-generation learners to overcome obstacles and achieve academic success.

Benefits of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT)

1. Authentic Tasks Enhance Language Proficiency

Authentic tasks are essential for language learners, as they mimic real-life situations, promoting meaningful language use. By engaging in tasks that reflect everyday scenarios, learners develop practical language skills, enhancing proficiency. Authentic tasks encourage learners to apply language

knowledge, think critically, and solve problems. This approach fosters linguistic accuracy, fluency, and comprehension. In arts colleges in Tamil Nadu, incorporating authentic tasks helps first-generation learners develop relevant language skills, preparing them for academic and professional success.

2. Interactive Experiences Boost Engagement

Interactive experiences revolutionize language learning, captivate learners, and foster engagement. Through immersive activities, discussions, debates, and role-plays, students actively participate, exploring language in context. Interactive experiences promote linguistic exploration, creativity, and critical thinking. In Tamil Nadu's arts colleges, interactive experiences help first-generation learners overcome language anxiety, develop confidence, and enjoy the learning process. By incorporating multimedia resources, educational games, and collaborative projects, educators create dynamic learning environments.

3. Personalized Feedback Improves Accuracy

Personalized feedback is crucial for language learners, pinpointing areas for improvement and reinforcing strengths. Tailored feedback enhances linguistic accuracy, clarifying misconceptions and promoting corrective practices. Effective feedback strategies include self-assessment, peer review, and instructor guidance. In arts colleges in Tamil Nadu, personalized feedback helps first-generation learners refine language skills, address challenges, and achieve academic goals. Regular, constructive feedback fosters linguistic precision, confidence, and autonomy.

4. Collaborative Learning Fosters Confidence

Collaborative learning empowers language learners, cultivating confidence through social interaction. Peer-to-peer discussions, group projects, and joint presentations encourage active participation, mutual support, and shared learning. Collaborative environments reduce language anxiety, promoting willingness to take risks. In Tamil Nadu's arts colleges, collaborative learning helps first-generation learners develop essential skills: communication, teamwork, and problem-solving. By working together, students build confidence, foster friendships, and become more effective language users.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Task-Based Second Language Teaching (TBLT) emerges as a transformative approach for first-generation arts college students, yielding remarkable enhancements in language proficiency, engagement, and motivation. By anchoring instruction in authentic tasks, TBLT cultivates students' ability to navigate real-world communication scenarios, thereby fortifying practical skills and autonomy. The study's compelling findings underscore significant strides in language proficiency, confidence, and self-directed learning, underscoring TBLT's efficacy. Notably, TBLT's collaborative and feedback-oriented framework fosters social learning, peer support, and expert teacher guidance, creating a synergistic learning environment. This holistic approach empowers first-generation arts college students to transcend language barriers, unlocking their academic and professional potential. Ultimately, TBLT's evidence-based effectiveness warrants its integration into language instruction, harnessing the power of authentic tasks to revolutionize language learning outcomes.

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MADDADDAM: AN ECO-CRITICAL READING

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Abstract

This paper is an attempt tocritically analyse Margaret Atwood's Maddaddam. The novel explores apocalyptic visions, highlighting the challenges faced by a new world shaped by bio-engineered species and the remnants of humanity. The novel centres on characters like Toby, Zeb, Snowman-the-Jimmy, and Adam One, who symbolize the end of the human race and the emergence of a new beginning for the Crakers, bio-engineered beings with an innate curiosity for stories. Atwood uses flashbacks to provide depth to the characters, especially Zeb and Adam, whose past adventures and connections play a crucial role in the narrative. The novel examines the interplay of storytelling and survival, with Blackbeard, a Craker boy, learning to read and write under Toby's guidance. This reflects her emphasis on the preservation and transmission of knowledge. The narrative also delves into the socio-political themes of environmentalism, technological caution, and the corrupting influence of power. Through Zeb and Adam's rebellious actions against their father, Reverend, and the fraudulent church, Atwood critiques the manipulation and exploitation prevalent in society. The novel, Maddaddam concludes by portraying the hope and continuity of life through the birth of new generations, symbolized by the Craker mothers and their children. The novel stands as a testament to her skilful blending of speculative fiction with profound reflections on contemporary issues, offering a cautionary yet hopeful vision for the future.

