INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ENGLISH: LITERATURE, LANGUAGE & SKILLS

Founding & Chief Editor Profile

Dr. Mrudula Lakkaraju, Department of English, Osmania University is trained from EFLU and a Doctorate from Osmania University. She prefers the designation of a trainer and a writer. She has presented several academic articles to international and national seminars, conferences, journals, and magazines. Casual and creative writing is also her forte. She is a prolific reader and writer. Her areas of interest are Post colonial Literature, Gender Studies, Film Studies, English Language Teaching, Contemporary Literature and Communication Skills.

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Dear Readers and Contributors,

This October 2017 issue is an interesting compilation of articles in English literature and English language teaching. In addition the two submissions in the creative/casual section are extremely interesting to read.

The articles worth a mention alongside all the other well-written articles are 'The Post-human Comedy in Italo Calvino's *The Cosmicomics',* 'The Meta-fictive Metaphor and Critical Realism: Re-reading Muriel Spark's *The Comforters',* and 'Theme of Women Empowerment in Shahrnush Parsipur's *Women without Men: A Novel of Modern Iran'*

Do not forget to send in your comments on the articles!

Happy Reading and Sharing!

Dr. Mrudula Lakkaraju
Chief & Founding Editor

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The Phoenix
Ishani Ghoshal Roy

The Phoenix
Out of your death
O dearest! Arose my life
Out of your ashes
Awakened my strength
With a body more dead
than alive
To battle on with my
tryst with time.

The unfaltering love
Reborn from the ashes
Took a million forms to guide and support,
My confused mind
Led me on from the bewildering darkness,
To discern the light
Through gnarled pathways and forests of hypocrisy,
Misleading friends and foes,
Your love held me secure, gently guiding and awakening within me
Strength to bear pain and yet transform it into something so loving and pure
That it could heal the hurt it was born of.

Our Manners Are Never On Vacation
Rosy Matilda

Etiquette plays a pivotal role in the life of a human being. We are distinguished as polished beings based on our etiquette and hence our etiquette can never be on vacation. The way Dining etiquette, E - mail etiquette and other etiquettes have their own prominence, bus etiquette is also not to be ignored. As the old adage goes, "The first impression is the best impression"; we vie to create a long lasting impression on the commuters we tread on the same path regularly.

In a country like India, where a majority of common man use buses as a means of transportation, it is pertinent that the need for bus etiquette should not be overlooked. Man is supposedly the most sophisticated creature created by God and it is appalling to see the reasoning disappear when it comes to following a few basic things in our life. We can never take a break from our manners and we need to be mindful of them at all public places.

Let us consider a metropolitan city like Hyderabad where we find bustling activity with tens of thousands of commuters taking bus rides to reach their destinations and the apathy of the sufferers.

Birth Right

People consider it their birth right when it comes to using the bus seats. They laze around and perch comfortably as if at home on the couch, clogging the aisle meant for their standing counterparts. Their barely tucked in feet cause a gigantic inconvenience to the commuters on their feet, who are already fighting gravity desperately. We can always sympathise with the rural lot for doing this, but it is not merely confined to them. A similar problem arises when people outstretch themselves and tend to occupy more than one seat.

Spittoons

One can also at times find people spitting out of the windows, forgetting to watch out if a motorist or a passerby has become an unfortunate spittoon. Some travellers are seen chewing tobacco / betel leaf or ghutkas which are supposedly banned. What of Swacch Bharat and a clean India when we indulge in such barbarous acts?

The window is all mine!

One common finding is that several commuters seated next to a window claim it to be their own and sharing becomes foreign. Moreover, they slide the window panes shut if the noise from outside causes a hindrance to their nap or phone calls or when they listen to music or if busy on a video call. They oftentimes tend to forget that the person seated next or the other passengers might find the bus suffocating owing to the lack of proper ventilation, particularly on sultry days. Even if requested, they open the window for a short while and then close it at their whim. The very thought of a bus being considered a mode of quotidian public transport has lost its essence.

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Bottleneck

Next are the commuters who board the bus with absolutely no intentions of moving further inside. They block the entrance, adamantly hanging on to the grab rails by the driver's seat, making it a herculean task for their fellow passengers to make their way through the phalanx and get inside. It is not rocket science for a person to understand this logic, for it's as simple as it gets. Nobody wants to be left stranded at the bus stop; everyone wants to reach their destination safe and sound at the earliest possible. It also follows the logic to allow the passengers to exit first, and from the lack of exactly that logic, has the problem of safety arisen. It is safe for the commuters to place themselves away from the entrance as there are chances of losing their footing and meeting with accidents when the driver hits the brakes suddenly. One should strive to abandon their ego and widen their horizon to be more empathetic towards others as ultimately; we are all sailing in the same boat.

Comity

As most people are aware, the first two seats are reserved for *Senior citizens* and *differently abled* (indicated in red) but unfortunately, words like chivalry and gallantry have been erased from our dictionaries. People are reluctant to give up their seats for a senior citizen or a differently abled person, let alone an expectant mother, a woman with an infant or a sickly person. It is very pitiable to see them ask for a seat or to sanguinely gaze into their eyes hoping that telepathy might work. Where we are heading with such uncouthness and insensitivity is quite questionable. It is understood that once we get a seat to sit, we consider ourselves very lucky after a tiring day or if suffering from some health issues, but the need to analyse 'priority seating' has to be understood.

Androcentrism

In a male dominant world, it is affable that some courtesy has been lent to the women; in that half of the seats in the buses are reserved for women, which is clearly indicated with a sign in bright red stating LADIES and RESPECTING WOMEN IS OUR CULTURE. During the bleak hours of the day, it is not uncommon to see men using the seats that have been reserved for women. No one is offended as long as there are no women to occupy those seats, but women on boarding the bus are forced to ask the gentlemen to vacate the seat that is rightfully theirs.

It is only human for both men and women to get equally tired and they deserve to sit; but is it right even in a world where chivalry echoes from the grave that women ask for something that rightly belongs to them? It is astonishing to come across some men who demand to show the 'Ladies' signpost as proof if they have been faded. Even if the person is a non local, he must read the terrain before entering into an argument. The worst part is that the RTC staff often fails to come to the rescue of the female passengers and become mere mute spectators.

Those ravenous solar plexus

People who travel long distances and miss their meal or those who are held up with their work or studies often get hungry while travelling. So naturally, they carry packeted

food to deal with the munchies. Some also carry odorous food along with them. They are often found crunching on chips and other food, and furthermore litter the empty wrappers/packets in the bus. And sadly, it does not end here. We also come across health conscious commuters who often drop fruit peels or peanut peels in the bus or dump them out of the window along with their education, and the rest is history. One can boldly categorise them as educated illiterates. A simple solution would be to dump the wrappers into our pockets or bags and empty them properly in a dustbin.

Stanchion menace

The most commonly used support in the bus and the most favourite of a majority of people are the stanchions. It is common sense to leave this area for those height challenged people who cannot reach the horizontal hand rails or the grab handles. People often cling on to the stanchion as if hugging it, depriving others of even holding it, let alone to grab on for support. They then get busy with their phones and leave the whole world behind them. If the stanchions are already taken, their next target would be the grab rails of the seats. They don't only hold on to them as a means of support; but are often found leaning their backs against them and causing a massive vexation to those seated passengers. At times even a wistful look from the seated passenger makes no difference to their posture and the seated passenger is thus deprived of resting his back. We can empathise with those commuters who are standing, but the question of our personal inconvenience becoming a public inconvenience should be given food for thought.

The earphone mania

And now moving on to the most vital commuters, they are 'the youth with their earphones'. People have gotten so addicted to earphones that it is a miracle to see one not using them. They consider it an unsanctioned crime to travel without the pair of gizmo hooked onto their ears. Students are the majority that fall under this category and unknowingly enjoy music at the cost of others' comfort. They become deaf to the gripes of the passengers on whom they accidentally lay a heavy foot on and don't get an opportunity to apologise to.

We travel regularly in buses that are squeezed for space and some travellers are so engrossed that they often forget to disembark at their destination. People who are hooked on to their earphones speak loudly and unintentionally gather undue attention and also pay a deaf ear to the conductor. Earphones are considered to be breeding grounds for the bacteria that could cause ear infections and other complications. We also find people who share their earphones with their friends and hence are not spared from the bacteria being transferred. Not everyone shares a common interest when it comes to music. One should opt for better earphones that do not leak sound even when plugged in. Some people are often found humming songs while listening to them and unfortunately, humans were not made tone deaf.

No peeking!

As human beings we have an inbuilt and uncontrollable urge to bother about others' business. This might probably be the reason for the much talked about success behind Big Boss. Even while travelling, we are ever curious about what the other person is

doing with his phone. We tend to crane our necks and read messages, go through the book they are reading, see what music they are listening to, what games they are playing, and so on. It makes the person uncomfortable if aware and the curious cat embarrassed. It is always better to keep our work to ourselves.

Don't wake the dead

Some people talk so loudly over the phone that it makes us question the necessity of a phone to get the message through. They get so clamorous while talking that they fail to remember their presence in a public place because respecting others' privacy is also a matter of concern. This trouble is also credited to the poor signals and the loud noises emitted from traffic because of continuous and unnecessary honking adding up to their misery. If the call is really important, one would unintentionally drive the caller crazy by making him repeat every alternate word. So it is better to take the call and tell them that you are travelling and ask them to revert after a while. Similar is the problem with loquacious people who talk about anything and everything while travelling, neglecting the comfort of a patient or a tired traveller or a person with a disturbed mind. We must try and keep our voices low when in public places.

Those leviathan backpacks

People who frequent their journeys with gigantic backpacks often fail to see if they are whacking someone in the face. Some students who are unable to take the weight of their bags hand them over to the seated passengers the minute they board the bus. These people don't even bother to take the approval before dumping their sometimes soiled bags onto the seated passengers, while on the other side we have concerned commuters who proffer to take our bags, unable to see us suffer. If we intend someone to take our bags while we are standing, the onus lies on us in maintaining the condition of the bags as well. We are willing to share someone's burden as long as they are courteous in asking. The best solution to this problem would be to place the backpacks between our legs.

Vandalism

While travelling we often find a lot of time to ourselves and this time is prudently utilised by some to carve their names on the front seat, peel off an advertisement or a piece of pasted information or scraping the paint off of the bus. How can we forget that we completely depend on the buses for travelling and it is each and everyone's responsibility to maintain them properly? We can avoid getting fidgety by reading a book that enhances our knowledge.

Sitting duck

Women often become sitting ducks while some men take undue advantage of the situation and this is not confined to the youth alone. They often become easy targets and quite frequently victims to the situation with no one on board to help them. Women should never feel that they are the weaker sex. They should not wait for someone to rescue them or to come to their aid and should learn to stand up for themselves. Kudos!! to the Telangana Government for initiating the novel idea of SHE TEAMS. Your problem is just a phone call away. Dial 100 and SHE TEAMS will swing into action. All we need is

confidence that we can fight our own struggle, thus setting an example for others by doing so.

Snitching

People often become targets to pickpockets while travelling. This happens mostly when we are squeezed for space and the light fingers are already busy. We should be very mindful and raise an alarm so that the frequency of such incidents will be minimised.

Miscellaneous

We should avoid smoking in public places as passive smoking causes greater harm. Besides, smoking in a packed bus often results in suffocation.

We should avoid using strong perfumes as not everyone might be able to stomach it.
We should cover our mouth and nose while coughing or sneezing as communicable diseases are rampant in public places.

We should get a firm grip of the grab handles or grab rails as there is a possibility of losing balance or stepping on someone's foot while the bus is in motion.

It would be erudite if we all faced the same direction while standing rather than facing one another.

We should maintain personal hygiene at all times; most importantly while travelling and worst case scenario if we are stood grabbing a straphanger. We can use deodorants to mask our body odour.

We should avoid picking our noses and grooming ourselves as people get flabbergasted. A bus is definitely not the right place for personal maintenance.

We should get rid of the habit of sticking the chewed gum beneath the seats or other places. We can wrap in a piece of paper for later disposal.

We should never take free rides. This is not done to save money. People only want to prove themselves as smarty pants. But the embarrassment it causes if caught is not worth it and hence we should always pay our fare.

Last but not the least, respect the staff. 'Respect' is on a give-and-take basis; not on a take-and-give basis.

So, we better watch our manners as they can never be on vacation.

Happy Travelling!

Theme of Women Empowerment in Shahrnush Parsipur's *Women without Men: A Novel of Modern Iran*
Gurpreet Kaur

Women without Men: A Novel of Modern Iran (2011), is written by Shahrnush Parsipur, an Iranian National Television and Radio producer and fiction writer. This book was originally written in Parsi language and led to a lot of controversies after its publication, followed by the ban of the book in Iran and a term in jail of Parsipur, the reason being that of a frank and bold portrayal of woman's sexuality. Its publication resulted into an exiled life for Parsipur. Even being banned in Iran, this book became a bestseller there and was translated into a number of languages all around the world. Later in 2009, this book was adapted as a feature film too.

This book is basically a universal story of women's desolate and pathetic life. It is about the coming together of five women in the background of 1953, when Mossadeq is overthrown. These women include a wealthy middle-aged ambitious lady, a prostitute, a school teacher and two house wives. They escape from their world to gather in the garden in Karadj, Tehran, which reminds us of the Garden of Eden or a utopian garden of dreams. This garden ultimately becomes a refuge for all the women in the novel.

Women without Men has been written in the postmodern manner, blurring the lines between realism and magic world full of fantasies and incredible things. Being full of realism, surrealism, and fabulism, it has a touch of Persian mythology and its idea of garden of pleasure and knowledge. It portrays the life and fate of several women in Iran who either don't have men in their life or more particularly don't have a positive image and experience of them. Most male-female relationships seem to have failed leading to a disappointment. The characters are positive and a combination of realistic and allegorical nature.

Although the book has been written in a simple and casual tone, yet it is has a very serious message to deliver through grave incidents. The society in this book especially, is full of unacceptable practices against women, chiefly, honour killing and sexual exploitation. Parsipur recreates Iran of 1950s when a woman would be killed for losing her virginity or even if she goes for a walk in her neighbourhood. Girls born in a poor family are sold to a brothel or may be married to a person double her age against her wishes.

Amir Khan, a character in the novel, finds his family's honour and personal honor at stake, when his sister Munis goes missing for about some days. On her return, he kills her, and Fa'iza, even being a woman herself, consoles and convinces Amir not to feel guilty for committing this murder, as this was to save the honour of his family:

Man listen to me," she addressed Amir Khan firmly. "This is an abomination. Why are you crying? You are a brother. You have honour, and a duty to protect it. You killed her? You did the right

thing. Why not? She'd been gadding around a whole month. No decent girl behaves like that. She was as good as dead. I'd do the same if I were you. Your mother has raised you nobly…. (32)

So this incident is not an uncommon occurring, and indeed, not very surprisingly many women are killed every day in the name of saving the honour of the family all around the world, principally in developing countries. Quite astonishingly, another character, Mahdokht, a school teacher, who is thirty-eight years old and still unmarried, because of her family's and society's expectations is unable to live normally. When she finds a young girl, Fati, having sex with their gardener, instead of exposing her there and then, she waits for her to be pregnant and, she knows that for her this crime she would be killed, "I wish she had gone pregnant so they would have killed her"(8). Mahdokht is strange for she even quits her job as a teacher when her Principal invites her to go see a movie. "She went pale, not knowing how to deal with this forwardness. What did the little man think? Who did he think she was? What was his intention?" (3) She has an earnest desire to become a human-tree to protect her virginity.

Fa'iza, another character, is strange enough to hold a belief that people with rounded face are mentally defective and this is what she thought about Munis. She desperately wants to remain virgin and pure as she believes that then only Amir Khan would marry her. She wants to marry Amir but is betrayed by him, as he decides to marry an eighteen year old young, an assumedly chaste girl. This deception, by Amir influences Fa'iza's indulgence in evil practices, like consulting psychics, wearing threads, inviting intervention of holy spirits, so as to disrupt his marriage with that girl. Finally, she, on being forced and threatened by Munis agrees to accompany her to Karadj.

Another character, Mrs. Farrokhlaqa Sadroddin Golchehreh, is 'as beautiful an impeccably groomed as ever' (46). She is fifty-one years old and at menopausal stage, and for this her husband, every now and then teases her and makes her feel inferior. She abhors him and feels 'restricted and claustrophobic' (48) in her own home in his presence. Rather in his absence 'she was more active and energetic' (48). For escaping from the present, and presence of her husband, she indulges in reverie, reminiscing Fakhroddin Azod her childhood friend, whom she adored. She was always sceptic about her husband's sudden unexpected lovely talks. In one such moment she accidently kills him by pushing him down through stairs. Then she sells her property and decides to shift to a villa with a garden in Karadj, the same one with a human-tree planted in it. And surprisingly this human-tree is none else but Mahdokht herself.

Zarrinkolah is a twenty six years old beautiful prostitute, living in Golden Akram's brothel. Since puberty she had been serving here, and sometimes she had as many as thirty clients a day. But on complaining about the work pressure, she only got abusing and beatings. She would have run away else she had an option. Yet she is cheerful and loved by all. Suddenly she starts seeing her clients to be headless, but is afraid to reveal to others who may accuse her of being possessed by evil spirits. She tries to pray, goes to a local bathhouse, gets herself massaged, and finally decides to go to Karadj.

Munis is murdered by her brother Amir for having eloped from her house for couple of days. When buried by him in their courtyard, she rises from the dead and surprisingly with a unique quality of an ability to read others' mind. 'She had died twice, and nothing surprised her anymore' (67).

In a world where all men are against women and are brutal towards women, we have an extraordinary man, a contrast to other men, in the novel known as a Kind gardener. "I am well known for having a green thumb. I touch a bush and it sprouts a hundred stem, I grow a hundred blooms on each stem" (79). He is the only man allowed to stay in the villa with the garden in Karadj, where all these women take refuge. He was kind enough to marry the prostitute, Zarrinkolah in the end. He enables the tree to bear fruits and is calm, and proves to be the jack of all trades.

Many strange things happen in the real world of the novel. For instance, the existence of the human-tree in the garden: 'The tree appeared to be a woman in her late twenties. She was buried in the ground up to her knees, wearing a tattered dress, standing erect, watching her surroundings' (77), person like the Kind gardener, feeding of the human tree with Zarrinkolah's breast milk when she gives birth to a lily flower. Parsipur ends the tale of the gardener and Zarrinkolah by depicting their merging with the lily tree, their child, and all three rising to the sky in a puff of smoke. All these are strange and magical incidents normally incredible. But here the writer is quite successful in presenting them in a believable manner. When Munis and Fa'iza both lost their virginity, by being mercilessly raped by the truck driver and his assistant on the way to Karadj, both the culprits meet an accident killing them immediately. God punishes them on the spot.

The plot of the novel moves in a circular direction beginning with introduction of all the women characters along with other minor characters in different chapters one after another. Then few chapters portray their life in the garden in Karadj, followed by their shifting to take new turns in their life after transcendence. Finally, in the last few chapters Parsipur gives an insight of their almost settled life.

After spending some years in the garden, all the women are transformed, although not to the same extent and not in the same manner. Parsipur closes the novel not with a completely happy ending. Fa'iza marries Amir and becomes his second wife. 'Life goes on for the two of them- not ideally, but not too badly either' (108). Munis becomes a simple school teacher. Farrokhlaqa marries Mr. Merrikhi: 'They have a fairly good relationship, not torrid by any means, but not frigid either' (112). Zarrinkolah, as stated earlier, vanishes in the sky with the Kind gardener. Mahdokht, now a tree, also turns into millions of seeds which wither and disperse in all directions.

Some commonalities in the lives of these characters are chance happenings of strange things followed by their decision to shift to Karadj for purgation or peace. All these women are sufferers in one way or the other at the hands of men, in the house or in the society. They are heading towards Karadj, as one of them, Fa'iza states 'we are going to Karadj to live by the fruits of our own labor and not to have any men to order in around' (68).

Men have a typical mentality in this novel as elsewhere. Amir believes: 'On principle women belong to the house. The outside is the world of men' (23). Golchehreh, Farrokhlaqa's husband insults her and restricts her in every sense. The driver of the truck and his assistant rape Munis and Fa'iza. These cruel men had no fear of being caught. Mahdokht's gardener, Yadollah, after having sex with the girl Fati, disappears, leaving her pregnant, and to be tortured by Houshang Khan, Mahdokht's brother. But consequently these men have to bear the fruits of their ill deeds.

Amir marries a girl whom he thinks to be chaste and pure, but she has actually been raped and left pregnant by her own cousin.

Although this novel is a didactic one but one never feels so. Through these characters' lives and incidents everything is presented in a light manner. Parsipur situates the city of Tehran as its background recreating it in cultural, economical, socio-political and historical context. All the characters, as stated in her 'Author's Note' in the novel, have been inspired by the real people she had known or met with in her life in Iran. She had visited Karadj when she was quite young and sensitive. The characters constructed out of real people are equally believable, even if they behave strangely, and are somewhat distressing.

The title *Women without Men* doesn't really mean a life without men. Women here are just making an attempt to free themselves from a world where men are inhumane and unsympathetic. They are trying to imagine a world free from oppressions of those men who either marry them for sex and treat them as animals, or kill them mercilessly for the sake of their honour. Restrictions in the life of women and issue of misogyny have been highlighted. Women are strong enough and want to discover the world and stand on their feet but for the same they need to overcome their cultural, traditional and social backgrounds.

This book has also been adapted as a feature film, *Women without Men* released in 2009, by an internationally acclaimed visual artist from Iran, Shirin Neshat. Both, the book as well as the film, have attracted a lot of audience all around the world. Similarly, another film released in India entitled *Parched* in 2015, also portrays three women of an arid village of Rajasthan, India, and their attempt to emancipate themselves. They are tired of the tyranny of their fathers, husbands, and sons, and ultimately decide to move towards becoming independent and finding grounds to fulfill their earnest dreams and desires. It is essentially a tale of women empowerment.

Another Iranian author Parinoush Saniee's *The Book of Fate: Fifty Years of Life in Iran* (2013), has depicted the life of Massoumeh in Tehran. She is the eldest surviving daughter of a traditional and religious family, where as everywhere else, girls are subjected to whims and tortured and boys are favoured. When she is discovered to be having an affair with a boy she has to bear many challenges as a consequence. For instance, the forced arranged marriage, years of single parenting, the imprisonment of her husband due to political reasons, his death, emigration of her family members, upkeep of her children, etc. Massoumeh's own children as adults cling to the same old notions of honour that her family and other families in Iran adhered to. The background of this novel ranges from the period of departure of the Shah, to the installation of the Ayatollah, to the Iraq-Iran war. This debut book of 434 pages, like Parsipur's was banned in Iran. Basically this book is a gentle reminder of the selflessness and loyalty of a woman to her family. It is an ode to all women around the world who have always, for the sake of their loved ones, suffered without complaints, and who have to struggle continuously to get their basic rights.

So in the end it can be said that literary master pieces and media, especially movies, are a means that these ladies have chosen to express their internal and external turmoil and suffering, and given insight into some unbelievable facts which generally remain unknown. Since ages attempts are being made to make women empowered and to let them know their basic rights also, as they very well know their duties towards their family and society. *Women without Men* is another

attempt in this direction. It is indeed inspirational and illustrates women empowerment and emancipation. Parsipur has created a 'world of dreams' using allegorical style for women by recreating a garden in Karadj, where only women live on their own. She is hopeful for transcendence from the oppressive world of suppression. She wants women to understand their worth, and their strength.

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Dalit Woman Writing: The Unheard Voice
Patchala Rajesh

"Dalit literature is an attempt to articulate unheard, unspoken voices" said by Dr. Dasari Kejiya. Now the time is to sing the Unheard Dalit women voice.

"Any discussion on Dalit and Dalitism is prone to be incomplete unless we take into account a strong undercurrent of Dalit Women and their condition as a distinct stream under the overall space of Dalit Literature" (15) said by Singh, K in his *Dalitism and Feminism: Locating Women in Dalit Literature.*(2011).

According to Martha Rampton in her article *Four Waves of Feminism* (2015) she wrote "Some thinkers have sought to locate the roots of feminism in ancient Greece with Sappho (d. c. 570 BCE), or the medieval world with Hildegard of Bingen (d. 1179) or Christine de Pisan (d. 1434). Certainly Olympes de Gouge (d. 1791), Mary Wollstonecraft (d. 1797) and Jane Austen (d. 1817) are foremothers of the modern women's movement. All of these people advocated for the dignity, intelligence, and basic human potential of the female sex. However, it was not until the late nineteenth century that the efforts for women's equal rights coalesced into a clearly identifiable and self-conscious movement, or rather a series of movements".

In the history of modern era, it is Mary Wollstonecraft, and her *A Vindication for the Rights of Woman 1792)* advocated the rights of woman. Following the legacy Jane Austen the famous author championed Feminism and her heroines are stronger than man. Then in the history we have Virginia Woolf, with her magnum opus "*A Room of one's own" (1929)* pleaded that woman needs a room of her own and some amount of money to take up the task of writing. Simon De Beauvoir's *Second Sex (1949) and* Elaine Showalter *Towards a feminist poetics (1979),* all these works have laid great foundations for the advocacy of feminism. One important thing to remember is all of them are from Western countries. As they are the colonial rulers over the world, only their works were known as the feminist writings keeping aside all the other feminists throughout the globe. The Western feminists did not concentrate on the primary rights for woman across world i.e Education, Dignity & Equality. They have been confined to their concerned countries, like so-called Indian feminists have been confined to their problems leaving Dalit and under-represented woman who were denied education in the name of caste and gender.

We have radical feminists who seek to abolish patriarchy, by challenging existing social norms and institution, rather than through a purely political process. Though they are many waves of feminism the fruits of concerned waves did not reach the oppressed communities throughout the globe especially Dalit Women. By the times all these feminists published their works majority of Dalit woman are illiterates. In India Dalit women were denied of access to education in the name of caste and gender, they are often treated as Dalits in Dalits.

They faced many struggles at working places and even at home. Women in Indian context are always treated as "second beings" but Dalit woman was treated worse than it. Talking about the position of women in Indian society Raj Kumar wrote in his *Dalit Personal Narratives: Reading Caste, Gender, Identity.* "Unfortunately the caste system operates with gender oppression subtly

and surely. That's why if the higher caste/class women themselves subject to gender oppression, the women come from less privileged sections such as Dalits and adivasis are doubly vulnerable .(84).

People know very well that women in Dalits are not much educated even now. According to Raj Kumar in the same book "Phule was perhaps, the only person in India to set up a school for Dalit girls in 1848 at Pune. His wife Savithri helped him to run the school. As a consequence of this revolutionary step, both Phule and Savithribhai Phule had to suffer many hardships including social boycotts from their community and outside. But they never compromised in their objective and wholeheartedly worked for the liberation of Woman.(213). Their work is now recognized. Serious explorations are being going on Phule's Work and Savithribhai Phule's contribution to the society.

In history Dr. B.R. Ambedkar is known for his concern for woman's rights. His contribution was great in the field of women's empowerment who advocated for the liberation of women and gender equality in India. Without Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, at least whatever so changes the position of Women today in India would be only question mark. There were many leaders who fought for the women's Rights in India. Most of them were failed in their action. But Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar was the only person who changed the effort via Law. He resigned from his ministry for "Hindu-Code Bill" in parliament which provides equal rights for woman.

Even in freedom movement of India, though there were woman participated in the struggle but all of them belonged to elite sections. "The freedom movement did have women like Sarojini Naidu and Annie Besant leaders as representing the masses. But despite the emergence of these women leaders the Indian freedom struggle continued to remain male-dominated. The male leaders of the movement did raise the issue of emancipation of women. But they placed all the issues related to woman in a common basket treating them as a homogenous group. As a result specific issues related to Dalit women never got highlighted. (212).And according to Singh, K "The pivotal organizations which played decisive role in the growth of Indian Feminism in the first half of the twentieth century were –"The Women's Indian Association" started by Margaret Cousins, Dorothy Jinaradas and Annie Besant in 1917; "The National council of women founded by Lady Tata and Lady Aberdeen in 1925, and "The All India Women's Conference" by Margaret Cousins in 1927. As is evident, the leadership of all these organizations belonged to Urban, English Educated middle class. The issues they championed in alliance with nationalist movement were those of upper caste, middle class, urban women. (33). Next in line talking when one discusses the caste factor in Indian Society and Gender bias in Dalit Community. Anupama Rao in "*Dalitism and Feminism"* said "Dalit women have been left in lurch by both modern feminists and male dominated Dalit movement. The women movement is its enthrallment of "Sisterhood" failed to note the "caste" factor while the Dalit Movement has remained patriarchal and sees the Dalit women's oppression merely as caste oppression (4).

The movements of Phule, Periyar , Ambedkar and Narayan Guru, gave women self –respect. But Ambedkar and his concern for equal rights for women were much received by Dalit Woman. The first generation of Dalit women writers Baby Kamble and Bama Faustina remembered Ambedkar. Dalit literature is presently getting recognition. According to Singh, K "Any discussion on Dalit and Dalitism is prone to be incomplete, unless we take into account a strong undercurrent of Dalit Woman and their condition as a distinct stream under over all space of Dalit literature." (15) in his *Dalitism and Feminism :Locating Women in Dalit Literature.(*2011).

According to Asa Jyothi "The influence of Ambedkar is perceived to be male centered consciousness, though it is equally responsible in inculcating Dalit Women consciousness. Among Dalit women writers, Baby Kamble emerged as popular writer, who has greatly inspired by Ambedkar. *The Prisons We Broke* is the first work in Dalit literature written by a woman (313). In Kamble's words "Ambedkar was the light of Dalit life". In her foreword by Kamble to it wrote "I want to show them what great soul, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar single –handedly achieved which no one else had achieved in ages. He paved way for Dalit women's emancipation.

Sumithra Bave *Pan on Fire* can be termed as collection of narrated Auto-biographies . Eight Dalit women narrated their life stories in it. One must read to know the problems of Dalit Women in her preface written by Frances Maria to *Pan Fire.*

"Thousands of term papers and books may be written on the Dalit Women, but the writer of the most scholarly of papers may be far from understanding, what the life and problems of Dalit women are to her. The best way of knowing what the life of a Dalit woman is to experience it, to be a Dalit Woman. Second best is to step into her chappals, or her bare feet, through her oral history in which she express herself in such a way that we can feel and identify with her and vicariously live through her experiences. The appeal here is not only to mind but also to the heart. (14). Yes Dalit literature is experience not imagination as said by Vimal Thorat "Nothing is illusion in Dalit literature. The roots ideologies and thoughts expressed in Dalit literature nurture and stem in experience (420) in the book *Exploring Fourth World Literatures: Dalits, Adivasis, Tribals. Volume II* edited by Prof. Raja Sekhar Patteti. One must experience a Dalit life to know it, and a Dalit woman's life in Particular.

Talking about the problems of Dalit Women literature Raj Kumar traced out the problem of writing in regional language and they have not been translated into English, which is also the problem of Dalit literature in General for male and female. Talking about this Raj Kumar in his *Dalit Personal Narratives* wrote "Dalit women mostly written in regional languages, and they have been hardly been translated into English. That's why perhaps Dalit Women auto biographies are still faceless and nameless in the so called mainstream literary circles and more so in the field of English literary criticism (210).

Dalit Panthers is often treated as profounder of Dalit literature for many reasons even though there existed many writers like Gurram Joshua, and Boyi Bheemanna in Telugu. Later it wide spreads through Andhra, Tamilnadu and many other states. Talking about the regional productions, it is after Karamchedu (1985) and Tsunduru (1991) massacres of Dalits a large number of Dalit poets and Dalit poetry emerged in Telugu a long time after Gurram Joshua. Katti Padam Rao a social activist and writer, Yendluri Sudhakar, and Paidi Theresh Babu, Maduri Nagesh Babu and Kalekuri Prasad and many writers emerged, but Dalit Women writing didn't taken place even in that vigorous times .

According to Challapalli Swaroopa Rani an emerged Dalit feminist and Ambedkarite wrote about Dalit women writing, in her essay *Dalit Women Writing in Telugu* (2013) "It has taken a long time for Dalit women, to overcome their oppression as women. As dalits and put to creative use the gains of social and literary movements. There are of course common issues that blind Dalit man and women, like Untouchability and caste oppression. But women also suffer from patriarchal

suppression. These concerns are constantly foregrounded in Dalit women's poetry in Telugu is evident in the form, content and the emotions that they express. However Dalit Women's poetry in telugu still needs to develop beyond the confines of the patriarchy. She continues "An examination of Dalit feminist poetry unravels for us a concern with caste oppression gender oppression, and class exploitation. Contemporary Dalit feminist poetry is written by Challapalli Swaroopa Rani, Madduri Vijayasri, and Darisi Sasinirmala, G Vijayalakshmi Rani, Karri Vijayakumari, Seeta Mahalakshmi, Nakka Vijaya Bharathi and Gouri". There is some similarities between these writers and Dalit women writers from Maharashtra Hira Banisode, Jyothi Lanjewar and Kumud Pawde according to Author. The similarities are nothing but experience.

Challapalli Swaroopa Rani writes about the problems of Dalit Women in everyday life about the undistinguishable evils of casteism and male chauvinism in her poem "Mankenapuvvu"

IntloPurushahankaram
Oka chempachellumanipisthe
VeediloKulaadipathyam
Rendochempapagalagoduthundi

The meaning of the poem is her own people slapped her in home in the name male dominance and she was slapped again in the streets in the name of caste. Dalit women always treated as bottoms of Indian society. According to S. M Basha and M. Farida Begum, "A Dalit woman is common and recurrent subject of victimization more than a woman of middle class, when sex, caste & class, are the defining parameters of oppression. Attacks on Dalits especially on women are coaxed by distressing element of untouchability. As rightly pointed out by Vimal Thorat, in overall social scheme of Hindu caste system, Dalit women is located at the bottom". Most of the women are in Dalits work in the houses of Landlords. Sexual harassment is common for every Dalit women. Domestic workers face all kinds of violence and deceit at the hands of their employers.

From the moment I opened my eyes
I cried for Dora and Dorasani
not mother or father
caste is my colour, dire poverty my garment
when he said come to my bed
and get a new skirt for the festival
I believed him (Vijaya Lakshmi "Pani Pilla")

The poem speaks of the ways in which employers offer small attractions to young unsuspecting girls and then rape them. Main stream Dalit feminists did not concentrated on the problems of Dalit women."Dalit Women have been distorted in Indian literature and especially in Indian English literature. Most of the upper caste writings appear as bigoted assertions towards and Dalit women" said by Dr. Dasari Kejiya. Sharmila Rege talks in her article *A Dalit Feminist Stand point* about the inclusion of Dalit problems in mainstream literatures "There was thus a masculinization of and a savarnisation of womanhood, leading to a classical exclusion of Dalit womanhood" (47). Dr. Dasari Kejiya opined "It could be an acceptable indication keeping Dalit women in main stream society, but at the same time it looks adequate make over without touching the conflicts of Dalit women and counter attacking them. Thus this omission of Dalit identity in

academics or writings troubled dalit women and provides latitude for them to represent themselves in effective methods".

An international conference at Savithri Phule Pune university between 14-15 December - 2015 titled as *Cast(e)ing Dalit literature* declared "Feminism is attainable and will be successful only when the Dalit women on the lowest rung achieves freedom from all social restrictions and commodification. They built their feminism on this ideological premise. Woman on the lowest rung is awaiting the re-advent of Phule-Ambedkar ideology and her liberation." Savithri Phule has now joined the list of motivators.

There is every need for more number of Dalit women writers in present context. Dalit women writing should be taught in academics. It is need of the hour talking about the feminism it should come for discussion. According to my opinion only few women writers are existing present Dalit community. Aruna Gogulamanda, and Manasa Yendluri is known for their writings in present. The writings of Dalit women should translate into global languages, so that many can understand and the problem of agony and struggle of Dalit Women.

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The Post-human Comedy in Italo Calvino's *The Cosmicomics*
Sambit Panigrahi

Italo Calvino is one of the most important writers of postmodernity. His omnibus collection of science fiction stories *The Cosmicomics* seems to be an exemplary exposition of what Mark McGurl would call "the posthuman comedy" (533) which, of course, is a key feature of many of the Postmodern novels written by Calvino. As the phrase suggests, Calvino's fictional endeavour seems to transcend the limiting dimensions of what could be called strictly 'human.' Needless to say, Postmodernism wholesomely discards an anthropocentric or human-centered worldview, particularly propagated by 'The Enlightenment' where man posits himself at the center of the universe and claims himself to be different from the non-human world of which he is the self-styled master. Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer very rightly mention in their famous book *The Dialectics of Enlightenment*: "Enlightenment has always taken the basic principle of myth to be anthropomorphism, the projection onto nature of the subjective" (6).

It hardly needs mentioning that in an anthropocentric worldview, the human being assumes for himself a distinctive identity separable from the non-human world that is presumably devoid of characteristic human features. Calvino, as it looks, is radically opposed to such a view for in many of his novels he attributes the inanimate objects with 'humanness'—a self-employed narrative ploy visibly intended towards the fictionalized illustrations of his own theory of anti-anthopocentrism.

What Calvino promotes then is anthropomorphism—a notion that he thoroughly explains in his theoretical treatise *The Literature Machine*. Anthropomorphism (which etymologically means attribution of human qualities to non-human objects and hence, contests the notion of the exclusively 'human') is the radical opposite of anthropocentrism, a thoroughly human-centered worldview that Calvino is vehemently opposed to. In an anthropomorphic worldview, the preconceived notion that the 'human' is distinguishably separate from the non-human world is thoroughly shattered as the non-human world is attributed with human qualities. This is precisely what seems to be Calvino's anthropomorphic agenda as he says, quite emphatically, that he is guided by "a positive delirium of anthropomorphism" as he further explains that it is impossible for him to think of the world "except in terms of human figures" (Calvino, *The Literature Machine* 34).

Of course, one needs to understand that such a scenario is attainable only when the cloistered conceptual entities of the 'human' and the 'non-human' merge and interpenetrate into each other. An anthropomorphic vision of the world, Calvino pronounces, would be "a way of putting the laziest, most obvious, and most vainglorious image of man to the test: by multiplying his eyes and his nose in every direction until he no longer knows who he is" (*Machine* 34). Observably, his stated claim seems to suggest towards the decentering of the human 'self' through its complete integration into the non-human world in a scenario where the human becomes the non-human and the non-human becomes the human.