Keywords: environmental, socio-political, cultural, technological, apocalyptic and identity crisis

The novel *Maddaddam* explores the impending Armageddon faced by the present generation and the future world's devastation by bio-engineered humans. These beings, resembling humans, enjoy listening to stories narrated by Toby. The narrative delves into the past lives of Zeb and Adam One, filled with dark humour and Atwood's recurring themes like natural resource protection, animal rights, online safety, vegetarianism, ecofeminism, the dangers of sex clubs, halting genetic modification, and warnings about technology, love, and adventure.In Atwood's trilogy, the first book,*Oryx and Crake,* focuses on Crake, Oryx, and Snowman (Jimmy), while the second book,*The Year of the Flood,* follows Ren, Toby, and Amanda, childhood friends working in a secret burger joint. *Maddaddam*, the final book, depicts the struggle for human survival in an overwhelmed world.

Atwood novels collectively explore a dystopian world. When asked about the message of the *Maddaddam* trilogy, she famously quipped that there is no message, suggesting that if there were, it would be better suited for a billboard campaign. Despite her remark, the trilogy reflects Atwood's concern for current environmental issues. The dystopian narrative portrays innocent bio-engineered beings, created by the scientist Crake, who cannot live independently of humans. They adopt human culture indirectly, as seen in the Craker boy Blackbeard, who learns storytelling from Toby. Blackbeard, a bio-engineered survivor of the eco-apocalypse, narrates The Book and The Story of Toby.

Maddaddam is a novel centred on the theme of self-definition. Toby, the protagonist, reflects on the nature of storytelling: "There's the story, then there's the real story, then there's the story of how the story came to be told." She ponders, representing the author's voice: "What else to write, besides the bare-facts daily chronicle she's begun?" Atwood classifies this trilogy as Speculative Fiction rather than Science Fiction, as it reflects on our past, particularly with

Maddaddam highlighting current global conditions such as floods, earthquakes, and significant scientific advancements. Narrated by Toby, a member of God's Gardeners, who appears in the previous novels and plays a central role in the entire trilogy.

Maddaddam begins with the tale of the egg, where Crakers, Snowman-the-Jimmy, and others discuss how Crake created the Crakers before his demise in the first novel. Toby serves soup to everyone, including the Painballers. As the Crakers start to inquire about their origins and founders, Toby inadvertently assumes the role of Snowman-the-Jimmy, becoming the Crakers' new guide. Snowman, the reluctant prophet, is weakened by fever and injuries. "The egg was big and round, white like half a bubble, and inside it were trees with leaves, grass, and berries—all the things you like to eat" (Atwood, *Maddaddam*, p. 3).

In *Maddaddam*, the author brings back the oral tradition, with innocent beings like the Crakers showing a keen interest in stories, demonstrating how past tales came into existence. The Crakers prioritize storytelling above all else. As the stories unfold, Snowman interrupts with cries of pain, causing the Crakers to pause and attend to him. Toby instructs some Craker women to soothe Snowman. Meanwhile, the Painballers manage to free themselves from their ropes and escape. *Maddaddam* brilliantly weaves together elements from past stories through the voices of Toby and Zeb, a former member of the Gardeners and Toby's secret lover. They become part of a new life in a select commune made up of human survivors. The Crakers, with their innocent wonder, often purr and sing "an eerie music," adding a humorous touch to their daily routines. Without stories, they feel a profound loss, frequently disturbing Toby to hear more. Adam One emerges as a central character as Toby and Zeb's past life, filled with memories of their childhood, resurfaces.

Adam, the son of the megalomaniac preacher Reverend, is groomed to inherit a fraudulent church run by their parents, Reverend and Trudy. Zeb is instructed by his half-brother Adam to take on the role of an online hacker. Although Adam and Zeb seldom meet, they maintain contact through the online game Extinctathon, a chatroom for secret communication. The brothers' adventurous plan involves stealing the Reverend's fraudulent money-making empire and escaping with the proceeds through the online game, with the intention of destroying the church and all the corporations and industries run by their father, Reverend.

Zeb″'s past life was filled with hilarious experiences and adventure. Adam″ is responsible for guiding Zeb and leading the Green pacifist religion, working on intelligence against the big corporations and their CorpSeCorps protectors. Atwood″'s flashback story narrative keeps readers alive and the thrill in the novel. The stories of Zeb and Adam look strange to Crakers. Zeb″'s Birth, Piglets, and Bear Lift were more interesting stories that influenced Crakers. Toby″'s fear is invisible to Crakers, but they can feel Toby″'s pain. Zeb″'s return gives hope for Toby. However, she feels something she gets back, and she has lost nothing in her life. Zeb stands as a symbol of hope in the eye of Toby, not only for Toby but also for all others such as Ivory Bill, Crozier and Lotis Blue. "After Zeb″'s return from the high mountains with snow on top, and after he had taken off the skin of the bear and put it on himself, he said thank you to the bear. To the spirit of the bear. Because the bear didn″t eat him, but allowed him to eat it instead and also because it gave him its fur skin to put on (Atwood, *Maddaddam* 84)."

Zeb's past is marked by humour and adventure. Adam is tasked with guiding Zeb and leading the Green pacifist religion, focusing on intelligence against major corporations and their protectors, CorpSeCorps. Atwood's use of flashbacks keeps readers engaged and adds excitement to the novel. To the Crakers, the tales of Zeb and Adam seem peculiar. Stories of Zeb's birth, the piglets, and the bear encounter captivate the Crakers. While Toby's fear is invisible to the Crakers, they can sense her pain. His return brings hope to Toby, making her feel that she has regained something rather than lost it. Zeb becomes a symbol of hope not only for Toby but also for others like Ivory Bill, Crozier, and Lotis Blue. "After Zeb's return from the high mountains with snow on top, and after he had taken off the skin of the

bear and put it on himself, he said thank you to the bear. To the spirit of the bear. Because the bear didn't eat him, but allowed him to eat it instead and also because it gave him its fur skin to put on" (*Maddaddam*, 84).

Zeb" 's wanderings through the Pleeblands of San Francisco, Mexico, and San Jose were classically breathless and read as they freewheel and twist like a genre within a genre. Zeb is killed by a bear, wearing its skin while riding a bike, planting clues as he goes to lead his trackers off track, to make them believe that he may be dead in his adventure. Crakers express nothing for the adventuress of Zeb because they have unknown the word adventure tells Toby. That"s how they have made (33).

Though the brothers often separated, they maintained their connection through an online game, remaining faithful to the bond that had formed between them. Their emotional relationship and the powerful twists challenge their resolve, gripping the reader and shaping the story's destiny. As Toby narrates the story of the battle, flying pigs wait for revenge. These stories set the stage for the battle to triumph over the antagonists. The plans of Toby, Zeb, and Snowman-the-Jimmy ultimately succeed, but they cannot save themselves or Adam. "And Zeb was carrying Adam, who looked very thin and pale; Adam was still breathing. Zeb said, 'I've got you, best buddy. You're gonna be okay,' but his face was all wet. After that, Adam stopped breathing" (Atwood, *Maddaddam*, p. 363).

Maddaddam demonstrates Atwood's method of teaching language to Blackbeard. He is quick to learn and soon masters the language of the Painballers. Atwood's strategy centres on the Crakers, especially Blackbeard, the gentle, reflective, and curious Craker boy whom Toby teaches to read and write in English. He writes, "I am Blackbeard, and this is my voice that I am writing down to help Toby. If you look at this writing I have made, you can hear me (I am Blackbeard) talking to you inside your head. This is what writing is. But the Pig Ones can do that without writing. And sometimes we can do it, the Children of Crake. The two-skinned ones cannot do it.

"Today Toby said Bryophyta is moss. I said if it is moss, then I must write moss. Toby says it has two names, like Snowman-the-Jimmy. So I am writing Bryophyta-the-moss. Like this" (Atwood, *Maddaddam*, p. 376). We observe Blackbeard as he learns sensitivity, with his heart and mind discovering that the thoughts and feelings of those around him are clearer when he speaks. Eventually, Blackbeard calls Ren, Swift Fox, and Amanda the Craker mothers, who will now serve as guiding stars for the Crakers. This new beginning brings hope to the remaining characters. "The three mothers and the four children are all doing well, and the Craker women are ever-present, purring, tending, and bringing gifts" (Atwood, *Maddaddam*, p. 380). Toby's held breath signifies the novel's tension, and her death symbolizes the loss of the current world. Margaret Atwood's depiction of the end of the world serves as a cautionary tale for everyone.

In *Maddaddam*, Atwood's apocalyptic visions are unique, as she sends the survivors of *Oryx and Crake* and *The Year of the Flood* to confront numerous issues. Bio-engineered species are poised to take over the earth. Atwood's final revelations contemplate the condition of future humanity. "Toby, Zeb, Snowman, and Adam One symbolize the end of the human race. Here are the names of the babies born: Ren's baby is named Jimadam, a combination of Snowman-the-Jimmy and Adam. Ren wanted Jimmy's name to remain alive in the world, as well as Adam's. Amanda's baby is named Pilren, combining Pilar, who lives in the bush with the bees, and Ren, Amanda's good friend and helper through thick and thin. Blackbeard says he will ask Toby what 'thick and thin' means. Swift Fox's babies are named Medulla (a girl) and Oblongata (a boy). Swift Fox says these names have a difficult-to-understand significance related to something inside the head. All the babies bring great joy" (*Maddaddam*, 381).