An omnibus collection of his science-fiction stories, his *The Cosmicomics* is chock-a-block with characters showcasing anti-human traits so as to puncture a human-centered worldview while contrarily; the non-human entities of Nature are attributed with human forms, qualities and traits. In this context, the present article intends to show how Calvino, in the aforementioned book, creates a

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boundary-less world where the cloistered conceptual domains of the human and the non-human merge and interpenetrate. Moreover, it will be shown how, in this process, the human being is robbed off a distinctive human identity and is attributed with one that is fluid and mixable with the non-human world.

The Chapter "The Distance of the Moon" proves to be a thorough explication of the above theme. Through what looks like an amusing love triangle operating in this chapter involving Qfwfq's deaf cousin, Mrs. Vhd Vhd and the moon, Calvino introduces his anthropomorphic agenda by endowing the non-human moon with human attributes. The Moon, here, is anthropomorphized as Mrs Vhd Vhd through the latter's willful transfiguration into the former after her realization that Qfwfq's Deaf Cousin loves only the Moon, not her. Qfwfq describes: "Because she had finally realized that my cousin loved only the Moon, and the only thing she wanted now was to become the Moon, to be assimilated into the object of that *extra-human* (emphasis added) love" (Calvino, *The Cosmicomics* 16). Mrs Vhd Vhd's intense desire to assimilate herself into that object of extrahuman love (the Moon) is, indeed, an extension of the 'humanness' onto a non-human object. On the other hand, one could observe that Mrs Vhd Vhd's self-willed transformation into the moon-figure negates a stable, definite, centered and exclusive human form. Finally, Qfwfq would tell us that Mrs Vhd Vhd has become the Moon:

She was the colour of the Moon . . . . I could distinguish the shape of her bosom, her arms, her thighs, just as I remember them now, just as now, when the Moon has become that flat, remote circle, I still look for her as soon as the first silver appears in the sky, and the more it waxes, the more clearly I imagine I can see her, her or something of her, but only her, in a hundred, a thousand different vistas, . . . (Calvino, Cosmicomics 18-9).

From the quoted passage, one could mark a symbolic inter-transference between the images of Mrs Vhd Vhd and the moon in a scenario where the latter becomes the former's figurative image in space with all the clear markings of her body on its surface while at the same time, one could see the instability and the transmutability of the human form (of Mrs Vhd Vhd, for instance) that Calvino intends to demonstrate.

Calvino carries forward his mission of anthropomorphism through the human/Nature merger in the Chapter "Without Colours."Here, Qfwfq's beloved Ayl, bereft of a clearly perceivable identity, makes occasional flickering appearances through Nature, the anthropomorphized sand dune in particular. In the colourless world where everything is grey, Ayl's first appearance is through the dune, with markings of a female shape (Ayl's) on it:

I went into the sandy wasteland: . . . the crests of the dunes seemed the outlines of reclining bodies. There you could almost make out the form of an arm folded over a tender breast, with the palm open under a resting cheek; further on, a young foot with a slender big toe seemed to emerge. . . . I realized that, before my eyes, I didn't have a sandy ridge but the object of my pursuit. (Calvino, Cosmicomics 51).

Ayl's indistinguishable merger with the sand dune in a way that the latter achieves a seemingly human shape not only suggests that the sand dune is anthropomorphized, but also indicates at the self-willed denial on her part to achieve a corporeal human identity. In the course of

the events that follow, we can notice that she persistently slips into the subterranean underworld possibly due to her utter unwillingness to be visible to the outside world with a recognizable human form.

After her merger with the sand dune, she is now found to be merging with the rising volcanic fire. This is exemplified by the mingling of her body parts (like her hair) with the former as Qfwfq narrates: "We ran along the crest of the volcanoes. In the noon greyness Ayl's flying hair and the tongues of flame that rose from the craters were mingled in a wan, identical fluttering of wings" (Calvino, *Cosmicomics* 52).

The chapter offers more clues to the readers to experience Ayl's continual escapade from attaining a visible human form in a scenario where even Qfwfq struggles to perceive her presence. She continues to baffle him by appearing momentarily only in flickers and then disappearing into the world without colours. In the words of Qfwfq: "Ayl might be the colourless shadow swinging from a branch of the colourless forest . . . . A hundred times I thought I glimpsed her and hundred times I thought I lost her again" (Calvino, *Cosmicomics* 54).

Moreover, Ayl's relentless defiance to the formation of colour perhaps can be understood as her denial for an identity apparently distinguishable from the Earth, at least in the visual field. Possibly, this is why she desires "to reduce everything to the colourless beyond of their ultimate substance" and also Qfwfq's contemplation of her as a "colourless shadow swinging from a branch of the colourless forest . . . (Calvino, *Cosmicomics* 54). In an ultimate act of repudiation of the world of colours and concomitantly, of a human form visually separable from the terra firma, Ayl prefers a perpetual merger with the subterranean inner world. Qfwfq describes: "As I had been projected outwards, into the open, Ayl had remained beyond the rock wall, closed in the bowels of the Earth" (Calvino, *Cosmicomics* 59).

Like the two tales analyzed above, the tale "Solar Storm" takes Calvino's anti-human agenda to another level through the corporeal assimilation of Qfwfq's wife Rah into the aerial electromagnetic field created by the solar storm. Qfwfq says:

It was then that I saw her. . . . hanging in the air like a flag unfurling for miles and miles around, her hair flying in the wind, and her whole body flowing like her hair . . . , her loins sickle-shaped like a crescent moon, her breasts like a cloud covering the ship's quarterdeck, and the spirals of her drapery mingling with the smoke from the funnel and with the sky above. (Calvino, Cosmicomics 351-2)

This quote, while describing the aerial view of Rah which only Qfwfq could see, gives a picture of the former's complete integration into the world of the wind, the cloud, the sky and the smoke. And most interestingly, in response to Qfwfq's inquisitiveness regarding the rationale behind her self-concealment in the aerial world, Rah says: "I wanted to see if there was another way of being" (Calvino, *Cosmicomics* 352). It must be noted from the further conversations between Qfwfq and Rah that like Rah, the former has also continually defied either a human form or any other definitive form or structure that the world attributes to him. When Rah urges that Qfwfq should relinquish freaking as a formless substance across the a real world and "get caught in a trap" and "reduced to the dimensions of the world where everything is limited" (353), she suggestively

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offers a possibility for Qfwfq—though seemingly unacceptable for him—to get confined inside a worldly form—most possibly a human form. Qfwfq knew that for both of them, "life was in the freedom of space criss-crossed by rays of light, amidst the bursts of solar explosions tat constantly buffeted . . . [them] this way and that, outside all dimensions and forms" (353). Qfwfq's brazen declarations of their unflinching longing for an all-pervading formlessness across the universe must be understood to be part of Calvino's decisive agenda of anti-anthropocentrism and his continual promotion of anthropomorphism. By robbing the human being of its human form and by attributing non-human objects of the world human qualities, Calvino presents before us a typical Postmodern world where the pre-existing conceptual boundary between the 'human' and the 'non-human' is thoroughly dismantled.

Not just Rah, even Qfwfq, as seen in the Chapter entitled "Implosion," mingles with the universe through an 'explosion' of his 'self.' In a universe of co-occurring 'implosions' and 'explosions,' Qfwfq's imploded 'self' also has, as its counterpart, an all-pervasive exploded 'self' that disperses his centered selfhood into the universe outside. In the words of Qfwfq: "Sometimes, of course, I do seem to hear a voice from the furthest galaxies: 'It's me, Qfwfq, I am yourself exploding as you implode: I'm splashing out, expressing myself, spreading myself about, communicating, realizing all the potential I have; I really exist, not like you, introverted, reticent, egocentric, fused in an immutable self . . .'" (Calvino, *Cosmicomics* 388).

Finally, Calvino's anthropomorphic or anti-anthropocentric imagination, in reality, puts us in the threshold of a world that disqualifies all boundaries, particularly that between the human and the non-human Nature. It reiterates the French philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari's declaration in their collaborative project *Anti-Oedipus*: ". . . man and nature are not like two opposite terms confronting each other . . . rather, they are one and the same essential reality . . ." (4-5). Through his anthropomorphic manifesto, Calvino discards the anthropocentric principles of humanity that sees the human subject to be a centered entity, both extraneous and superior to Nature and instead, comprehends the same as a thoroughly de-centered, fragmented and dispersed one.

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A Study of Ironic Vision in Nissim Ezekiel's Poetry
Sanjeeb Kumar Mohanty

Introduction

No poet lives and writes in isolation, for he is a personality alive in a particular period of time, in a particular place, in a particular social environment. He is an individual and at the same time a member of society and society will inevitably play its part in his poetry. Our modern Indo-English poets are no exceptions. An awareness of the contemporary situation and differences with various social customs, traditions, and illusion about myths compel the contemporary poets to write on social concerns and quite a few of them are best at handling irony. Modern Indo-English poetry is concerned with and conscious of the contemporary society but is never a tool of social criticism. Irony is the favorite mode in this kind of poetry dealing with the socio-economic-political scene of our country. The poets who deserve special mention in this context are Nissim Ezekiel, R. Parthasarathy, A.K. Ramanujan, Shiv K. Kumar, Kamala Das and others.

Review of Literature

In the Greek comedy the character called the 'eiron' was a dissembler, who characteristically spoke in understatement and deliberately pretended to be less intelligent than he was. In most of the modern critical uses of the term 'irony', there remains the root sense of dissembling or hiding what is actually the case; not, however, in order to deceive, but to achieve special rhetorical or artistic effects.   In the true sense, irony relies on the difference between what is said and what is intended. The ironist exercises his intellect in exploring the reality, with which he is concerned, and his major concern is distinguished between appearance and reality; between what is said and what seems to be. As the ironist sees one thing in terms of another usually its opposite, irony touches the realm of the metaphorical. Skillfully used, irony holds in suspense two levels of meaning- one, the level of meaning explicitly stated; the other, its opposite of which the reader is aware precisely because the explicit statement is ironic.

A poet may use a pun as Shakespeare does to achieve the effect of irony. Hamlet says that too much attention is being paid to him- and false attention, at that – but also ironically objecting to his hated step-father, Claudius, who had addressed him a few lines earlier as 'my son'. Understatement is frequently used to achieve the ironic effect as in Milton's *Paradise Lost; "............*a length/Not damaged she (Eve) thus in answer spoke" (qtd. in M.H. Abrams, 1999). Eve is so amazed at hearing the serpent speak and at what he says that she is well on the way towards acting on the advice of the serpent; her act results in the loss of paradise conversely, overstatement is frequently used to achieve irony. Irony can be made effective by speech, gesture, intonation or facial expression.

Verbal irony is a statement in which the meaning that a speaker implies differs sharply from the meaning that is ostensibly expressed. The ironic statement usually involves the explicit expression of one's attitude or evaluation, but with indications in the overall speech-situation that the speaker intends a very different, often opposite, attitude. Thus in Canto IV of Alexander Pope's *The Rape of the Lock* (1974), after Sir Plume, egged on the ladies, has stammered out his incoherent request for the return of the stolen lock of hair, the Baron answers, "It gives me much," replied the

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peer again,/ "Who speaks so well should ever speak in vain" (qtd. in Abrams, 1999). This is a straightforward case of a ironic reversal of surface statement because there are patent rules, in the circumstances established by the preceding narrative, that the Peer is not in the least aggrieved and does not think that poor Sir Plume has spoken at all well.

Some literary works exhibit structural irony that is, the author, instead of using an occasional verbal irony, introduces a structural feature that serves to sustain a duplex meaning and evaluation throughout the work. One common literary device of this sort is the invention of a naïve hero, or else a naïve narrator or spokesperson. Swift's stubbornly credulous Gulliver in *Gulliver's Travels,* the self-deceiving and paranoid monologist in Browning's "Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister" (1842), are best examples of naïve hero.

In *A Rhetoric of Irony* (1974) Wayne Booth identifies stable irony that in which the speaker or author makes available to the reader an assertion or position which, whether explicit or implicit, serves as a firm ground for ironically qualifying or subverting the surface meaning. Unstable irony on the other hand, offers no fixed standpoint which is not itself undercut by further ironies. The literature of the absurd typically presents such a regression of ironies. In Samuel Beckett's drama *Waiting for Godot* (1955), there is an endless regress of ironic under cuttings.

Dramatic irony involves a situation in a play or narrative in which the audience or reader shares with author's knowledge of present or future circumstances of which a character is ignorant. Writers of Greek tragedy who based their plots on legends whose outcome were already known to their audience, made frequent use of this device. Sophocles' *Oedipus*, for example, is a very complex instance of tragic irony. A comic example of dramatic irony is the scene in Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* in which Malvolio struts and preens in anticipation of a good fortune that the audience knows is based on a fake letter.

Cosmic irony is attributed to literary works in which a deity, or else fate, is represented as though deliberately manipulating events so as to lead the protagonist to false hopes, only to frustrate and mock them. Thomas Hardy, in his *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* writes that the heroine, having lost her honesty, finds it only by murder, and having been briefly happy, is hanged. Romantic irony is a term introduced by Friedrich Schlegel and other Germen writers of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries do designate a mode of dramatic or narrative writing in which the author builds up the illusion. Byron's great narrative poem *Don Juan* persistently uses this device for ironic and comic effect. I.A. Richards (1974) defined irony in poetry as equilibrium of opposing attitudes and evaluations saying that, "Irony in this sense consists in bringing in the opposite, the complementary impulses; that is why poetry which is exposed to it is not of the highest order and why irony itself is so constantly a characteristic of poetry which is".

Irony in the Post-Independence Indo-English Poetry

The decaying standards of political life and behavior attract the attention of poets like Shiv K. Kumar, O.P. Bhatnagar and Keki N. Daruwalla. In "Epitaph on an Indian Politician", Shiv K. Kumar comes heavily on the unscrupulous politicians:

Vasectomized of all genital urges
for love and beauty
He often crossed floors
as his wife leaped across beds.

In "The Peacock" Bhatnagar questions the amassing of wealth overnight by unscrupulous politicians; "He has got into power with slimy ease/ Acquiring property, shares and virtues new/ The total is more than illusion". The irony is not missed upon the readers. Irony gives way to sarcasm, when Bhatnagar observes in the same poem:

Before the British came
The land was not ours
After they left
It was not ours too
The land belongs
To those who rule.

Irony serves as a tool of social criticism-witness Mamata Kalia's "Hell". The poet almost prophetically announces, "Give up all hope/ Ye that enter the kingdom of/ Government service….". Daruwalla makes a dig at the so-called political party leaders, who instead of helping the people during the days of famine, make use of the situations to enrich the party funds. Thus in "Yes Friends", the poet writes:

Why do I tour a thriving district
During draught, you will ask? Party funds?
Like granaries elsewhere, the party coffers are empty.
I am touching only the fringe of my mandate.

The contemporary poets give an ironical treatment to the rituals that are in vogue in our society. Shiv K. Kumar's conclusion of his poem "Kali", is also notable for its grim irony:

If the way to create
is the way to kill,
I have hoarded enough blood
In my throat
For all the hyenas to suck from.

Rivers, which occupy a place of pride in the hearts of the Hindus, get a different kind of treatment in Ramanujan's "A River". The river is Vaikai, which flows through Madurai, a city that has been for about two thousand years the seat of Tamil culture. The river is beautiful when quiet in summer, but when it floods it causes suffering, which is not at all poetic.

In "The Old Playhouse" Kamala Das is ironic about the treatment meted out to her by her husband. The ironic protest against the husband leads her to generalize the grievances of women who have suffered from their enforced subjection to the tyranny of self-centered man:

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The strong man's technique
Is always the same. He serves his love in lethal doses,
For love is Narcissus at the water's edge, hunted
By its own lonely face.

Contemporary Indo-English poets subject their experience to an ironic vision. This saves them from being didactic in their approach. Irony is a mode with them to disapprove of things which do not come up to their satisfaction. Through the use of irony they seek to awaken a sense of reality and explore facts of life and being at a deep and engaging level. The poets' call for originality warns the fellow poets against borrowing and imitation. There is the possibility of imitation even in adopting the ironic mode; if irony is not the upshot of originality in perceiving the incongruities of life and experience, it will cease to have a poetic force.

Irony in Nissim Ezekiel's Poetry

Ezekiel excels in the ironic mode. His irony is gentle, soothing and it aims at pointing out the pitfalls of different systems of our contemporary society. The title of the poem "The Stuffed Owl" is ironical and according to him it was written after reading much bad poetry. The Indian English poetic scene is full of obscure and uninteresting poets. He describes such a poet calling him an owl whose 'lyric impulse' is frozen and he is just a bore. This poetaster is at loss how to do and he has no control over the material; that is why the poet says:

He strays disconsolately
From a mystic image to a sterile phrase
Flaunting by the way a myth or moral
Stolen from an antique page.

The word 'stolen' is ironical and it refers to pure undigested poetic material and plagiarism in its worst form. He turns at first to love, stimulating passion with a metaphor until a wobbling line betrays elaboration of a trivial theme. Out of sheer disgust, he 'tears his hair and tries again' and he 'suffers sky and wind to fulfill his blanks with feeling'. Some poets also send letters to 'forgotten friends' to get the recommendation for publishing their poems in journals. So far as the themes of these poets are concerned, it is also equally strange. They can also attempt so many themes as stated in the following lines:

About the sea, a parsimonious
Epitaph on soldiers or an ode
To Beethovan, or simply "Lines
To my Mother" or sonnet to a bitch
A calculated couplet ends the game,
The tired poet quickly sings his name.

The word 'quickly' is used ironically and the above mentioned lines are marked by, irony and bathos, the 'tired poet' is trying his best to write and publish his poem and in all his steps he behaves like an enigmatic stuffed owl. This poem "The Stuffed Owl" is truly ironical and its sarcasm reminds us that of Pope's "Epistle to Arbuthnot".

Ezekiel's first significant volume is *The Unfinished Man*, a thin volume containing just ten poems which appeared in 1960. The title "The Unfinished Man, is taken from one of the greatest poems of W. B. Yeats, "A Dialogue of Self and Soul", and like Yeats' poem, the volume is Ezekiel's affirmation of life, his everlasting yea to life. Ezekiel's poetry is very often viewed as a metaphoric journey into the heart of existence, into the roots of one's self or being which embodies the mythic as well as existential dimensions of life. Poems like "Urban", "Enterprise", A Morning Walk" demonstrate such a journey. In "Urban" the poet describes the predicament of the man of the city with all its horrors and for him the hills are always far away. The speaker of the poem experiences drudgery of city life. It reminds us of Wordsworth's line 'the sounding cataract haunted me like passion' in his well known poem "Tintern Abbey" which is a life giving experience with nature. On the other hand, in Ezekiel's poem, modern city is burning like a passion which is life-denying. In this poem, we find irony mixed with mild sarcasm. In the "Enterprise" there is the description of a pilgrimage like Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* and more recently T.S. Eliot's "Journey of the Magi". 'The way of serpents and goats' is ironical symbolizing the vices of life and at last the protagonist realizes his destination. The ironic mode of perception and the precise observation at the close ('Home is where we have to gather grace') really strengthens this poem.

The city dweller is driven from his bed by troubled sleep and starts his morning walk alone waiting for the sun; but 'his native place he could not shun/ the marsh where things are what they seem' in the poem "A Morning Walk". These lines remind us of Eliot's 'Unreal City'. It has an atmosphere of Eliot's "Preludes" where the road cannot understand the predicament of the modern man. For Ezekiel's city dweller, the morning breeze released no secrets and the more he stared the less he saw.

Ezekiel's *The Exact Name* (1965) contains twenty poems written during 1960-64. In these poems, he tries to present as far as possible with exact words, phrases and lexical items. Two kinds of irony seem to operate in his poetry: " One closely allied to satire where the poet stands at a distance from the object looked at; the other, closely allied to compassion, where the poet examines the experience as if from within" (Paniker, 1982). In "Night of the Scorpion" we have the second type of irony. Here, we have a stuation, not merely a state of mind and the speaker moves among other characters. It is seen that the poet's mother was stung by a scorpion and after biting, this creature with a 'flash of diabolic tail' vanished somewhere in the darkroom. The peasants came like swarms of flies and 'buzzed' the name of God a hundred times to paralyse the evil one. The expression 'clicked' is ironical as it shows the acute observation of a real situation. Coolness, distance, and objectivity are the hallmarks Ezekiel's harsher notion of Indian life. This is evident in his poems like "In India" and "Two Images". The poem "In India" begins dramatically lake a metaphysical poem of John Donne. The poem speaks of Bombay urban life with its slum. The expression 'Burnt-out mothers' is ironical and reminds one of Eliot's 'burnt-out ends of smoky days' in his "Preludes". Ezekiel's apt expression is seen in the oxymoron 'noisy silence'.\

Ezekiel desires to achieve complete identity with self, family, society and God, but tells us in one of his poems in *Hymns in Darkness* the fixed star of his seeking eludes him for, "It multiplies like a candle in the eyes of a drunkard". In "Tribute to the Upanishads" and "Happiness" the poet realizes that one, who gets nearer to his true self, also gets nearer his fellowmen. In the poem "Ganga", the poet has ironically presented the maid servant, with suspect morals and deficient personal hygiene whose treatment at the hands of her employers underscores middleclass

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sanctimoniousness. In "Guru", Ezekiel makes a dig at the holy men and lays bare the myth that they are above the ordinary men, 'the lesser mortals'. Like ordinary men they are capable of human vices and make a sharp discrimination between the rich and the poor, man and woman, countrymen and foreigners.

Ezekiel writes about his relationship with other people, love, sex and the individuals in society in his anthology *Later-Day Psalms* (1982). There is quite an impressive variety of subject matter and treatment in this volume. The poet advises us to look within and grasp our folly, and we grasp ourselves and implores upon us to turn to silence, nothingness. The poet laughs at the folly of modern Indians and contemporary society with an undertone of irony. So, he says in the "Poverty Poems"; "She did not know beggars in India/ Smile only at white foreigners". The pre-dominant characteristic of this volume is that the poet is trying to come to terms with himself and bring a concord between the inner self and outer world. In doing so, he has dived deep into Indian life and living in the contemporary world. Ezekiel uses irony in the speech of the retired professor named Sheth who speaks of contemporary life in India and invites the visitor to come to him again.

How many issues you have? Three?
That is good. These are days of family planning?
I am not against. We have to change with times.
Whole world is changing. In India also
We are keeping up. Our progress is progressing.
Old values are going, new values are coming.
Everything is happening with leaps and bounds.

Ezekiel's irony is woven into the very texture of his poetry. His irony is both implicit and explicit. As Shiv K. Kumar has rightly pointed out that "this irony comes through more inclusively in his poems written in Indian English which is a mix of Indian vernacular and half-baked English" (Shiv K. Kumar, 1992). Ezekiel knows how to speak of humility and without humility is profoundly ironical which exposes the hypocrisy of our people.

Conclusion

Ezekiel's contemporary Indo-English poets subject their experience to an ironic vision. Nissim Ezekiel's irony is directed against the rituals and routine life of the society. The study has found that Ezekiel's irony is woven into the very texture of his poetry. It is through irony he perceives the Indian situation. By bringing everyday conversational language into the realms of poetry and making it an appropriate medium for the use of irony, Ezekiel has revolutionized post-colonial Indian English poetry.

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Children's Fiction published by The National Book Trust of India and Children's Book Trust of India-An Effective Tool in Imparting Environmental Education to children.

N. Santhi Sri Devi & P. Hari Padma Rani

Literature, since time immemorial has been reflecting ecological concerns without the writers and readers being conscious of it. Romanticism in English literature has glorified man-nature relationship. Jean Jacques Rousseau was against the notion of progress and argued that the state of nature was the purest and civilization was "artificial and corrupt. Literary writings with subject headings like American studies, regionalism, pastoralism, the frontier, landscape in literature bear a testimony to this fact. However the pressure of the global environmental crisis has drawn the attention of the intellectuals and writers just like any other social movement to the environmental movement in the sixties and seventies resulting in the 'greening' of literature.

The emerging approaches, subjects and forms relating to this modern environmental thought have been brought under the umbrella term, "Eco Criticism" first coined in 1978 by William Rueckert in his essay : "Literature and ecology: An experiment in eco criticism". By eco criticism Rueckert meant, "the application of ecology and ecological principles to the study of literature." Simply put eco criticism is an earth-centered approach to literary studies (Cheryl Glotfelty:1996 Introduction to the Eco Critical Reader). The child and childhood hold an important position in the development of an individual and the literature a child studies influences him/her for the rest of life. Children's literature is often regarded as the "Literature of Hope". It is an effective means of equipping our children with the knowledge about the different facets and challenges of our environment, the new attitudes and behaviours that are desirable in a future society when the planet's life supporting mechanism is at stake.

Once upon a time human beings lived in the lap of nature and were in a position to understand, experience and appreciate "Nature". Their childhood had fond memories of playing outside till it got dark. This outdoor play has established a direct contact with nature and enabled children to gain a firsthand knowledge about the natural world. Technological advancements and rapid urbanization have distanced children from the natural world leading to 'extinction of experience' (Pyle 1993). The children of today are screen addicted and most of their everyday life has been shifted to indoors where children entertain themselves with gadgets and wander in a virtual world of car races and mock fights. The onus now lies on texts to offer them a true meaning of the term, 'environment' and enable them to comprehend its value. How children view and treat their environment depends on how they frame the environment in their minds. A positive attitude towards environment is the first step towards an active concern. Given the lack of space and opportunity to watch how beautifully nature's feet can dance, visual images and verbal images play a greater role in mediating a child's natural experience. From the time children learn to read, story books with excellently done illustrations grab their attention. Majority of the children's fiction published by the National Book Trust of India and the Children's Book Trust of India possess an exquisite design both in narration and illustration and can be employed in introducing the concepts of environmental education to children.

The National Environment Policy, 2016 in India says, "Enhancing environmental awareness is essential to harmonize patterns of individual behavior with the requirements of environmental conservation. Awareness involves not only internalization of environmental responsible behavior, but also enhanced understanding of the impact of irresponsible actions including to public health, living conditions, sanitation and livelihood prospects. Environmental education is the principal means of enhancing such awareness among children. The Supreme Court has also mandated that environmental education must be imparted at all levels, including higher education.

The first level in the hierarchical goal levels for environmental literacy focuses on teaching ecological concepts there by giving children the basic background knowledge necessary to make informed decisions. Some of the stories published by the NBT and CBT do meet the goal of 'consciousness raising' by portraying the bewildering diversity among living organisms, the distinctiveness of each of the organisms inhabiting our planet, their interdependence, certain natural phenomena and their importance, the life sustaining mechanisms existing in our environment. These stories have a unique way of combining 'instruction with delight' and aim at inculcating a sense of appreciation among the young readers towards the bio-physical world around us before asking them to protect it.

The story, *How Munia Found Gold* in the garb of a simple story depicting the germination of a seed conveys a profound ecological message that trees are worthier than gold. There is a direct hint at the rich rewards Mother Nature bestows on us for a little care and protection from our side. The Gold in the title does not refer to any material prosperity but to a tree.

And one spring, Munia saw the tree was covered with lovely white-and-pink flowers. A few weeks later to Munia's surprise the flowers turned into delicious golden cherries-just like the cherry she had lost. Munia was overjoyed. There were enough cherries for all her friends. The tree would be their home shading them from the hot summer sun and heavy monsoon rain

The sustenance we receive from the environment is brought out very well in the story, *Holiday…Oh! No No…* When the sun wants to enjoy a holiday, the readers witness scenes of chaos. The birds, engulfed by sudden darkness return to their nests without collecting food for their babies. The snow on the mountain peaks ceases to melt and the rivers come to a standstill. All the plants deriving food from the rays of the sun begin to wilt. Finally the sun on recognizing the turmoil following his holiday resumes his work thinking that there is no use from such a holiday which only spells doom. The revelation about the incessant work of the natural elements has a strong appeal to the junior readers.

The collection, *Celebrating Seasons* provides an opportunity for the young readers to participate intimately in the cycle of seasons. This book is an example of aestheticized literature as it evokes the visual, auditory and tactile senses of children with the imaginative depiction of the colours, sounds and tastes associated with every season. Children will surely find a new insight into a common natural phenomenon like seasonal changes and understand its importance.

The distinctiveness and the worthiness of each living organism is delineated in the story, *The Lion and the Hedgehog*. The Hedgehogs are hired to keep the Lion's den neat and sprightly by removing all the weeds. One day the lion accidentally puts his paw on a hedgehog and the shooting

pain forces him to banish the ugly creatures from his kingdom. When the den was untidy with weeds growing everywhere, the lion realizes the purpose of every creature on this earth.

The story *Home- coming* raises the ecological sensibility of the readers by illustrating almost every aspect of environmental education. Nana an old man teaches his grandson Kanu the ins and outs of living in a forest and his words are replete with ecological wisdom.

"What shall we do today, Nana? Shall we take the new catapult you made and try to bring down the bad hawk which killed the little pigeon?
Mother was alarmed. "No, no, don't shoot at fierce birds such as hawks; they might pounce on you. Why don't you kill some of those crows in the neem tree; horrid, thieving creatures!"
Nana was silent. Later he said to Kanu, "Those are not ordinary crows, child; they are ravens. You can tame and teach them to talk. They have funny hoarse voices and they chuckle like old men.

The concept of Bio-diversity is sketched in the stories, *We stand alone, Birds of Different feathers, Sona's Adventures, We are different etc.,* Readers are made to understand the bewildering variety seen among the trees in the forest and also they understand how organisms adapt themselves to fit into the larger world.

Alongside the stately trees, there grew a few conifers or the evergreens of the forest. These trees were the only ones on that slope which did not shed their leaves in autumn. The higher slopes of the mountains were full of conifers where they stood tall and proud, wearing their green foliage al through the bitterly cold winter; but on the lower slopes these few conifers were the odd ones among the large sal and mahogany trees.

The beneficial interdependence among living beings finds expression in the story, *Bukka learns a lesson.* His mother warns Bukka, a baby elephant about the interconnections of life in a forest.

"Never break a branch of a tree without checking, even if you are dying to eat the fresh juicy leaves,"
"Wait; there may be chicks and eggs of some birds. They might fall and be destroyed. If you are not careful, the birds will never be your friends.
"Never break branches with flowers on them...Flowers have nectar. They attract bees and butterflies who are the matchmakers of the plant world. Without them there will be no flowers or fruits or seeds or new trees. And what will you eat then?
"Remember, we are all big animals. While sitting or lying down on the ground, you must watch out for snails. See that you don't crush them with your weight. It is the snail that tells you when flood waters enter the forest."
"Check out for baby squirrels in the hollows of trees when you shake their branches to pick the fruits. These animals in turn will be the first ones to give you news of danger like fire."

The second level of environmental education is to teach conceptual awareness of how individuals and groups affect the quality of the environment and therefore our quality of life. This goal is met in most of the stories named, Home-Coming, Mini Visits the Atlantic Ocean, A Chance to Dream, George, Once in a village etc., Different aspects of the Bio-disaster caused by humans ranging from Deforestation, Air Pollution, water Pollution, Sound Pollution, cruelty to Animals,

extinction of species owing to habitat loss are represented in these stories. Grave issues like Development at the cost of environment strongly protested by environmentalists like Vandana Shiva find their way into these stories.

"My real problem is man! He throws foul stuff into me. It kills my fish and plants. He catches too many fish, kills my beautiful whales and sharks…" howls the Atlantic. (Mini visits the Atlantic ocean)
All those green fields have gone; where the pampass grass used to wave in the wind, there are now rows and rows of houses, and factories belching smoke. We rarely see a mongoose now, and the jackals no longer cry in the night. Where have they all gone/ I feel terribly sad, all of a sudden, for I can hear the cruel sound of the axes, far away. Will people come to clear this remaining strip of green jungle, to chop down the trees and pull away the undergrowth-to build more and more houses? If they do-then where will all these wild creatures go? How will they find food? Where will the birds build their nests? Will they all vanish, forever? (George)

The next level of environmental education focuses on acquiring the ability to derive solutions to positively resolve environmental issues. The NBT and The CBT publish a genre of Adventurous stories where the child protagonists as characters with a commitment for the cause of environment. Stories like Rahul to the Rescue, The Maleo Birds, Adventures in Clee Island, The Kaziranga Trail, The Night of the Light Birds, A Different Diwali to name a few meet the goal of equipping children with the required skills to preserve and conserve the assets of our earth.

"Can't we do at least this much for chinnamma? Sacrifice a few crackers?" pressed Alok seeing that everyone was beginning to have a change of heart.
"Yes, and what are crackers any way, just causing air and noise pollution, leaving the streets dirty," opined Jyoti.
"Not to mention the injuries they cause," added Roshan. (A Different Diwali)
"Kumar saab," Chotu's voice shook, "please, why don't you rest Moti? She is not at all well."
"If I rest her, the other lions will also not leave their cages. They will feel disturbed   . I know enough about animal behavior to say they move together."
However, Chotu felt as if Moti was imploring him,"Please can I take the place of Moti?"
Mr. Kumar almost threw a fit. "You?" he shouted. "People will laugh!"
"Exactly," replied Chotu drawing on his inner strength and his courage. "I am here to make people laugh. I will lead the lions and jump first through the ring-I am sure they will follow. It will make people laugh to see me…." (Growing Tall)

Thus environmental literacy is a predominant theme in the children's fiction published by The National Book Trust of India and the Children's Book trust of India. These Governmental publishing agencies are even encouraging commissioned writing in the way of offering financial assistance to writers, conducting joint workshops for illustrators and children's literature writers, executing special projects like 'Listen to Me' to promote theme based writing for children etc., It is the duty of parents, teachers and librarians to make these magnificently done books available to our children and help them in knowing their role to safeguard the health of our planet.

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Depiction of Women in Khaled Hosseini's Novel –*A Thousand Splendid Suns*
Sumaira Nabi & Naziya Rasool

Introduction
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Gender inequality is the preference or prejudice of one gender over the other. It can also be defined as the discrimination based on sex, especially discrimination towards women. History witnesses that women have always been considered as a weaker sex by the society. She has been given a position submissive to men. This discrimination is more or less prevalent everywhere in the world.

In a patriarchal set up, a woman is always oppressed. She is not even given the freedom of her own choice and opinions are just thrust upon her. Depending on the social practices and the culture of the author, women are represented differently in literature .Khaled Hosseini's novel 'A Thousand Splendid suns" is a story set in Afghanistan. The author has brought to forefront the sufferings of two Afghan women - Mariam and Laila.

Mariam is just five years old when she is made to encounter the word 'harami' (meaning bastard) by her mother Nana. Mariam, a five year old kid suffers for the sin she didn't even know about. Nana was a housekeeper for a rich businessman named Jalil in Herat. Jalil impregnates Nana and when jalil's family comes to know about this, they demand him to throw her out. Even Nana's own father disowns her. A woman looses everything while as a man continues to enjoy his life.

You know what he told his wives by way of defence? That I forced myself on him. That it was my fault. You see? This is what it means to be a woman in this world (7).

From the above context, it is evident that how difficult it is to be a woman. Jalil puts all the blame on Nana as if he was not a part of this affair. She is made to suffer alone for the mistake they committed together. She is made to leave the town and live in a small Kolba, cut off from the rest of the city. Jalil doesn't lose anything and who suffers alone is a woman.

Jalil visits them every Thursday just to comfort Mariam with his rich lies. Nana and Jalil tell Mariam opposite stories about her birth. Nana says that Jalil didn't even summon a doctor for her. She herself cut the umbilical cord between them with a knife. But Mariam believes Jalil's version of the story that Nana was attended by a doctor. That she delivered the baby in a hospital and not on the floor as said by Nana. Jalil's company comforts Mariam so much that she believes each and everything said by Jalil. She feels happy in Jalil's company than her mother's. What a mother is getting at the end- her daughter's hatred induced by her father.

What is the sense of schooling a girl like you? It is like shinning a spittoon. And you will learn nothing of value in those schools? There is only one, only one skill a woman like you and me needs in life, and they don't teach it in school (18).

In these lines, Laila puts the desire of going to school before Mullah Sahib, but Nana rejects this proposal. She says that a school is not meant for a 'harami' child as she is worried that her

going to school may bring shame on Jalil's honour. And Mariam – a woman is being deprived of her right to education.

A man's heart is a wretched, wretched thing, Mariam. It isn't like a mother's womb. It won't bleed, it won't stretch to make room for you '(27).

Jalil on his visit to Kolba tells Mariam about the cinema he owns. Mariam leaves with jalil and insists him to take her to the cinema. Jalil promises to take her tomorrow noon. Nana gets angry when Mariam doesn't arrive on time and makes her realize a mother's importance. She is aware her that her father doesn't need her. But Mariam doesn't listen to her. She waits at the point where jalil had promised to pick her up. But Jalil doesn't return. Mariam decides to go to Heart- the place where Jalil lived a luxurious life with his three wives and nine children. Jalil khan directs his driver to send her back home. But Mariam catches a glimpse of her father from the window. Mariam feels shattered at her father's lie. On returning home, Mariam sees her mother hanging from a tree. The innocent Nana had to end her life. So Nana costs her life to the mistake done by both her and Jalil. Only she has to suffer whiles as Jalil continues to live his luxurious life. What was the crime of little innocent Mariam in all this. She loses the only real support of her life. Afterward, Jalil makes a great show in front of villagers of tending to Mariam and takes her to home with him. Mariam doesn't want to go but has to.

"Now he is a little older than you ," Afsoon chimed in. 'But he can't be more than ……. Forty. Forty- five at the most. Wouldn't you say, Nargis?''(47).

One day Jalil's wife calls Mariam downstairs for some important talk. His wives come to the point of the meeting and say there is a suitor for her.

The suitor they choose for her named Rasheed is far elder than her. A fifteen year old girl with a forty five year old man and his own father Jalil has no objection. This is the purpose of bringing her to Herat. They just wanted to get rid of her. A daughter is made to pay for her father's mistake.

One of the wives of Jalil says that *'yes. But I have seen nine- year old girls given to men twenty years older than your suitor, Mariam. We all have. But you are fifteen (47).*

Why did she escape her own daughter from this statement? Why this bias with Mariam for the sin she didn't even commit. What was her sin?

"They had been disgraced by her birth, and this was their chance to erase, once and for all, the last trace of their husband's scandalous mistake (48).

Mariam is left with no option other than marrying a man of her father's age just to prevent any further disgrace to her father. After some days Mariam comes to know that she is pregnant. Both Mariam and Rasheed are so delighted at this news.