Atwood's choice of names reflects a scientific world, hinting at the future. Her new, brave world has come into existence. She presents a chaotic world, suggesting that our living earth could perish at any time. *Maddaddam* concludes by showcasing Atwood's saga of survival and caution. The novel is

sharp, witty, and strong enough to stand on its own. Atwood's world in *it* begins to diverge from ours. In an interview with Rothschild, she was asked about the "real world" and responded, "What do you mean by the real world, earthling?" This left the interviewer unsure how to reply. The past trends have destroyed *Maddaddam*, illustrating a potential future for our own world (Rothschild, Atwood Dec/Jan 10).

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IMPACT OF CULTURAL NARRATIVES ON LEARNER OF THE DIGITAL ERA

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Abstract

This study critically examines how technology has a significant impact on cultural narratives that influence how today's generations learn. It demonstrates how digital innovations like interactive technologies, multimedia resources, and online learning platforms are radically altering conventional educational frameworks. Student's engagement with cultural narratives is greatly increased by this change, which makes it possible for more dynamic and individualized encounters with the resources. The study also examines how technology is involved in the knowledge transmission techniques, demonstrating how teachers can use digital tools to enhance learning outcomes and broaden cultural awareness. By addressing these essential aspects, the study highlights the amazing potential and difficulties of incorporating technology into the classroom, thereby improving student's cultural understanding.

Keywords: culture, digital learner, online education

Introduction

Technology has profoundly transformed many aspects of modern life, with one of the most notable changes occurring within the field of education. This study aims to explore the intricate and multifaceted ways in which technology impacts the cultural narratives that shape how today's generations engage with and understand knowledge. Specifically, we will analyze how the integration of advanced digital innovations-such as interactive technologies that facilitate hands-on learning, extensive multimedia resources that elucidate complex ideas, and robust online learning platforms that offer flexibility and accessibility-has drastically redefined traditional educational paradigms. The shift toward technology-enhanced education fosters an environment that promotes dynamic learning experiences, where students are not passive recipients of information but active participants in their own educational journeys. For instance, interactive technologies allow learners to participate in simulations and virtual laboratories, encouraging deeper exploration of subjects and engagement with real-world scenarios. Multimedia resources, encompassing videos, podcasts, and interactive diagrams, cater to diverse learning styles and help to illustrate nuanced concepts, making them more digestible and relatable. Furthermore, online learning platforms have revolutionized access to educational content, enabling students to learn at their own pace and explore a wider array of topics than ever before. This flexibility not only accommodates different learning preferences but also empowers students to take ownership of their education, leading to heightened motivation and engagement with the material. As technology reshapes the educational landscape, it significantly influences the cultural narratives that inform students' worldviews. These narratives, which encompass stories, beliefs, and values, play an essential role in shaping students' understanding of societal issues, history, and cultural diversity. By incorporating technology into their learning, students can engage with diverse perspectives and narratives, fostering critical thinking and empathy as they interact with a global community. In this study, we will thoroughly investigate how these technological advancements enhance students' engagement with cultural narratives and alter traditional methods of knowledge transmission. We will also consider the implications of these changes on educators and educational institutions, as they adapt to an increasingly digital landscape that requires innovative teaching strategies and curricular adjustments for the benefit of future generations. Ultimately, this examination aims to

illuminate the profound role technology plays in shaping the educational experiences and cultural understandings of today's learners making them enter into a new era of learning.