'Boy is better, Mariam Jan, they carry the family name-" Bah- Boys get married and run off. Girls stay behind and take care of you when you are old.''(66).

In the above line, Mariam and Rasheed are discussing about their baby. Rasheed only wants a son and considers daughters as a burden. In a patriarchal setup, sons are always considered superior to daughters. Boys are considered as name carriers of the family. The birth of a son gives pleasure to everyone, while a daughter disappoints everyone.

"What about Zalmai?" he said. 'It is a good pashtun name".
"what if it is a girl?'Mariam said.
'I think it is a boy. Yes. A boy'(85).

Mariam and Rasheed are so excited for this baby. They are now choosing the name for this baby. Rasheed says the baby boy will be named Zalmai. He doesn't even want to think of a girl name. Rasheed makes a crib for his baby boy. He wants to give his son happiness but doesn't want a baby girl. His actions speak that he will not love the baby if turned out to be a girl. But Rasheed's dream is shattered when Mariam suffers a miscarriage. Rasheed and Mariam both mourn the death of their baby. Rasheed holds Mariam responsible for this loss and starts avoiding her. He doesn't even want to look at her.

'Then he was gone, leaving Mariam to spit out pebbles, blood, and the fragments of two broken molars (103).

Rasheed tortures Mariam by putting a handful of pebbles in her mouth to chew. Two of her molars break and blood starts oozing from her mouth. Rasheed holds Mariam responsible for the baby's death and tortures her in every possible way.

The novel talks about Laila's friend Hasina. Hasina's parents have decided to marry her with her cousin, twenty years older than her. Hasina is not interested in him, but being a girl she is bound to obey her parent's command. Here it can be said that girls can't even marry a person of their choice. In a patriarchal setup, males decide the fate of females.

Laila is a little innocent girl living in Mariam's neighbourhood. Laila has two brothers who have joined Mujahideen. Laila's mother all the time talks of her two sons and is least bothered about Laila. This thing hurts Laila but she doesn't express this feeling. Whenever Laila wants to spend some time with her mother, she starts a story about boys. Laila stands nowhere in her life, sons are always given priority over daughters. Here, the author has rightly put how desolate she feels when her mother discusses her brothers all the time.

'Laila lay there and listened, wishing Mammy would notice that she, Laila, hadn't become shaheed, that she was alive, here in bed with her,(140).

After the death of Laila's brother's, she is worried that her mother may kill herself. But her mother says that she wants to live till the day soviets are kicked out from Afghanistan and this would mean a lot for her sons. A daughter realises that she is not enough of a reason to keep her mother living. A living daughter is not a reason for keeping mother alive, but dead sons are.

'what of it? What? She is too young, you think? She is fourteen. Hardly a child. You were fifteen, remember'(208).

In these lines, Rasheed is asking Mariam to put his marriage proposal before Laila. Mariam tells him that she is just a fourteen year old kid. But Rasheed reminds her own age when she got married to him. Rasheed gives the fake news of Tariq's death to Laila through one of his friends. And thus, Laila accepts his proposal. Fearing the consequences of being an orphan and alone in a patriarchal society compels her to accept an unwanted relation.

'We are city people, you and I, but she is dehati. A village girl. Have you told her that you are a harami (216).

Mariam no longer appears beautiful to Rashid. He no more considers Mariam, the so called honour of his home. After spending so many years with Rasheed, she is being again and again insulted for being an illegitimate child and a village girl. This depicts that a man only needs a woman when they are appealing, young and satisfy their needs.

'you,'' Rasheed said to the girl, 'you, on the other hand, would be a Benz. A brand- new, first – class, shiny Benz' (216).

After getting a new, young and beautiful sexual partner, Mariam now no longer appears pleasing to Rasheed. He compares her with an old car model, which is considered of no use.

' He had immediately hopped on his bicycle, ridden to a mosque, and prayed for a boy' (222).

When Rasheed comes to know that Laila is pregnant, he immediately goes to the mosque and prays for a boy. He is excited at the news, the way he was when Mariam was pregnant. Rasheed stresses the point that he wants a baby boy. Here, again it shows that a father does not even want to think of a baby girl.

'Swelling so quickly,'' Rasheed said. 'it is going to be a big boy. My son will be a pahalwan; like his father' (226).

Looking at Laila's big belly, Rasheed assumes that the baby inside is a boy. The only possibility he thinks of is a boy.

'And the room smells like a sewer. There is shit, clothes lying all over the place (230).

Rasheed's displeasure with the baby girl is quite obvious. His behavior is altogether changed and doesn't like this baby even a bit. He hates this baby girl like anything. He can't even tolerate her crying. He makes her wear those clothes bought for his presumed baby boy. He doesn't even call this baby by her name -Aziza which means the cherished one. Laila is no more the 'noor' of Rashid's eyes as she has given birth to a baby girl.

'I am not picking you up. Go on before you get stepped on '(248).

Just because the baby is a girl Rasheed doesn't care crushing her beneath his feet. Had the baby been a boy, things would have been altogether different.

Aziza pushed the TV's power button. Rasheed scowled, snatched her wrist and set it on the table, not gently at all. this is Zalmai's TV , he said' (290).

Laila is pregnant again and this time to Rasheed's pleasure, the baby is a boy. He gets each and everything for Zalmai. He doesn't allow his daughter Aziza to touch her brother's TV. This depicts that only boys are given the luxuries of life.

'What has happened to you? he said.' I married a pari, and now I am saddled with a hag. You are turning into Mariam' (297).

Rasheed's hatred and displeasure continues for Mariam and now even for Laila. He continues to behave cruelly with both the women.

Conclusion:

After analyzing the women characters of the novel, it was found that women suffer a lot in a patriarchal society. In childhood a female is a responsibility of her father, in youth to her husband, and when her husband is dead, to her sons; a woman is never given independence. They are treated as slaves and are oppressed by men at every phase of their life. The female character of the novel – Mariam avenges her sufferings and kills her husband. Mariam's struggle inspires Laila to become a strong woman. Another female character of the novel- Laila after facing so many hardships emerges as a strong character and starts working for the empowerment of Afghan women.

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Relevance of Ecocriticism: 'Issues' Debated
S. Sushma Raj & J. Siva Satyanarayana

The branch of Ecocriticism in literature is past twenty years old. Though coined by William Rueckert in 1978, the term was revived with full gusto in 1989 by Cheryll Glotfelty, who assumed captaincy of ecocritical movement, as an academic segment. The active debate that followed was initiated after her inaugural proposal that "human culture is connected to the physical world, affecting it and affected by it, a theoretical discourse negotiating between human and non-human , exploring different kinds of knowledge from places to arrive at divergent values for humanity". She courageously expressed that "the human survival is threatened" and 'ecocriticism' would do well to focus on this drama in the creative functions of literature. The wide response, her proposed theme obtained in a decade (200 articles appeared in support of 'ecocriticism' for 1996-2004) had invited a wild reaction with interrogations like 'What is this ecocriticism? Is it a red carpet for human misdemeanours on green carpet of the world? What are their methods? Who conceived them and by whom confirmed as a literary paradigm? Is it by an American woman, aspiring to win over the world by welcoming an anthropocentric aggression in the guise of a biocentric (Michael P. Cohen, 2004) activity? Is there a subtle conspiracy by 'American imagination', ignoring Western actualities of nature – love in the name of scientific treatment to literature. The conflated usage of the term 'ecocriticism' was conceived by many as a new term for 'nature-writing', or a revised version of it in the light of the new environmental knowledge. The naturalists, who ruled the roost for centuries, began to doubt whether ecological studies are a modern revival of nature's glory or a silent rivalry, hatched, to impose human superiority over nature.

The suspicion gained currency as the writings like 'Silent Spring' (Rachel Carson, 1962) cautioned that "the most important function of literature today is to redirect human consciousness to a full consideration of its place in the threatened natural world". The truths from ecology and environmental imaginations do not go hand in hand. Literature is not a science lesson but shall be a science-based one. An English language teacher cannot afford to say that earth is flat in a poetry classroom and round at home for fear of his geography colleague living next door. At best he can poeticize eco-truths like Biodiversity – as – the joy of abundance, extinction of species – sorrow of deprivation, ecobalance- harmony in nature, hot spots - gold mines of nature, danger to Green house – green house aggrieved and ozone hole as disaster in the sky to life.

However, the green criticism, as it was euphemistically called in the initial years, was subjected to severe criticism (Michael P. Cohen, 2004, Ecocriticism under critique), partly due to xenophobia, and partly due to extreme loyalty to Romantic nature worship, with inscrutable faith and fervor. William Rueckert (1978, Literature and Ecology: An experiment in Ecocriticism) sounded skeptical about application of eco-concepts to the study of literature. Critics like Lawrence Buell (1995) were more pungent when they reiterated safety to 'non-human environment' as more important than concern about 'human interest' which for them is an illegitimate one. There is need to worry about human accountability to ethical nature', treating environment as a process and not a constant. They feared that wilderness may be extinguished, landscapes may be demolished for urbanity and nature's divinity be diminished in the pursuits of civilization. They warned ecocritics that environment is a co-actor in the drama and not a human protégé.

Romantic poets of Europe and America, with their liberal values like freedom of man, pastoral passion, patriotic fervor, independence, brotherhood of peoples and platonic love had an intense obsession with nature. Mostly the romantics appeared (18th – 19th centuries till the Avant-Garde group appeared in the middle decades of 20th century due to the effect of industrialization) to be pro-changers in the social culture but a strong section turned conservatively anti-science group. Bertrand Russell(1872-1970), the veteran thinker, writer, scientist, explained "that the romanticists had no sympathy for industrialization as it was ugly and money grabbing and interfered with individual liberty. They have aesthetic but not utilitarian standards. The earth worm is useful but not beautiful. The tiger is beautiful but not useful. Darwin praised Earthworm…..and Blake praised the tiger". W. H. Auden (1907-1973) visualized the future scenario when, and anticipating a Glotfelty to appear on critical literature, remarked that 'the impulse of poetry is to do research on tomorrow's atomic fall out'. Another romantic cum progressive poet of Avant-Garde group (1981) mused in pristine clarity

Nightingales….Sunset, meanest flower,
Were formerly the potential poetic powers……..
Microscopic anatomy of ephermerides………..
Power house and girder ribs provide the poetic base now……

If ecocriticism were to be only nature –writing, romantic poets such as Wordsworth, Keats, Shelly, Frost and Tagore were full of passionate pictures, painted with poetic heights and filled with warbling birds, grazing fawns, limpid lakes, jumping falls, bubbling streams, fanning trees, hissing reptiles, festive flowers, roaring tigers and mewing cats. Rising Sun and fading moon are at home with every Romantic poet. They are in such an abundance that analysts like Ursula K. Heise considered ecocriticism as only nature writing. The dissent option to ecocritical appraisal of 'human – nature' interaction provoked them to search for eco-writings in the major poets of romantic period like Wordsworth.

In fact, science is not a cultural intruder…it is an evolutionary essence of man's struggle with nature. As Karl Marx opined 'the freedom is not the absence of constraint…it is the recognition of the need'. The need for the aesthetic arsenal of creative writers is fulfilled by a changing society in the height of science. No one needs to worry that literature; an art form is doing service to scientific problems of social milieu. In fact, the result is other way round. Science enriches, astounds and emancipates literature from drudgery and drabness, one of the examples being ecocriticism.

Christopher Caudwell (1907-1937) the writer, and a Marxian critic explained "that the major change of literature to life from fictional flights is exclusively due to science, which creates a wonderful drama, sufficient to satiate the creative thirst of literary people".

A. Romantic Ecology

To redress the balance of the culture-nature debate, an English professor of Literature at University of Liverpool, Jonathan Bate, authored the book 'romantic ecology', taking Wordsworth as an exemplar of ecocritical thinking. By doing so, Bate and his similar ones stressed for delicate relations between the human and non-human worlds.

Following suite, Indian romantic ecologists began to produce similarities. Ambika (2011) does it on Robert Frost in her article "An ecocentric reading of Robert Frost's selected poems". Suresh Frederick (2007) in his article titled "Human aggression on Nature: Selected poems of Rabindranath Tagore", accused human aggressors on nature, who are supposed to be anthropocentric. Fredrick quoted Tagore's powerful warning "humans should understand the roles assigned in a disaster". Who are the nature's aggressors before the year 1941 when environmentalism did not start? May be, a foolish forest hunter or an avaricious timber merchant. Tagore could have never meant the blunders of dangerous industrial polluters and urbanisers, whom the Romantic Ecologists are aiming at as aggressors, or the ecocritics of Glotfelty School or environmental group itself?

Trying to discover or rediscover the ecological principles or ecocritical rudiments in our literary past is no sin. That happens with every new phenomenon in the social order. In Indian classical literature, a section 'Vedic' Literature (3000 B.C) was called Aranyakas the literature born in forests! One of the hymns of the 'forest – literature' group in Sanskrit suggests *"Vruksho Rakshati Rakshitaha"* which means "Save the tree, It saves you". What an ecocritical foresight! In the Indian epics of Ramayana and Mahabharata (scripted 1500 B.C. and beyond), many references exist.

Some with slight deviations from pure romantic ecologists are those who claim eco-reflections in nature like Steve Grant (Birds and Bees: Finding nature in literature"….Dec, 1998). Grant is anxious to report that 'literature and environmental courses are offered both in English Departments and Environmental Science Programmes', a jubilance which cares for ecocritical branch of knowledge to flourish in literary pedagogy.

Joan Hamilton (Sierra Magazine, Nature 101) in his essay on Robert Hass pacifies the needless acrimony when he says Nature-writing is not enough. Ecocriticism in U.S and later in Europe refers to 'ecological failure which is an unintended by-product of industrial age". Referring to romantic poetry, he discerns that 'the poet who says a 'bird sings' is a mask on his massive ignorance of birds' ecosystem and life patterns'. By this time ecocritical literature in English is occupying the territory once occupied by deconstructionism, post-modernism, feminism, structuralism and psycho-analysis. With its feet in the literary past and the mind in the future of humanity, the heart of ecocriticism is beating for literature of social concern with an enormous mixed response, only to be processed as an academic paradigm.

B. Raised Eyebrows?

While such is the background of nature-poetry of Romantic writers, why skeptics raised eyebrows now at the mention of science as ecological –backbone to grasp the eco-imbalance and needed human-interventions? Some of the reasons put forth are: (Laurence Buell)

Ecocriticm is looked at as a critical 'insurgency' with canonical understanding of the ultimate goal to hit. The second reason is that Ecocriticism is outside the traditional Euro-American Academia, guided by Western Literature Association. The whole movement had sprouted from enthusiastic radicals from American dry soils, who want to break the barriers between formal

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criticism and creative writings with personal narratives. They are mostly young (perhaps amateurs too and a rebellious group of American Society of Literature and Environment. Another important group expressing anger over the aggressive postures of ecocritics insisting for human interference to save the nature from disaster is the pure-naturalists, who might be sent to oblivion in case the ecological writings assume importance. The last group is of the opinion that these ecocritics may smuggle in 'personal and political commitments' in the name of environmental benefactions. Simon C. Estok (PMLA letter,Oct,1999) crudely summarized the possible questions of a preponderant pessimist, like

"Can a person who chews down on a fat roast beef on rye at lunch be an ecocritic at two 'o' clock seminar"?

The skeptical opposition to any theory, nascent or old, is a healthy sign for scientific phenomenon, more so, when the science had to be hybridized with an art form like literature. The lack of other 'pole' is a sign of destruction and death to any 'dialectical' growth. As Glotfelty insisted "that nature-writing should be given its due professional dignity along with environmental aspects. Otherwise the ecocriticism will be a trend to attract publications and promotions. It would not change things".

C.

There lies the million dollar question as whether the literature could be or could be turned into an instrument of change, that too of a magnificent natural crisis like 'ecofailure'. Words, syllables, similes, metaphors and fiction with imaginary characters trying to play a role of correcting "human misbehavior" on a social scale with economic greed and political implications. Ecocritics are not likely to pack the literature up with ecological detail and make best sellers on market bookstands, and be contended with. They have opened a Pandora's Box of 'critical' environmental orientation. They are not satisfied with works like a 'Silent Spring', 'Machine in the Garden' or a 'virgin land', who might create an interest in nature and a positive 'disinterest' in human endeavours. Ecocritics are deliberately for the human intervention to rescue the loss of 'ecobalance' with a scientific methodology, which does not include a sigh of despair, despondency or a sweetest song, made out of a saddest anecdote. Science in fact appeals to literary aestheticians, expert-thinkers and skilled artisans to come to its rescue-operations as cofighters to salvage nature. Gurajada (1907) the romantic poet of Telugu literature of South India turned a science-oriented rationalist and a social-humanist. In his poem 'Pariotism'
 (Tr. Sri Sri)

Let the nightingale sing the songs, hidden in the bushes
Let the song breed seeds of love among the fellow citizens….
Stop the loose talk and stretch a helping hand for the society….
the country never means soil…….. it is people…….'

D.

Gregory Mc Namee (Utne Reader, 15 Dec, 1997) in the article 'Wild things' suggested the contents of eco-writings. "Environmental literature has always been broad and inclusive, wide

enough to contain the writing of botanists, entomologists, bee-culturists, beef-ranchers, explorers, poets and novelists", Gregory elucidated.

Evan Mwangi (2004) wrote on environmentalist of Africa 'Wangari Maathai', on receiving the Nobel Prize for her fight on 'the rights of forests and women', when both are violated for greed, resulting in rural space being lost and urban background, degenerated. Though written in high appreciation for the work of Wangari, Evan titled the article as "Nobel Prize – A shot in the arm of African Ecocriticism" (the Nation, Oct, 2004). More interesting is the remark of Wangari Maathai, the non-literary - ecoactivist, 'ethical emphasis of environment shall be on a world beyond text and beyond reader, needed to be the syllabus of ecocritics.

The skeptics like Sven Birkerts (1996) were more vocal in their essays like 'Only God can make a tree: the joys and sorrows of ecocriticism". The emphasis of Glotfelty's 'human nature in environmental behavior', needed to be highlighted in literary discourses, was mistaken as license for human intrusion and hence the 'ordained' duty to protect the 'divine nature'. What else does the expression 'only God can make a tree' suggest….except to recall Tagore's vehement remark on suspected anthropocentricism, "it is not for you to open a bud into a blossom"!

It is a common knowledge that any scientific exercise grows by trial and error. Opposition to a thought keeps the truth in its position. Dissent argument, presumably in defense of nature and literature posed questions like: can literature be carefully examined as having bearings on man and his relations to the world?; as a literary purist, can one claim that literature should not be used as pretext for examining nature?, Conflating world and mind is a critical error? ; Does Literature become colorless "cross-pollinating with worldly matters, if "human nature" dominates nature?

The repeated emphasis of ecocentric protagonists that 'ecocriticism is not just a means of analyzing nature, it implies more towards a biocentric world and an extension of ethics had gone unheard. Jonathan Bate (1991) pooh-poohed the seriousness of ecocritics. Ecocriticism is only a proxy-attempt to politicize the events, there is no nature, there is only history', Bate remarked. William Howarth (1996) went further in his article "Some principles of ecocriticism in Glotfelty and Fromm", when he finds fault with Glotfelty's emphasis on 'connecting science to literature, which is difficult for the two cultures that have grown widely apart. One finds 'truth' in data and other in 'metaphor', running parallel. In such a situation, Howarth remarks, to consider that science itself as the orbiter of truth as fixed, final and absolute is an illusion.

Ursula K. Heise (1997) recognized the fact that 'some sectors are antagonistic to science, which they perceive as one of the root causes of current degradation of ecosystems due to technology, industrialism and urbanization. Ursula pacifies the antagonists with the argument that 'ecocriticism shall not ignore scientific descriptions of nature through aesthetic articulations'. In the essay on 'Science and Ecocriticism' Ursula divides ecology into 'deep ecology' and 'social ecology', the former relating to species, food cycles, producers and predators and the latter referring to human interests, socio-political factors and anthropocentric misdeeds. This division helps to reconsider and reorganize visions against science. With the ubiquitous nature of concretization, ecology confounds the analysts more often than not. After a decade of debate over the syllabi of ecocriticism, Cheryl Glotfelty, the professor of English Literature and Environmental studies at University of Nevada, Reno, had become stronger with the ecocritical convictions. Speaking at the

MLA conference in Dec 1998 on the topic, she insisted for environmental practices in our professions and eco-friendly recycled paper only be used for documentation in MLA conventions'. She has moved from precept to practice. In 1996, she clarified in one of her discourses as "you would quickly discern that race, class and gender were the topics of late 20th century but you would never know that the earth's life support systems were under stress, indeed you might never know that there was the earth at all'. Cheryll, coming down to brass-tacks of the issue, pacified the anti-science group. Their love for literature as pure art form is neither insulted nor injured by science or technological prescriptions. It was Sigmund Freud, the master psycho-analyst, who pronounced that 'literature is the science of feeling and science is the art of knowing.

Michelle Boisseau (2000) showed the way of ecocritical writing in 'deep ecology' when scripted the poem 'Parchment'.

....slaughtered calf....the skin taken out…
insect kermes, whose pregnant
bodies gave pigment…
the goose, who supplied quills,
the horse its hair,
the flax, the fine strong thread
that held the folder skins,
into a private book,
stamped with gold for a king".

Surely, it is not the romantic excitement of a poet of yester years we see above. It is the poem in 'deep ecology' wing of ecocriticism, appearing to be an ode to nature's bounteousness.

Conclusion

The browbeaters of ecocriticism are mainly confronted with a sense of marginalization, in case ecocriticism becomes ubiquitous. Some of them inherit a nostalgic fear of science, likely to demolish the 'divine nature' built around by providence. Some others are struck with the obfuscating nature of ecocritical syllabus. The ecocriticism had moved from 'debate nature' to 'defend nature' on the thematic level. Even if some people do not agree with the Marxian view of economic determinism as a crucial factor in shaping the civilization, the influence of social, political and economic structures on the texts of ecocritical culture is certain. From the Shakespearean Drama to a wild life documentary, from the romantic pastoral to a scientific thriller on celluloid, the lessons of preservation of eco-health are compulsive in ecocritical syllabi. Excessive debate at times obfuscates the central theme.

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From Jewishness to Americanization: Literary Manifestations
Swati Mukerji

Judaism provides a vast storehouse of literary material, perpetuating many Jewish-American texts. Drawing upon their religious heritage, the authors direct us toward a distinctive way of seeing the world, focusing on a quest, journey or maybe a new awareness. These texts lead to an aesthetic, moral or intellectual transformation, while questioning the relevance of the traditional religious faiths in the contemporary American scene. While subtly probing the vitality of the Judaic Christian tradition, they try to generate an evaluative response from the perceptive reader. It needs to be remembered that Jewish American literature holds an essential place in the literary history of the United States. It encompasses traditions of writing in English, along with other languages like Yiddish. It basically began with the memoirs of the immigrants who arrived in America during the mid-seventeenth century—yet Jewish American writing grew over subsequent centuries to flourish in other genres like poetry, drama and fiction.

The first notable voice in this category was Emma Lazarus, whose poem 'The New Colossus' on the Statue of Liberty became a great hymn of American immigration. This poem not only introduces ethnic issues into literature but also places emphasis on the social equality expected by this community. In return they would practice loyalty towards the American creed and try to integrate themselves into mainstream American society.

A great number of Jewish American writers such as Norman Mailer, Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud among others are successful as well as socially accepted. Their works are read by both Jewish and non-Jewish readers, making their texts a significant part of a recognized literary canon. Yet it is obvious that the majority of the Jewish American literary productions stand in sharp relief in the multicultural American landscape, as they are shaped by strong ethnic forces.

The early 20th century saw the appearance of two pioneering novels—namely Abraham Cahan's *The Rise of David Levinsky* (1917) and Henry Roth's *Call It Sleep* (1934). These two works explored the conflicting pulls between the Jewish tradition and secular society as experienced by these East European immigrants who passed into the New World through Ellis Island.

In Cahan's novel, David Levinsky becomes an American millionaire at the cost of his Jewish heritage. Formerly he was a poor scholar, studying the *Torah* and the *Talmud*, but later becomes a cloth-manufacturer, interpreting the American Dream in commercial terms. This process of acculturation results in a deep identity-split and David feels as if he is devoid of a stable subjectivity where the inner identity of a Jewish immigrant resists Americanization. As a lower-class Jewish immigrant, who can succeed only on the dominant culture's terms—he has to abandon the familiar milieu of religious scholars and synagogues along with the practices of Orthodox Judaism. By abandoning his Judaic religion, he experiences feelings of loss and confusion about his identity. In the last chapter of the novel, he complains about his inability to break away from his past, to forget his Old World—the Polish Russian Jewish self, and immerse himself fully in America:

I can never forget the days of my misery. I cannot escape from my old self. My past and present do not comport well. David the poor lad swinging over a Talmud volume at the Preacher's Synagogue, seems to have more in common with my Inner identity than David Levinsky, the well-known cloak manufacturer" (530).

He often boasts that he had become 'one of the two or three leading men in the cloak-and-suit trade', making him worth more than two million dollars. Yet to undermine the miracle of this transformation, from a Judaic scholar to 'the New Man, the American', he postulates that "there are cases when success is a tragedy" (529). Hence his so-called successful acculturation results in a deep identity-split, where he perceives himself as devoid of a stable subjectivity. His 'inner identity' resists Americanization and his past incarnation as an Old World Talmud scholar from Antomir often returns to haunt and overwhelm him. He laments that his "present station, power, the amount of worldly happiness at his command…seem to be devoid of significance" (3).

Hence, the clash between the Old and the New World results in the protagonist's identity-split. From the practices of Orthodox Judaism, he has to unwillingly adopt the religion of American capitalism, which demands a whole new cultural identity. Therefore, he not only crosses from one culture to another, but has to negotiate two diametrically opposite versions of a spiritual existence. He realizes that a new identity is always purchased at the exclusion of the 'Other'. He loses the innocence of a Talmud scholar, subsequently learning to hide his "inner identity".

Henry Roth's novel *Call It Sleep* (1934) is also an ethnic chronicle of the life of Jewish immigrants as they try to fit into mainstream society. The reader travels along with the protagonist, David Schearl, as he ages from six to eight, growing up on the lower East side of New York. David and his mother Genya arrive at Ellis Island in 1907, the year which saw one of the biggest waves of immigration to America, especially from East Europe. The landscape of the new country is pictured in 'dismal tones', because the steamer's whistle is like a 'hoarse warning' (9) and the immigrants are delivered to the 'stench and the throb of the New York tenements' (9). As in Cahan's novel, here too there is a reference to the Statue of Liberty, which is 'charred with shadow, her depths exhausted' (Prologue, 14). It is this darkness against which David must struggle in his quest for a new identity. He wanders about the streets of New York, involuntarily trying to decide where he fits within this consumer-oriented society. Instead of learning about life and religion from a synagogue and Judaic texts, he educates himself from the exposure to the New York streets. In order to submerge his Jewish identity, he tells the rabbi a lie about how his mother is dead and he is half Christian.

His mother Genya remains immune to the allurement of America and gives preference to her enclosed world. She mainly speaks Yiddish—so the language barrier condemns her to isolation. Her life is restricted to the microcosm of their apartment, mainly the kitchen. This could possibly be a metaphor for the self-sustained community of people who follow the Judaic religion. Roth highlights the relative compactness of the 'urban *Shtetl*', where Jews are in contact with their culture and speak amongst themselves in their own language. Apart from Yiddish, the other languages referred to by Roth in the novel are Hebrew and Aramaic. These are basically understood as 'sacred' languages because these are contained in the passages read out in the '*cheder*' that David is asked to attend in order "to learn what it means to be a Jew" (210). These languages are somehow linked to David's initiation into Jewish culture and the Judaic religion, so that he could be

'cleansed of his sins'. Like the other boys in the *cheder*, he too only memorizes the texts written in these languages, even though they are mysterious and incomprehensible to him. As this religious education is forced upon him by his father, he does not enjoy the exercise. These languages represent an obstacle to his appreciation and understanding of the ethnicity of his culture and religion.

Even though David Schearl is actually a gifted and perceptive child, but a religious school represented by the stern rabbi Yidel Pankower, fails to satisfy an inquisitive child. The pupils in the '*cheder*' are shown as ignorant and unconcerned, who are more interested in skates and kites than in religion. The rabbi Pankower, feels disillusioned when he thinks about the prospects of "this sidewalk and gutter generation" (374) because for them 'God' was "forgotten, forgotten wholly" (374). Another undesirable impact of materialistic America on Judaism is symbolically illustrated in the episode depicting the burning of the leavened bread, called '*hamez'*. This ritual is common among Jews on the eve of the 'Passover,' a festival commemorating their deliverance from bondage in Egypt. In the novel, David is looking for a place where he can burn the leavened bread…it is symbolic that he finds an appropriate place near a 'junk-heap'. Moreover, when some hoodlums threaten him, thinking him to be a Jew, he denies his Jewish identity, claiming that he is Hungarian. It is mainly through these multiple episodes that Roth depicts the decline of Judaism in America.

However, in spite of David's denial of his ethnic roots, yet there is a sense of guilt lurking in his mind, that somehow he has betrayed his community. In an attempt to redeem himself, he finds inspiration for purification in the sacred texts with which he was acquainted in the *cheder*. He was particularly impressed with the biblical story of Isaiah who had his unclean lips cleansed by fiery coal, to become worthy of speaking to God. David in his own way is cleansed of his so-called sins after the incident of the enormous electric shock he received from the streetcar tracks, when he thrust his hand into a crack. This shock almost killed him and he was in a state of 'sleep' for sometime on the borderline between life and death. However, this shock was redemptive in the sense that he experienced a feeling of victory over the fear and guilt, which were the major components of his religious experience in America. The shock could be metaphorically related to the cleansing effect of the coal on Isaiah's lips. Hence, this novel could be considered as an intersection of competing narratives…that of Judaism and Christianity because it derives its dynamism from the cultural and ethnic diversity of the new continent.

In conclusion it can be said that for characters like David Levinsky and David Schearl, who represented the new generation of Jewish individuals, the Judaic tradition was slowly becoming redundant. They preferred to bypass their Talmudic education in order to Americanize themselves in the multicultural urban context. Today, it is often seen that many ethnic groups like the Jews, take recourse to literary texts in order to learn about their own religion. The popularity of these texts even today is evidence of the fact that they can provide solace and comfort in a world which is fast becoming devoid of religious and spiritual values.

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Cross Cultural Distress of Diaspora in Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger*
S. Thamil Selvi & J. Jayachandran

Introduction

Aravind Adiga is an Indo-Australian novelist whose debut novel *The White Tiger* has won Man Booker prize in 2008. He has also penned two other novels namely *Between the Assassination* and *Last Man in Tower* along with quiet a good number of short stories such as "The Sultan's Battery", "Smack", "Last Christmas in Bandra" *and "*The Elephant". The novel *The White Tiger* reveals the religious stereotypes, caste, corruption and poverty predicaments that exist in India which suppress and degrade Indians from uplifting their societal status in the world scenario. The novel explores class struggle as witnessed by a small ordinary north Indian boy, Munna later named as Balram.

Balram's quest for Self-Identity

Theme of Self-Identity is one of the most important features of Diaspora. The novel is narrated by Balram Halwai to Mr. Jaibao, Chinese premier who intended to visit India. The novel is set in various locations of India including Laxmangarh, Delhi, Dhanbad, and Bangalore. At the beginning, the protagonist was nameless and known as 'Munna'. Later he passively accepts the name Balram, given by his own teacher. Highly impressed on Balram's intelligence and learning capacity, a school inspector appraised him as 'white tiger' which is the rarest creature in the jungle that comes only once in a generation so is Balram in that village who can read and write in the rural school where no one is capable of. The inspector pointed his cane towards Balram and told that "you, young man, are an intelligent, honest, vivacious fellow in this crowd of thugs and idiots' (*The White Tiger* 35). Balram accepts this name because it allows him to define himself. The animal 'white tiger' is a symbol of freedom and individuality. The protagonist, Balram never maintains friendship as the White Tiger.

In search of identity, Balram changes his name as well as his profession whenever he claims up in his socio-economic status. He was prone to accept any name which has been given to him. Initially named as Munna by his family members, then called Balram by his school master and finally Mr. Ashok Sharma which he gave it to himself: "yes, Ashok! That's what I call myself these days" (*The White Tiger* 302). This attitude proves that his thirst for self-identity has not yet been quenched. He changes his profession from a cleaner in a tea stall, chauffeur and entrepreneur, he wanted to own a real estate and finally to be a correspondent for a school. In the opening chapter itself the readers can find the search for identity of the protagonist by accepting a nick name *The White Tiger* which is considered to be the rarest animal living one at a time. Only because of this nick name, Balram had constructed his own selfhood. During his childhood itself, Balram has designed to lead an independent and a successful life: "I was destined not to stay a slave" (*The White Tiger* 41)

Facets of Transcendence in Balram

The protagonist encounters a larger society that tests his various potentialities and eventually the physical journey motivates psychological changes through which his mental ability grows. Balram, the protagonist of the novel is able to travel from Darkness to brightness, from ignorance to intelligence, from emptiness to satiation, from innocence to malfeasance. He makes a psychological journey from innocence to maturity on his journey from North India to South India. Balram continues his journey from poverty towards richness but unable to travel or transcend from the corruption or bribery of 'darkness' into honesty and faithfulness of 'light'. In the novel, the reader can trace Balram's growth from a submissive village boy to an inflamed individual capable of murdering his own employee for money in pursuit of his own success which is a symbol of psychological journey.

The self-acquired prominence made Balram to transcend himself from the Dark to the Light. He had nurtured his psyche for this kind of transcendence. In the process he has been transformed from a legitimate village boy to an immoral entrepreneur: "I have switched sides: I am now one of those who cannot be caught in India" (*The White Tiger* 321). The acquired "education" in the new place and the newly found self-knowledge instigate the ultimate maturity of the hero. Balram had climbed from his low socio-economic status to the highest position in India. He was able to convert his miserable life into a bourgeois life in the society in which he lived: "I changed from a hunted criminal into a solid pillar of Bangalorean society" *(The White Tiger, 292)*.

In Delhi which is a metropolitan city, he used to read *Murder Weekly* which accidentally provoked him to acquire the idea of murdering his employer for money. His mental maturity allows him not to have friends, as they deceive him and a White Tiger never keeps friend. Eventually Balram had learnt also the art of bribery which is the easiest way to be a successful entrepreneur in India. He unscrupulously bribes the police as well as the family of the victim, for an accident committed by his driver. Though he knows that at any point of time he has to be ready to face the reality, He never wanted to go back to his starting point.

Balram with Severed Mother Land and Home

Displacement is one of the underlying concepts of Diaspora which is the process of moving from a primitive and unsophisticated village into metropolitan cities venturing something to achieve. This involves separation from family. By doing so, the protagonist becomes a successful individual to become self-achieved or a "his own man." In the novel, the protagonist travels to various places such as Laxmangarh, Dhanbad, Delhi and Bangalore. It's a kind of adversity for human beings to be uprooted from their native town and to be cast out to an entirely novel environment where everything is found challenging to adapt. Balram was unable to become accustomed to the new environment and the habitats behaviour:

Poor people in the North of this country drink tea, and poor people in the south drink coffee…there was an etiquette, a routine, associated with it that fascinated me. It was swerved in a cup set into a tumbler, and then it had to be poured in certain quantities and sipped at a certain speed from the tumbler. How the pouring was to be done, how the sipping was to be done, I did not know. For a while I only watched. (The White Tiger 296)

The novel environment might sometime annoy the protagonist which may make them to regret. Balram thought that he might have chosen Mumbai or Calcutta after murdering his boss instead of coming to Bangalore.

Balram, a Self-Developed Entrepreneur

Balram, an indigent chauffeur - servant from Laxmangarh becomes the biggest entrepreneur in Bangalore. Having the ability to analyze the racial discriminations prevailing in the religiously and culturally stereotyped society, he worries about his pitiable condition

Halwai, my name, means 'sweet-maker'. That's my caste – my destiny. Everyone in the Darkness who hears that name knows all about me at once. That's why Kishan and I kept getting jobs at sweetshops wherever we went… but if we were Halwais, then why was my father not making sweets but pulling a rickshaw? Why did I grow up breaking coals and wiping tables? … Why was I lean and dark and cunning, and not fat and creamy-skinned and smiling, like a boy raised on sweet would be? (The White Tiger 63)

Racial discrimination of the society, in which the protagonists lives, does not allow the lower caste people to come up or the higher caste people to go down. Generations after generation goldsmiths are goldsmiths, landlords are landlords and untouchables are untouchables. Somewhere in the downtrodden parts of India, discriminations in terms of race, class and gender are still prevails. This has been brought to the light by Adiga through his protagonist, Balram

This country … was like a zoo. A clean, well kept, orderly zoo. Everyone in his place, everyone happy. Goldsmiths here. Cowherds here. Landlords there. The man called Halwai made sweets. The man called a cowherd tended cows. The untouchables cleaned faeces. Landlords were kind to their serfs. Women covered their heads with a veil and turned their eyes to the ground when talking to strange men. (The White Tiger 63)

Though leading a very difficult life, Balram gathers every walk of his life as experiences from childhood to adult to become a successful entrepreneur. He launched a taxi service for call center workers in Bangalore, which he calls "White Tiger Technology Drivers". He has sixteen drivers who work in shifts with twenty six shining new Toyota Qualis cars...

Yes, it's true: a few hundred thousand rupees of someone else's money, and a lot of hard work, can make magic happen in this country. Put together my real estate and my bank holdings and I am worth fifteen times the sum I borrowed from Mr. Ashok. (The White Tiger 301)

Because of his bitter experience which he faced as a chauffeur, he has resolved not to ill-treat his servants rather treat them as human beings: "I was a driver to a master, but now I am a master of drivers. I don't treat them like servants-I don't slap, or bully, or mock anyone."(*The White Tiger 30*)

Conclusion

The novel *The White Tiger* is a Bildungsroman novel which typically centers on the maturation process of the protagonist, Balram. Retrospective technique has been used in this novel to narrate the life history of the protagonist in which the novelist exposes the pitiable condition of chauffeurs working as servants in India. The psychological and physiological metamorphosis shapes the protagonist in relation to the environment and society in which he lives. *The White Tiger* proves to be a novel of Bildungsroman genre. The readers can identify some of the most essential elements of Bildungsroman such as psychological and physiological growth of the protagonist, his education which shapes the personality, individuality in the life of the protagonist.