Cultural Narrative: Impact on the New Learners

One of the key components driving the current technological shift in education is the incorporation of interactive technologies in the classroom. Tools such as smart boards, tablets, and a variety of educational apps are revolutionizing traditional teaching methods, creating dynamic and engaging learning environments. These interactive platforms encourage students to take an active role in their education, transforming them from passive recipients of information into proactive participants in their learning journeys. The significance of this interactivity extends beyond mere engagement; it plays a crucial role in enhancing students' understanding of complex cultural narratives. Interactive technologies enable students to delve deeper into the study of historical events, literary works, and pressing social issues. For example, when students are given the opportunity to utilize multimedia presentations or group discussions facilitated by smart boards, they can collaboratively analyze and debate various perspectives, which broadens their understanding of these topics. Moreover, the rise of digital technologies has dramatically expanded access to a diverse array of cultural narratives. In the past, students' exposure to different cultures and viewpoints was often limited by geographical constraints and the availability of physical resources like books and museum exhibits. Today, the internet allows students to access a vast wealth of multimedia content, including documentaries, virtual museum tours, cultural presentations, and interactive simulations. These resources not only provide a richer understanding of various cultures but also illuminate the interconnectedness of global histories and experiences. For instance, students can explore ancient civilizations through immersive virtual reality experiences, which offer them the chance to walk through historical sites, interact with artifacts, and engage with the daily lives of people from different eras. This hands-on approach to learning fosters a memorable and impactful educational experience that traditional textbooks often cannot replicate. Furthermore, this increased accessibility to diverse content supports a more personalized learning journey. Students can pursue their interests and engage with materials that resonate with them on an individual level, which can enhance their motivation and retention of knowledge. By incorporating these innovative tools, educators have the opportunity to create a more inclusive and effective educational experience that caters to diverse learning styles, interests, and backgrounds. As we embrace these technological advancements, we not only enrich our students' learning experiences but also prepare them to thrive in an increasingly interconnected world.

Moreover, multimedia resources have transformed the educational landscape by providing educators with a wide array of tools to present information in rich and engaging formats. This approach effectively caters to a spectrum of learning styles, ensuring that every student's needs are met. For example, incorporating engaging videos into lessons can capture the attention of visual learners, while thoughtful podcasts offer auditory stimulation for those who comprehend better through listening. Additionally, virtual reality (VR) experiences provide an unparalleled immersive learning opportunity, allowing students to explore vivid landscapes and interact with historical contexts, thus deepening their comprehension and appreciation of various cultures and histories. One particularly exciting application of this technology is the concept of virtual field trips. Through this innovative approach, students can embark on thrilling adventures to iconic landmarks like the Great Wall of China or the pyramids of Egypt. Equipped with VR headsets or guided digital tours, they can experience a sense of presence and exploration without the logistical challenges of actual travel. Such vivid experiences not only enhance students' empathy towards diverse cultures but also spark their natural curiosity, making abstract cultural narratives tangible and relatable. In addition to enhancing content delivery, technology plays an

essential role in cultivating new cultural narratives. Students are no longer passive consumers of information; they actively participate in the creation of digital content, allowing their voices to be heard. By writing blogs, recording podcasts, and sharing their insights on social media platforms, they express their perspectives on cultural narratives, contributing fresh interpretations and viewpoints to the conversation. This dynamic engagement sharpens their critical thinking skills and empowers them to be key players in the cultural discourse, influencing their peers and communities. Furthermore, the rise of collaborative online platforms has created vibrant opportunities for students from various backgrounds to connect and share their diverse experiences. These platforms serve as important spaces for dialogue, where students can engage in discussions about their cultural backgrounds, beliefs, and experiences, fostering a deep understanding of one another. For instance, students may collaborate on online projects that address pressing global issues such as climate change, pooling their collective knowledge and experiences to craft compelling digital presentations. These collaborations not only highlight different perspectives and solutions but also create a powerful sense of camaraderie among students, enriching their educational journey and building valuable intercultural empathy.

Online learning platforms are fundamentally reshaping the educational landscape by democratizing access to a vast reservoir of knowledge that was previously out of reach for many individuals. Platforms such as Coursera, edX, and others provide learners with the invaluable opportunity to engage with high-quality courses delivered by leading experts and institutions from around the world. This global access not only allows students to broaden their academic horizons but also enhances their cultural awareness and understanding of diverse perspectives, fostering a more interconnected world. The availability of diverse educational resources encourages learners to explore topics that resonate with their personal interests and future career aspirations, thereby cultivating a sense of autonomy and ownership over their educational journeys. As

students can curate their learning experiences to suit their unique needs, they become more motivated and invested in their studies, ultimately leading to better learning outcomes. However, the integration of technology in education brings about several important challenges that must be addressed. The sheer volume of information available online can lead to what is often referred to as information overload, making it difficult for learners to discern credible sources from unreliable ones. This scenario emphasizes the necessity for education systems to equip students with critical thinking and media literacy skills, enabling them to effectively evaluate and engage with the vast amount of information at their disposal. Additionally, the digital divide remains a significant barrier in the pursuit of educational equity. This divide refers to the unequal distribution of access to technology and reliable internet services, which disproportionately affects marginalized communities and exacerbates existing educational inequalities. To truly maximize the benefits of technology in education, it is crucial for policymakers and educational institutions to prioritize efforts that ensure equitable access to technological resources. This includes investing in infrastructure, providing affordable internet options, and implementing comprehensive digital literacy training programs for both students and educators. Moreover, the study underscores the innovative ways in which educators can harness digital tools to enhance their teaching methodologies and improve the dissemination of knowledge. For instance, learning management systems like Google Classroom provide teachers with a platform to organize course materials, share resources, and facilitate meaningful discussions among students in a structured manner. These tools not only streamline administrative tasks but also promote collaborative learning environments where students can interact with their peers, share insights, and deepen their understanding of complex subjects. By embracing and effectively utilizing these digital platforms, educators have the potential to significantly enhance learning outcomes and create a more inclusive educational experience that broadens students' exposure to diverse cultural narratives and

viewpoints. This approach not only enriches the learning environment but also prepares students to thrive in an increasingly globalized and digital world.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the integration of technology into education plays a transformative role in how today's generations engage with cultural narratives. By effectively utilizing interactive technologies, such as virtual and augmented reality, multimedia resources like videos and podcasts, and online learning platforms that enable flexible access to information, educators have the opportunity to create learning experiences that are not only dynamic but also tailored to individual student needs and learning styles. This study emphasizes the critical importance of adapting traditional educational frameworks to fully embrace digital innovations. As the world becomes increasingly interconnected and complex, it is imperative that students are equipped with a robust set of skills and knowledge that encompass both technical proficiency and an understanding of diverse cultural perspectives. This preparation is essential for enabling students to navigate and contribute to a globalized society. Moreover, technology is fundamentally reshaping how cultural narratives influence learning experiences. By providing students with access to a broader spectrum of resources—including literature, historical documents, art, and multimedia content-educators can facilitate a richer understanding of cultural contexts. Additionally, technology encourages active participation in knowledge creation, allowing students to engage collaboratively with their peers and teachers. This interaction not only enhances their learning but also fosters essential intercultural dialogue, promoting empathy and understanding among different cultures. Despite these advancements, it is crucial to address persistent challenges such as the digital divide, which highlights disparities in access to technology and internet resources among different socioeconomic groups. Furthermore, promoting critical digital literacy skills is essential. Students must learn to critically assess information, recognize credible sources, and understand the ethical implications of technology use. By addressing these issues, we can harness technology's full potential to create educational environments that are not only more inclusive but also more effective in preparing students for success in a rapidly evolving world.

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LANGUAGE USED FOR ANTAGONISING WOMEN IN CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE

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Abstract
This study explores ten key terms used to describe women in contemporary Indian and Chinese literature, analyzing how these terms marginalize and vilify female characters. Using Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) model, the research examines how language both reflects and critiques gender power dynamics. The study reveals that these terms often portray women as manipulative, seductive, or morally questionable, reflecting societal anxieties surrounding changing gender roles and discomfort with women who challenge traditional expectations. It highlights the reciprocal relationship between language and cognition, where societal beliefs shape language use, and language, in turn, reinforces these beliefs. These terms contribute to the reinforcement of gendered power structures, influencing public perceptions of women's behavior and identities. Through a critical analysis of the language used to describe women, the study underscores how language can both construct and challenge gender norms, calling for greater awareness of the ways in which literary and media representations impact societal attitudes toward women.
Keywords: contemporary literature, women, antagonist, female, critical discourse analysis, indian, chinese

1 Introduction

The English language contains numerous terms which can be derogatory that disproportionately target women, often combining gender with other characteristics to create deeply offensive insults. These terms cover various categories, such as sexuality *("slut," "whore"),* age *("hag," "crone"),* animals *("cow," "dog"), and* body parts *("twat," "cunt").* Many insults also combine traits like appearance, intelligence, or age, exemplified in phrases like "*fat cow," "dumb blonde*," and "*old biddy*." Even terms simply identifying women, such as *"girl" or "woman*," are frequently used pejoratively. (Stollznow, 2024)

This pattern reflects broader societal attitudes that reduce women to stereotypes based on external attributes, reinforcing gender inequalities. Women's value is often tied to superficial traits like beauty, youth, or sexual purity. Despite progress in challenging these stereotypes, such linguistic practices continue to contribute to the devaluation and marginalization of women, perpetuating inequality in both public and private spheres.

2 Literature Review

The idea that language influences thought is frequently linked to Benjamin Whorf, who argued that a person's thoughts are entirely shaped by the language they speak. However, cognitive psychologists have discovered that language has a subtle, yet significant, impact on human cognition (Boroditsky, 2001; Boroditsky & Gaby, 2010; Boroditsky et al., 2003; Fuhrman et al., 2011; Slobin, 1996), suggesting potential effects of language on political opinions.