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Search for Self in Nayantara Sahgal's *Plans for Departure*
B. Tirupathi

Plans for Departure is the seventh novel of Sahgal. It was published in 1986 and in the following year the novel won 'The Common Wealth Writer's Prize' for literature. The novel is set in an imaginary village of Himalayan region, Himapur. Sahgal in a way created that all the characters in the novel are not the natives of this village but arrive from different parts of the world for different purposes. Anna Hansen, a Danish girl who in her desire for self-realization postpones her marriage with an English diplomat, Nicholas. She wanted to taste the essence of life in its magnificent as well as mundane aspects and for this purpose, she plans a journey for one year visiting various places in India, Copenhagen, London, Madras and Calcutta finally to Himapur. Sir Nitin Basu, a botanical scientist reach Himapur to continue his research on plants. Henry Brewster, an English man appointed as the district Magistrate and Marlowe Croft, an American Preacher, come to Himapur to establish a church of his own. Sahgal by employing these characters who are in search of their self exhibited in the novel a combination of diverse qualities like that of superb craftsmanship, gentle humor and keen observation.

Sahgal brings out the feminine considerations in the novel. The concept of disturbance and unhappiness in marriage is shown through couples Henry Brewster and Stella and Marlowe Croft and Lulu. The self realization of women characters like Anna and Stella who assert themselves fulfilling their desires according to their will is the other feminine aspect that Sahgal projects in the novel.

Anna is not happy with boredom life of staying at home and doing nothing. Her engagement with Nicholas makes her think of her future, that she would be confined to four walls. She is not fatalist and therefore intends to free herself from the restricted life. She plans a journey through which she wanted to assert herself. Nicholas does not want her to go on a journey at this peculiar time especially when they were preparing for their marriage. But, for Anna this is the crucial time where she had to get to know about her own self and decide accordingly. Finally when she takes a call, Nicholas comments ironically for which she responds:

You can't be so infantile as to think you have to see the world's wonders before you settle down. Anna reacted in a burst of anguished English, and a flourish that upset her glass of water. It is not the silly wonders I am after. But what other way can I break out and be me? (Sahgal, Plans 62)

Anna arrives at Himapur and joins as a secretary to Nitin Basu. Anna started to adjust herself with the village and society. She happens to meet Henry Brewster, the District Magistrate and visits him frequently to use his personal library as she was fond of reading books. She developed intimacy with Henry. The long conversations with him and his attractive personality had made Anna fall in love with him. But it was not for a long period because she plans to get back to Nicholas again. This departing from love does not hurt them because their relation was not so strong. Moreover, Henry deeply loved his wife and Anna's love for him was only on terms of self-realization. However, Henry feels bad and lonely as Anna plans for her journey.

I'm greatly in your debt, it has been comforting to know there was someone else in the house. It's a big house to rattle around in by oneself, I've never even thanked you. I shall miss you when you leave Himapur. (Sahgal, Plans 131)

The narrator also expresses that, "A rising fever to be alone possessed him as they walked down the slope together" (132). Nicholas was also surprised and says, "You were so bowled over by your noble District Magistrate, I thought you'd never come back" (189). Though Anna's life was happy and satisfied with her stay at Hamapur, she was stumbled at the mysterious deaths of Stella and Lulu. She was not able to hold the stealthy crime associated with these deaths and thus plans to return to her country and finally settle down in life, marrying Nicholas. The character of Anna resembled by Sahgal shows her concern not only for Indian women but also foreign women. Sahgal feels that wherever they go women remain as women and their desires and needs for self satisfaction may vary in degree but does not change. Same is the case with Anna who travelled different parts of the world especially Indian sub-continent to realize her own inner being. The title of the novel is indeed apt as the protagonist travel from one place to other for the sake of viewing her life from different angles.

Stella and Lulu are not satisfied with their marriage, though their husbands love them immensely. Henry was always longing to spend enough time with Stella. He expresses that:

He could not bear to be parted from her though they were children when they married and always together. He would make senses every time she wanted to visit her parents. He said he could not live a day without her. 'Stuffy of him' and 'suffocating for her' one day while he was out, she packed up and went home. When he came back and found her gone, he thought he would go raving mad, and set off to bring her back. (113)

Stella was not able to understand the love of her husband as she was drawn towards Robert because of his political career. Her love and desire for Raj and Henry in Bureaucracy is also another cause for her negligence towards Henry. Henry in a conversation with Anna tells her that, "She didn't even know what I meant by love, and we certainly did not have it in common. Love must be one of the most unequal dispensations on earth" (178). The relation between Henry and Anna had resulted in the failure of marital bond between Henry and Stella.

On the other hand Lulu, who had been attracted to the preaching of Marlowe Croft, deeply fell in love with him and got married. After their marriage they have come down to Himmapur to build a church, preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ. Croft expresses "No one has preached the gospel here before, or anything else. These hill people have no real religion. They worship nature spirits. I am incredibly fortunate to have the task of bringing them into the church laid upon me" (138). Though Lulu helped him in his mission, there was dissatisfaction in their marriage because Lulu was disliked and disagreed with Croft in many of his decisions. In spite of Lulu's, warning, Croft wanted to adopt a sweeper boy whom he baptized him earlier naming him George Jeremiah. Lulu was not able to accept this because she was not willing to serve a sweeper boy. Lulu says, "If you do adopt him, Marlowe, I'm warning you I shall leave" (139). At this point, their marriage almost came to an end. Sahgal feels that marriage is a companionship on equal terms and understanding. Difference of opinions led to the devastation of Croft and Lulu's marriage.

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As the novel comes to an end, Sahgal unravels the mysterious death of Stella and Lulu where the murderers are none other than their own husbands. Both the women were unhappy and intended to make a departure from their marital bond. Paradoxically, Sahgal made them to depart from the earth i.e., their death. With the murder of these two women, caused by destruction, disagreement in marriages and extra marital relationships, Sahgal conveys that at the end women is the sufferer.

The major themes in the novel include human relationship, East-West encounter, status of the woman, British imperialism and the Indian National Movement. Anna's unyielding independence and her sense of freedom provide a striking contrast to the British imperialism and the suffocating political situation of the 1914. She is conscious of the span of India's history, its cultural tradition, as well as its present. She reflects: "The struggle for self-mastery was all that was really real. If that was Hinduism in a nutshell...it was a pity it had not stayed grand and simple, in the nut" (Sahgal, *Plans* 47).

She has come to India for self-realization. Anna is more Indian than any other Indian character in the novel. Sahgal deals with how love can mean different things to different people. Anna realizes that what she shared with Henry was special. But she takes a long time to arrive at this understanding. Initially she deceives herself into believing that she could never love a murderer. Therefore, she emphatically tells Nicholas that she could never have married a murderer or even loved him. Later on, she reads Henry's letter in which he tries to explain his marriage to Stella and its subsequent failure. Stella is the daughter of a colonel. As soon as she realizes that Henry does not share her beliefs, she shuts herself off from him. She is unable to see the sensitive loving man in him. Henry writes to Anna about Stella:

If she had left me because she was her father's daughter, I would have accepted it and let her go without a fight. It would have been an honorable reason for parting. But her political commitment got muddled with other reasons. (192)

In spite of Henry's devotional affection for Stella, which makes him give up his dreams of a new political life in England, she develops an affair with Robert Pryor, the Home Secretary. Stella pushes Henry to the depths of desperation and makes her journey downhill only to marry Robert. By this time, Anna comes in contact with Henry. Another couple, Marlowe Croft and his wife Lulu also find disharmony in their marriage. Sahgal narrates: "With her good wifeliness gone and her loyalty to his loyalties at breaking point...the life she had made with him was over" (146-147). Then she plans to depart. But before she could depart, she meets with an accident.

The novel takes the reader back to the colonial past. It represents a picture of the subcontinent poised for revolution. The time in which the novel is set coincides with Tilak's trial, the rumblings of the Indian freedom struggle and the outbreak of the First World War with its carnage and self-inflicted destruction. The novel is an artistic metaphor of the historical movement and moments between 1885 and 1914. It is replete with copious references to such well-known nationalist leaders as B. G. Tilak, Motilal Nehru, Ranade, Bankim Chandra Chatterji, Bhagat Singh, Khudiram Bose and M. K. Gandhi. It is a subtle, sharply imagined novel, skillfully plotted and elegantly written. A reviewer of this novel in *The Guardian* observed that

Sahgal handled her ingredients — love, compromise, anguish, serenity, the writing on the wall — with lucent sincerity and a feeling for both kinds of history, outward and inward. The novel is both a love story and a mystery, set in a continent poised for revolution and a world on the edge of war — a novel of haunting power and superb craftsmanship, rich in intrigue, gentle humour and exquisite observation. The novel is the most successful and brilliant fiction of history, re-enacts the drama of socio-cultural change in the Raj in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. (Guardian 1)

Sahgal portrays most of the characters, making plans for departure in search of their self, for different reasons as the title of the novel suggests. Sahgal brings out the ephemeral nature of their mutual association with Himapur. The novel ends with Anna in her extreme old age, looking back over her much splendored life in which Himapur represents the irresistible lure of what might have been:

The good, satisfying memories folded peacefully away.... The ones that kept one alive and stirring belonged to lost opportunity...for there was no release from the embrace of things that had never happened. Imagine the horror of getting everything we want, and what lumps and clods we'd be but for our yearnings. Oddly enough we are the legacy of our aches, of plans that never came to pass. (192)

The novel is open ended, without giving reference of Anna's death, stretching the reader's imagination outwards, extending the meaning of the novel beyond itself. The public and the private issues are subtly integrated and resolved in this novel. The characters making plans for departure in search of self is elegantly presented in the novel which shows the artistic creation of Nayantara Sahgal.

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The Metafictive Metaphor and Critical Realism: Re-reading Muriel Spark's *The Comforters*

Uttam Kumar Guru

Introduction

With a lot of rebuilding taking place in England in the aftermath of War II, there seemed a collective attempt to reorient the cultural manifestations In Britain, including literature, towards their Victorian cornerstones. No wonder then that the English novel of the 1950s seemed inclined to restore the Victorian verisimilitude to contemporary fiction. But, as we would see, literature is not so much answerable to a haloed tradition or any calcified ideology of the past, as much as it remains dialogically bound up with the present, evidenced in many fictional works written in the fifties. Muriel Spark's debut novel *The Comforters*, published in 1957, (hereafter, *TC*) belongs to a group of fictional works which interrogate and, even at times, reject some of the basic premises of classic realism despite being predicated on them. The novel, dealing with the process of writing fiction, in fact, teases out the cliché of realism of the nineteenth century British novel to see if it still can give voice and shape to a reality which is, in all likelihood, incommensurable with the nineteenth century belief in the moral sincerity in the depiction of reality in fictional writing. The sanctity of plot and the consolation of closure through the identifiable markers of ideology are sharply interrogated. The metafictive metaphor – the central concern in the novel – is however used not to trifle with the novelistic tradition of realism for its own sake, but, as mentioned atop, to see if it can still be of use to convey the engagement of the self with an external reality.

Re-assessing Muriel Spark's *The Comforters*

The story line is slim but interesting. The novel opens with Laurence Manders, a BBC sports commentator, spending a week's vacation with his grandmother from his mother's side, Louisa Jepp in Sussex. Laurence is gifted with an exceptionally keen observation power, a hint at the documentary aspect of realism's claim to sincerity of rendition of objective reality. Louisa is a spritely widow above sixty and lives decently all by herself in her cottage. During his stay, Laurence discovers her involvement in some smuggling activity with three mysterious persons – Mr Webster, Mervin Hogarth and his crippled son, Andrew. He writes to Caroline, his erstwhile lover, about his suspicions about Louisa's complicity in some clandestine illegal activities. Caroline Rose, a novelist and the central character in the novel, is a recent Catholic Convert, who has gone to the Pilgrim Centre of St Philumena in Liverpool on retreat. Unfortunately however, Caroline has left St Philumena after three days as she felt oppressed and repulsed by the catering warden of the centre, Georgina Hogg. Laurence's letter which also contains some uncharitable remarks about Georgina reaches her who does the most uncivil thing by opening and reading it. To complicate the matter further, she visits Laurence's mother Helena Manders to tell her about Louisa's involvement in criminal activities. She even stoops so low as to blackmail Louisa Jepp and inflict emotional torture on Mervyn.

In the meanwhile, Caroline gets back to her flat in Kensington, and on the night of her return she starts hearing voices –voices speaking her thoughts which are preceded by the sound of a typewriter: "…she heard the sound of a typewriter… It stopped, and was immediately followed by a

voice remarking her own thoughts. It said: O*n the whole she did not think there would be any difficulty with Helena*. There seemed, then, to have been more than one voice: it was a recitative, a chanting in unison" (34-35; emphases original). Frightened, she goes to spend the night at the place of Willis Stock, also called Baron Stock, an old friend of hers and Laurence's. From their conversation, the reader comes to know that Caroline is now working on a critical study of the twentieth century novel titled *Form in the Modern Novel*, and she admits that she is "*having difficulty with the chapter on realism*" (48; emphases added).

Laurence returns to London to stay with Caroline who is now visibly distraught as she now hears the uncanny voices and the typewriter almost on a regular basis. It is during this time that she tells Laurence as if it were an undeniable fact of "her theory about [an] author making a book out of their lives" (83). Laurence too is troubled by his apprehension about Louisa's involvement in smuggling activities and insists that Caroline spend few days with him at his grandmother's cottage to investigate. On their way to Sussex, however, they meet with an accident resulting in their hospitalisation. Laurence is discharged first, and Caroline, lying in the dreary hospital ward with fractured limbs, has now fully accommodated the mysterious voices as part of a fictional structure that tends to fictionalise her own life as well as those around her. But she, a novelist herself, resists to be fictionalised thus by forces beyond her creative manoeuvre.

Lawrence, however, continues with his investigation about her grandmother. And as it turns out, Louisa is in reality involved in the smuggling of diamonds. She is the leader of the gang in which Mr Webster, the local baker, Mervyn and his disabled son Andrew are members. The father-son duo often goes abroad under the pretext of pilgrims looking for a cure for the son and thereby obtains diamonds which they smuggle through customs back to England, hiding them in plaster figures of saints or rosary beads. Mr Webster delivers them concealed in bread to Louisa. She, on her part, sends the diamonds in tins with herring roes or fruit to Baron Stock, their London agent, who finally sells them to a jeweller.

All other characters are involved in one form of plotting or another. Mervyn was first married to Georgina who thus happens to be Andrew's mother. When she refused to divorce him, he committed bigamy by marrying Eleanor, a ballet dancer by profession. But she became Baron's mistress when she suspected Mervyn of being involved in the black mass. She now receives the patronage of Ernest Manders, the prayed-for brother of Edwin Manders, Helena's husband.

The novel ends with Caroline and Laurence having a picnic on the bank of river Medway bordering Sussex and Kent. Helena joins them with Baron Stock and Georgina to the chagrin of both Caroline and Laurence. In an unforeseen accident, Georgina drowns. After this, Caroline goes off alone to Worcestershire to finish writing her novel.

The novel explores three distinct yet interconnected strands of Spark's life and thought – her conversion to Catholicism in 1954, her misgivings about her ability as a novelist and her distrust of realism.

Spark converted to Roman Catholicism in 1954. In the same year, she started writing the novel. According to Kelleher, her Roman Catholicism is "much more than an item of biographical interest: it is a potent force which has profoundly affected the shape of her art" (79). She herself

admits to have undergone a profound metamorphosis after her conversion, and she can now see her life as an ill-coordinated series of events: "I began to see life as series of disconnected happenings" (Whittaker 161-162). Ruth Whittaker writes that "this view intersects with that of the novelist, seeking imaginative sense out of apparent randomness". Her sense of coherence "means that she sees the external visible world not as distinct from the spiritual world, but as manifestation of it; not as two worlds, but one" (162).

In fact, Spark has pointed out the disconnectedness or randomness in the external reality by assigning Laurence with an exceptionally strong sense of observation. Since his childhood, he has exhibited this power, thereby terrorizing the household with his "sheer literal truths" (4). His mother would always discourage his prying nature. And as he grows up, he learns to "conceal the sensational portions of his knowledge, imparting only what [was] necessary to promote his reputation for being remarkably observant" (5). The moral unease of his mother at Laurence's habit results from her strict adherence to the Catholic ideal of a well-coordinated series of happenings, decent and morally righteous. Laurence's view of the world is, however, random, inchoate and, even at times, morally outrageous. Unlike Caroline who has recently converted to Catholicism and who is trying to come to grips with her converted life, Laurence's world is not spiritual. Nor is it infused with any significance beyond their mere materiality either. He seems to stand for the documentary aspect of realism with its emphasis on the detailing of particulars. However, his failure – the failure of realism, so to say, – results from his inability to connect his observations with their spiritual significances. His is all matter. His therefore fails to comprehend the hallucinatory experience of Caroline in terms of their connectedness with her creative self. Laurence, for example, has brought in a tape-recorder to capture the voices Caroline hears. She has her doubts about its usability:

'Maybe those voices won't record,' Caroline said.
*'They will if they're in the air. Any sound causes an occurrence. If **the sound has objective existence it will be recorded.***
*'The **sound might have another sort of existence and still real**.'*
'Well, let's first exhaust the possibilities of the natural order'
*'But **we don't know all the possibilities of the natural order.**'*
(54-55; emphases added)

The conversation shows the difference of attitudes of both to what constitutes reality. For her, the voices have 'another sort of existence', and can still be real; Laurence is, however, in search of objective modality of reality. This is why he collects the "enormous sheaf of notes" from Caroline's flat when she is off to Worcestershire to send them to her, hardly realising that her novel, dealing as it is with 'another sort of existence', does not need to be factual. Like Jake Donaghue and Hugo Bellfounder in Murdoch's *Under the Net* or Rosa Keepe or Annette Cockney in *The Flight from the Enchanter*, Laurence is a pattern-maker in consistency with the Judaeo-Christian tradition of context-free and logical-positivist notion of reality.

Louisa Jepp, Laurence's grandmother, is, however, keen to unify and coordinate whatever seems disparate and even disoriented. She is a master manipulator and deft maneouverer. It is due to her ability to articulate situations that the entire act of smuggling diamonds assumes an almost

comic undertone. Yet her manipulation and maneuvering fails to capture the reality in a form that she can master. Mervyn Hogarth thus says, repudiating her assessment of reality:

I understand you, Louisa. You can't bear to participate in separated worlds. You have the instinct for unity, for coordinating the inconsistent elements of experience; you have the passion for picking up the idle phenomena of life and piecing them together. That is your ideal, is used to be mine. Reality, however, refuses to accommodate the idealist. (15)

And Mervyn is proved right when Louisa's smuggling is busted by Laurence. Though there is no explicit reference to it in the novel, her passionate involvement with smuggling seems to have a deeper significance. Her part in smuggling seems to result from an unacknowledged passion to be close to Mr Webster whom she finally marries. Her success in marriage is the failure of the idealist and the adventurer in her. All her patterns finally unstuck when she discovers her passionate side.

Caroline, on her part, is initially a pattern-maker in consistency with the accepted norms of conventional reality. Upon her conversion, she considers it sinful to live with Laurence without the consecration of marriage. At the suggestion of Helena Manders, she goes on a religious retreat to St Philumena to familiarise herself with the Catholic ways of living. And on her sudden return to her flat in London she begins to hear voices and the sounds of a typewriter – an experience which becomes the central concern of the narrative and Caroline's life. It's here that her earlier patterns of thought are disrupted, and the entire narrative begins to be focalized from her point of view.