3 Objectives

This study aims to identify ten key terms used to vilify female characters in contemporary literature from India and China. It will analyze the connotative meanings of these terms and explore their impact on real-life perceptions of women and literary portrayals of female characters. Using Critical Discourse

Analysis, the research will examine how these terms reflect and reinforce gendered ideologies within these distinct cultural contexts.

4 Methodology

This study employs a qualitative research approach.

4.1 Data Collection

Data is chosen purposefully through, purposeful sampling method. Phrases and terms which are being used frequently and have negative connotations were selected from the Internet and readings, and journals.

4.2 Data Analysis Method

Analysis was done qualitatively using Fairclough's Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) model. Fairclough (1993) defines Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as an approach that systematically examines the often opaque relationships between discursive practices, events, texts, and broader social and cultural structures.
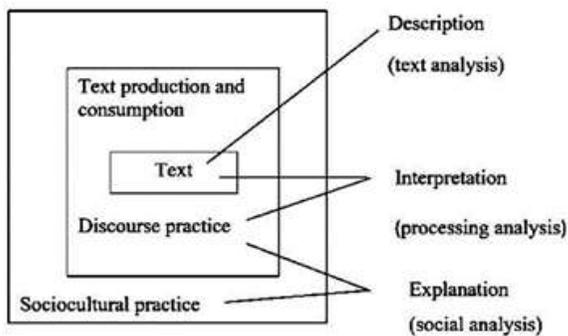

Figure 1 Fairclough's Three-Dimensional Model

The three stages in Fairclough's three-dimensional model of discourse analysis are: 1) Description – identifying linguistic features such as genre, style, and register; 2) Interpretation – analyzing the discourse's meaning within its social, historical, and cultural context; 3) Explanation – examining how the discourse reflects or challenges power relations and social structures.

5 Analysis

5.1 Chinese Literature

Table 1

S.No	Terms/ phrases	Meaning
1	Gold Digger	A woman who seeks financial gain through relationships with wealthy men, often at the expense of personal feelings or integrity.
2	White Lotus	A term used to describe a woman who presents herself as pure, virtuous, and innocent, but is actually manipulative, scheming, or self-serving. It refers to someone who pretends to be flawless or morally superior while engaging in deceitful behavior behind the scenes.
3	Green Tea Bitch	A term that combines the image of the delicate, refreshing green tea with a derogatory label for a woman who is outwardly sweet, innocent, and demure, but is actually calculating, manipulative, or self-interested. She plays the role of the "good girl" while secretly pursuing her own agenda, often at the expense of others.
4	Princess Syndrome	A term used to describe a woman (usually young) who is overly self-centered, spoiled, and expects special treatment. The term is often used to describe a woman who sees herself as entitled, like a princess, and expects others (particularly men) to pamper her.
5	Little White Rabbit	This term refers to women who appear innocent, harmless, and naive but are actually cunning or manipulative. It's similar to the "White Lotus" but can also apply to someone who uses their perceived innocence to exploit others.
6	Cinderella	The term "Cinderella" is often used in a derogatory sense to describe a woman who is perceived as having no personal worth or agency and is dependent on others, particularly a man, to "rescue" her or elevate her social status. In some contexts, it refers to women who are seen as unremarkable but who gain status or wealth through marriage or relationships.
7	Fox Spirit	The term is used to label a woman who is seen as overly flirtatious, cunning, or manipulative in a negative light, suggesting that her value is linked only to her ability to charm or deceive or leading men astray.

8	Jade Feminine/Ice queen	This term can be used ironically to describe women who appear to be virtuous but are perceived as cold, distant, or unapproachable. It implies a kind of perfection that is often unattainable and thus criticized.
9	Vixen	A woman who is sexually provocative and manipulative, often using her charm to deceive or control men
10	Bitch	A harsh term used to describe women who are seen as morally corrupt, manipulative, or overly ambitious, especially when they use their sexual or emotional power to get ahead.

5.2 Indian Literature

Table 2

S. No.	Terms / phrases	Meaning
1	Trophy Wife	This term is used to describe a woman who is seen as a mere status symbol for a wealthy or powerful man. She is often portrayed as attractive but lacking substance or personal achievements.
2	Drama Queen	This term describes women who are seen as overreacting to situations, being excessively emotional, or creating drama where none exists.
3	Loose Woman	This term portrays a woman as one who has lost her purity, either through premarital or extramarital relations, or through association with immoral behavior.
4	Vamp	A seductive or morally dubious woman, often portrayed negatively in literature and cinema.
5	Bitch	A derogatory term used to demean women, often implying that a woman is aggressive, spiteful, or unreasonable.
6	Bimbo	A derogatory term used for women perceived to be attractive but unintelligent or shallow. It's used to dismiss women based on their appearance rather than their intellect or accomplishments.
7	Fallen Woman	This term refers to someone who is sexually liberated or promiscuous, defying the social expectation of modesty and chastity.
8	Homewrecker	This label is applied to women seen as responsible for breaking up a family, often by becoming involved with a married man.

| 9 | Siren | This term represents a seductive, dangerous woman who leads men into temptation or ruin. |
| 10 | Modern-Day Sati | A woman who is perceived to blindly follow her partner or societal norms, sacrificing herself for the sake of others, often viewed as excessively self-sacrificing or submissive. |

5.3 Critical Discourse Analysis

The terms *Green tea bitch, Vixen, Siren, Fox spirit, Bitch,* and similar expressions fall into categories identified by Stollznow (2024), such as animal-related terms, and labels like *Bimbo, and Fallen women* associated with sexuality, alongside *Trophy wife and Jade feminine* linked to materialism.

The terms *Gold Digger, White Lotus, Green Tea Bitch*, and others reflect societal stereotypes of women, carrying cultural, historical, and ideological meanings. These terms highlight how women are confined to specific roles and how their behavior is judged through traditional gender norms. Writers use these terms to comment on the ways women navigate or challenge these expectations. Similarly, terms like *Vamp, Siren, and Homewrecker* carry negative connotations, labeling women as manipulative or morally questionable. These terms reflect a societal bias against women who reject traditional roles or challenge patriarchal expectations, reducing them to one-dimensional characters. (Stollznow, 2024)

In contemporary Chinese literature, especially in urban dramas and romances, terms like *Gold Digger* or *Cinderella* are common, indicating ongoing societal debates about gender roles. In Indian literature, terms like *Trophy Wife and Drama Queen* often appear in romance and drama genres, reinforcing stereotypes through mainstream media such as novels, films, and television. This perpetuates societal norms where women's independence, sexual autonomy, or material ambition are viewed with suspicion or disapproval. The media thus participates in reinforcing or challenging traditional gender roles, creating a feedback loop where women's actions are reduced to these labels.

These terms are tied to traditional gender roles, power imbalances, and social hierarchies. In

patriarchal societies, women who step outside prescribed roles—through ambition, sexual freedom, or material pursuits—are often seen as a threat. The use of terms like *Siren* or *Vixen* reflects this fear. The way audiences interpret these terms, whether as condemnation or a reflection of complex social realities, shapes their perceptions and internalizes these discourses.

6 Observation

This study identifies ten major terms used to describe women in contemporary Indian and Chinese literature, analyzing their meanings and the ways in which these terms vilify and antagonize female characters. Using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), it examines how both literary traditions reflect and critique gender power dynamics. These terms reveal societal anxieties about shifting gender norms, the changing power balance in relationships, and discomfort with women who challenge traditional roles. The language employed in literature not only mirrors societal values but also serves to reinforce them. By focusing on how these terms depict women as manipulative, seductive, or morally questionable, this study illustrates how language perpetuates gendered power structures and influences public perceptions of women's behavior and identity. Furthermore, these terms provide a platform for critique, highlighting how such stereotypes limit women's potential and shape their identities. The language used in both literary traditions both constructs and challenges social realities, reflecting evolving gender dynamics. These terms are also prevalent on social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and Baidu, where they are used to degrade women. Additionally, many literary genres and tropes are rooted in these stereotypes, further perpetuating their impact.

7 Conclusion

In conclusion, this study provided a comprehensive analysis of the terminologies used to antagonize and vilify female characters in contemporary literature from India and China. By examining the linguistic patterns and connotative meanings of these terms, the research revealed the ways in which such language reflects and reinforces societal attitudes toward women. The terms used in literature are not just casual descriptors of female characters, but reflections of deeply ingrained societal views on gender. Through the application of Critical Discourse Analysis, the study explored the power dynamics embedded in these depictions, considering how they shape not only literary portrayals but also real-life perceptions and treatment of women. Ultimately, this research seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of how gendered stereotypes and ideologies are perpetuated through literature, and how these representations may influence broader social norms, behaviors, and policies. By analyzing contemporary works across two cultural contexts, it can be seen that language both constructs and challenges the social realities women face, acting as a mirror to changing gender dynamics.

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