There are two coordinated phases of Caroline's hallucination. First, she hears the sound of a typewriter typing the words which are then spoken by one or more voices[1]. The words are her own thoughts. As she tells Willi Stock, "A typewriter followed by voices. They speak in the first tense. They mock me" (46). Initially, she is unnerved and thinks herself to be going mad. All around him like Willi Stock, Laurence and Helena also think that she needs to be treated in a nursing home. Helena even proposes to bear the expense of her treatment. This phase continues till Chapter 3 when it dawns upon her that an entire story – the story of her first novel – is being unfolded to her through these hallucinatory experiences. Thus while half-asleep in her flat in Kensington, she hears the sound of typewriter and the voices again:

At this point in the narrative, it might be as well to state that the characters in the novel are all fictitious, and do not refer to any living persons whatsoever.
Tap-tappity-tap. At this point in the narrative… (59).

This phase of hallucination is thus marked by her sense of being a character in a novel, as if a "writer on a different plane of existence [is] writing a story about us" (53). She feels cured of her fear and obsession with the hallucination as she hits upon the "truth of the matter", that is, the "fabulous idea of themselves and their friends being used as characters in a novel". Her exchange at this point with Laurence is revealing:

'In fact, she continued, 'I've begun to study the experience objectively. That's a sign, isn't it, that I'm well again?'
He thought not. He went so far as to suggest, 'Your work on the novel form – isn't it possible that your mind –'

It's convenient that I know something of the novel form,' Caroline said. (83)

She is convinced that her life is moulded into some fictional plot. Even Laurence's ideas about his grandmother's involvement in some illegal activity seem to her to be "phoney plot" of some irresponsible writer:

From my point of view it's clear that you're getting these ideas into your head through the influence of a novelist who is contriving some phoney plot. I can see clearly that your mind is working under the pressure of someone else's necessity, and under the suggestive power of some irresponsible writer you are allowing yourself to become an amateur sleuth in a cheap mystery piece. (91-92)

In fact, an important aspect of the second phase of her hallucination concerns us more here. It's during her stay in the hospital with her fractured bones that she gets over the idea of herself being a character in a fictional plot of an invisible writer. It's rather Caroline herself who is the writer writing about herself and the people around her. From Part II Chapter Six, the novel becomes Caroline's. As the novel proceeds towards its closure, the reader is forced to believe that Caroline Rose is the author of *The Comforters* despite her being a character herself in the Spark's novel[4]:

Caroline found the true facts beclouded. She was aware that the book in which she was involved was still in progress. Now when she speculated on the story, she did so privately, noting the facts as they accumulated. By now, she possessed a large number of notes, transcribed from the voices and these she studies carefully. (165)

As pointed out above, *TC* explores three interrelated issues of Spark's private and creative life – her conversion to Catholicism, the suspicion about her own fictional powers and the efficacy of realism in terms of articulating the self-vis-á-vis religious or conventional patterns of thought.

The quasi-meta-fictional nature notwithstanding, the novel is not a self-reflective fiction up to the hilt because it is purposed *not* solely to demystify the process of writing fiction for the sake of undoing a whole array of ideological commonplaces. It is rather intended to interrogate the mystic of realism in terms of *two* of its integers – the portrayal of reality of the self as and when it is on the cusp of certain transformation, and the claim of realism's moral underpinnings. Meta-fictional novels like Fowles's *The French Lieutenant's Woman* (1969) undermine the complacency of Victorian verisimilitude in its entirety even while being nostalgic about it.

TC looks back at the process of writing fiction, however, from Spark's personal and moral preoccupations. Spark's fiction deals with the question of relation "between God and man". It is also concerned with the "relationship of the novelist with the novel" (Whittaker, *Faith* 151). God is equated with the novelist, Whittaker writes, as both "create a world which they can people with characters simultaneously free and limited" (*Faith* 126). This aspect of her writing can be explained in terms of her religious beliefs because as a Catholic "she is aware that her fiction-making activities take place within what could be called 'God's plot', it being a metaphor for the Christian belief in divinely ordered universe" (*Faith* 91).

Whittaker is right in so far as she identifies Spark's penchant for manipulation of fictional forms to complement or counterpoint God's plot-making. But she fails to explain how this aspect in *TC* happens to critique the basic premises of the classic realist fiction.

Realist fiction projects a fictional heterocosm, complete in itself yet reliant upon the world of reality for it being recognisable and identifiable. It creates and all along sustains the illusion of a sharply distinct world from which the author, prescient though s/he is, remains absent from it by virtue of a pretended impersonality, even if it is first-person narrative. Flaubert wrote, "An author in his book must be like God in the universe, present everywhere and visible but nowhere apparent" (Winock 374-75). Flaubert's observation affirms the workings of realism in its apparent negation of the author for the autonomy of fictional heterocosm. Like God, the novelist spins a plot, remaining all the while however behind a screen of impersonality. *TC* interrogates not merely this realist assumption, but the assuredness of the self vis-à-vis its transformative encounter with new experiences. As mentioned in the earlier chapter, Spark could not entirely trust the efficiency of the traditional realist fiction when she came down to writing one, that is *TC*, as she said,

*I was asked to write a novel, and I didn't think much of novels – I thought it was an **inferior way of writing.** So I wrote a novel to work out the technique first, to sort of **make it all right with myself** to write a novel at all. (Kermode 141; emphases added).*

TC was written to 'set it all right with [herself]' – to see how novel worked to articulate her expression of moral reality. Though Spark was converted to Catholicism shortly before she began writing the novel, *TC* placed the catholicity of the moral self above religious sentiments. Thus the novelist's desire to 'set it all right' with herself enables her to see through the moral depravity of Georgina's religious rigidity or Helen's incurable Catholic righteousness.

Georgina embodies religion with all its prohibitive strictures. Her spiritual regime leaves no room for personal affections or sensitive reactions for that matter. She is a pattern-maker as per the scriptural instructions she has gathered in her life. But it's due to her unshakable reliance on her own righteousness that she emerges as an evil figure in this otherwise tranquil landscape of the novel. Morality, pursued too keenly and typically with little or no consideration for human idiosyncrasy, borders on evil. Creativity cannot be cultivated with the inhibitive presence of evil. It's, therefore, after the death of Georgina that Carline can now set down to writing her novel.

Helena Manders, with all her magnanimity on the other hand, labours under a distorted idea of religious propriety and righteousness. She is too eager to assist people even when the person does not deserve to be encouraged with such help. Although she is not an evil figure, her inability to stop Georgina's evil planning highlights her moral failure in Spark's fictional world. Sensitive yet too complaisant, she does not supply Caroline with an example to help Caroline, and Spark too, to 'set it all right' with herself.

Edwin Manders, on his part, is also a devout Catholic. But his absent from the happenings in the household render him a caricature – almost a comic character. During most trying times in the family he is seen to be on religious retreats. His idea of reality is too conventional and too straight jacketed. This towards the end of the novel when Caroline declares that she intends to go away on a "long holiday" to write a novel, Edwin proposes, "Make it a straight old-fashioned story, no modern

mystification. End with the death of the villain and the marriage of the heroine", she say with a light laugh, "Yes, it would end that way" (186).

In fact, Spark's distaste of fellow Catholics is evident in many of her novels. She writes in 'My Conversion' how she felt put off in her desire for conversion by some Catholics she knew personally:

I was put off a long time by individual Catholics, living ones, I mean. Good God, I used to think, if I became a Catholic, will I grow like them? (59)

Her chief objection against these people was their subordination of the self to religious doctrines to the extent of sheer orthodoxy. It is altogether due to the same reason that she takes issue with realism and the corollary belief in its moral truthfulness. Moral truth, for Spark, emerges when the self engages with the world in its wonderful randomness and when it unifies its wantonness in its own spiritual idiom without the conventional religious or philosophical encumbrances.

Conclusion

Muriel Spark's critique of the edifice of the nineteenth century realism results from her distrust of the reification of a narrative commonality which, by way of sustaining the illusion of a 'real life' or a 'slice of reality', endeavours to suggest an objective reality and a commensurate depiction of it. Through the persona of Caroline Rose in *The Comforters*, the creative process itself is laid bare before the reader in a way similar to what the German playwright Bertolt Brecht did in his plays through the device of 'alienation effect', an important aspect of his project of 'epic theatre'. As against the 'dramatic theatre' which creates and then sustains the illusion of reality, Brecht's 'epic theatre' dispels the empathy of the audience with what they witness on stage in order to prevent them to sink into the world of the play and adopt instead an objective and critical attitude towards it. Spark's metafictive metaphor in the novel seems intended for exactly the same effect: to promote and propage what we may term 'critical realism' – a narrative form that critiques a tangential attitude towards the *mechanism* of representation of reality, and not reality itself.

Notes:

1. In fact, Caroline's hallucinatory experiences have distinct biographical references. Shortly after her reception into the Catholic Church, Spark herself started suffering from hallucinations. It might be due to her having taken Dexedrine as an appetite suppressant. She was then working on a book about T S Eliot: "one night the letters of the words I was reading became confused. They formed anagrams and crosswords..." (*Curriculum* 204).

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New Strategy Women in Shashi Deshpande's *The Dark Holds No Terror, That Long Silence* and *A Matter of Time*

T. Vasanth & K. Sundararajan

Over the decades, a number of novels appeared in Indian English fiction dealing with women's problems. The treatment is often powerful and novels end up glorifying the writers of Indian women like patience, devotion and acceptance of sufferings. Many Indian women novelists have explored female subjectivity in order to establish an identity that is not imposed by a patriarchal society. The works of Kamala Markandaya, Nayantara Sahgal, Anita Desai, Gita Hariharan, Shashi Deshpande, Kiran Desai and Manju Kapur and many more have left permanent imprint on the readers of Indian fiction in English. In this article Shashi Deshpande has made bold attempts at giving a voice to the disappointments and frustrations of women. She represents contemporary Indian English writer. She is the daughter of a famous Kannada playwright, popularly known as Sriranga. She graduated from Elphinstone College, Mumbai. She had also taken M.A. in English Literature from the Mysore University. Her writing career began initially with short stories and later published many novels and also children's books.

She did a graduation in Journalism at the Bharatiya Vidya Bhawan, Mumbai and worked for a couple of months as a journalist for the magazine 'On Looker'. Her first novel is *The Dark Holds No Terrors* (1980) and *Roots and Shadows* (1983) received the major award Thirumathi Rangamal Prize for The Best Indian novel of 1983. She is a winner of the Sahitya Akadami award for her novel *That long Silence* (1989). Some her famous novels are *A Matter of Time* (1996)*, Small Remedies* (2000)*, The Binding Vine* (2002)*, Moving On* (2004)*, In the Country of Deceit* (2008) and *Shadow Play* (2013)*.

Deshpande's works reflect a realistic picture of the contemporary middle class, educated women and especially urban Indian. She occupies a unique position among Indian English Literature. She deals with the struggles and adjustments of the middle-class Indian women and represents the majority of women whose voices are not considered by the society. As for as the women are concerned, they have been traditionally characterized as care, calm and obedient. They are kept controlled by the patriarchal norms, devoted to her husband, steadfast, loyal and completely identifying her with him.

In her novels, *The Dark Holds No Terrors, That Long Silence* and *A Matter of Time* taken for analysis through Saru, Jaya and Sumi. They fought against their family and the society for freedom and identity, but ultimately find themselves an adjustment for their children's and their society. Life is full of choices. Life is full of compromise. Life is an adjustment. Even a compromise is one of the respectable choices that are developed as a survival strategy by Shashi Deshpande. As Amarnath states

...Almost all the literary ventures of Shashi Deshpande revolve round the pathetic and heart rending conditions of women in a male dominated society. (Prasad, 2001)

The Dark Holds No Terrors, the protagonist Sarita is known as 'Saru', an ordinary, modest, sensitive and middle class woman. The novel deals with the story of marriage on the rocks. Saru is a

successful doctor during the daytime and at night a terrified and trapped animal in the hands of her husband Manu who is an English teacher in a small college. After her marriage she had decided and had announced that she would never come back to her father's place but circumstances forced her to return back as she was unable to bear the sexual sadism of her husband. She came to her father's house after fifteen years of marriage. In her father's house she had liberal opportunity to review her relationship with her father, her brother, her husband, her children and her mother. She emerged with a better understanding of herself and others. She remembered all the past experience, a brief confession to her father about her suffering and her courage to confront reality.

In her father's house, she remembered her dead brother, Dhruva. Once they went to a pool without the knowledge of her parents. But unfortunately her brother had drowned and her efforts to bring him out of the water failed. She cried and cried for him. Her mother said to her that she had killed him. "You did it, you did this, you killed him… you killed him. Why didn't you die? Why are you alive, when he's dead"? (DHNT, 191)

This bitterness was reflected in all matters of her family. Sarita decided to become a doctor and wanted to go to the Medical College at Bombay. But her mother stood firmly against her joining the college. She said that they would need money for her marriage. Her mother argued, "Yes, but they are the girls whose fathers have lots of money. You don't belong to that class and don't forget, medicine or no medicine, doctor or no doctor." (DHNT, 144) Society treats the male-child, the son as an ultimate solution to all problems, the girl-child and the daughter is always treated as an unwanted burden, as she cannot fulfill, the parental needs. Life becomes more pathetic to Saru after Dhruva's death. She failed to get any sympathy from her father and this guilt suffocates her and she was made to live with the guilt that she was the murderer. Once there were celebrations at home whereas herself much-awaited birthday passes off in silence. Her mind was filled with deep and permanent scars as her mother constantly mingled for her dead son and rejected even the presence of her daughter.

A woman, for getting freedom, seeks marriage as an alternative to bondage created by parental family. Saru hated the role of a daughter and looked forward to the role of a wife, in the hope that her changing role would help in getting her freedom and identity. She married Manohar quite against her parents will; she didn't feel any guilt at this separation. Instead of getting her problems solved after her marriage, her problems get increased by the male chauvinistic behaviour beliefs of the society, which affect the husband-wife relationship. It was at every stage in her life she had to submit herself unwillingly to her husband and her mother.

Saru became popular doctor and Manu was relegated to the secondary position, which hurt his ego. She realised that Manu had a singed psyche because the esteem, she was getting from the people had made her inches taller than her husband. It was as a reflex action that Manu tried to dominate over her in private.

He attacked me like an animal that night. I was sleeping and I woke up and there was this … this man hurting me. With his hands, his teeth, his whole body. (DHNT, 201)

He did it again and again, every night. She could not stop him because he seemed more powerful than he appeared to be. She couldn't cry lest children in the next room should hear. She

wanted to escape from the hand of her husband. In the beginning love and sex was fulfillment of life but now sex became a dirty word for her.

In the meantime Saru came to known that her mother had died. She went to mourn for the death of her mother. When she gets a cold reception, she realizes her mistakes and regrets on her visit to her old house without her children. She tells her father how she was subjected to a beastly treatment in the nights by her husband. Her father could say nothing except that he needed treatment. When she gets a letter from her children whose inform that Manu is coming to meet her. She tells her father that she is indeed scared of him not because what he had done to her but what she had done to him. She tells her father,

My brother died because I heedlessly turned my back on him. My mother died alone because I deserted her. My husband is a failure because I destroyed his manhood. (DHNT, 217)

Finally Saru makes a compromise in her life with her husband for her survival in a society. Without compromise, there is nothing possible. As a girl, she has to adjust herself twice in her life, first in her father's house and then in her father-in-law's house.

That Long Silence is the story of personal journey; the heroine, Jaya who is a middle class woman. She learns as she undergoes the mental torture and suffering at the hands of her husband. After her marriage even her name is not her own, keeps on changing accordingly the wishes of her husband. Her name Jaya is symbolizes victory, the desire of her father and later Suhasini represents her husband's expectations from her that is satisfying submission.

Though, when he wrote my name, it had been 'Suhasini', not Jaya. And if I disowned the name, he had never failed to say reproachfully, I choose that name for you. (TLS, 15)

Jaya decides to make adjustments wherever possible, through a neutral analysis of the situation. As she herself admits, "I've always thought – there's only one life, no chance of a reprieve, no second chances. But in this life itself there are so many crossroads, so many choices". (TLS, 191-92) In the beginning of her marriage, she had dreamt like other girls of her age that there would be love and romance after marriage as she had seen in the films of Raj Kapoor and Nargis, Cary Grant and Deborah Kerr. She had imagined that her husband would be a handsome young man and would say to her 'I love you'. But soon after her marriage, she realises that it is a marriage not a love affair. Love has come to mean nothing for Jaya and Mohan but an urge for sex. The emotions and responses of love are redundant, meaningless things. They have their own definition of love.

Mohan is an Engineer. He had no option but to find a more profitable job and he succeeded in his effort. Her life gets changed when her husband, Mohan found guilty in business. He shifted many place because of feared dishonor due to shame. She recollected, "If Gandhari, who bandaged her eyes to become blind like her husband, could be called an ideal wife, I was an ideal wife too." (TLS, 61)

Once Mohan stormed against her for writing a story which he wrongly thought criticized his own attitude. Jaya apparently gave up writing, but she continued to write secretly under a false name. Jaya tried to speak in her defense but she had recoiled under his action. Her body became

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rigid and she could not speak anything. Later he left the house, without saying anything to her. When she was alone without Mohan, she remembered the words of Vanitamami that "a husband is like a sheltering tree." (TLS, 32)

Jaya felt that Mohan had gone away due to her failure as wife. "He expected something from me, from his wife and I've failed him." (TLS, 185) She received a telegram from Mohan, informing her that all was well and he would return soon. She accept her permanent solution comes from inside, not from outside. So she makes an adjustment as survival strategy for getting happiness from conjugal life.

Sumi of *A Matter of Time* gradually emancipates herself as a new independent woman from deserted wife. She returns with their three daughters to the shelter of her father's house, where her parents live in silence: they have not spoken to each other in many years. This silence is unraveled, a horrifying story of loss and pain. She looks courage and self-confidence. She wants to fight her own battle and assert her individuality. She has the full support and sympathy of her parents, sister, cousins and others. This support has helped her to a great extent to withstand the shock, pain, humiliation and the suffering of desertion.

The novel is told through the three generations of Manorama, Kalyani and Sumi. It unfolds through not the words of the character but their silence and inner thought process that sometimes makes them unfriendly to their own family.

The silence that predominates the world of Deshpande's women is not that of peace and tranquility rather it is an amalgam of their pain, anger, frustration, defensiveness and rejection. Silence takes various shapes in her work. There is the unthinking silence; the resigned silence and finally the one bristling with suppressed anger. (Roy, 88)

Shripati, Kalyani's husband has cut himself off completely from her and has not spoken to her for more than thirty years. She has suffered silently. She made to realize that while losing her son, a male heir, she had abandoned her right as a wife. He had stopped communication to his wife because he held her responsible for the loss of their mentally retarded son. Both the ladies live with a psychic wound. Kalyani's mother Manorama fails to beget a male heir to her husband and fears he might take another wife for the same purpose. So, in order to avoid the property getting passed on to another family, Manorama gets her daughter Kalyani married to her brother Shripati. Deshpande very aptly quotes from the Brhad-Aranyaka Upanishad (1.5.17) to sum up the traditional desire to beget male heir and related Indian psyche:

Whatever wrong has been done by him,
His son frees him from it all;
Therefore he is called a son. By his son
A father stands firm in the world. (MT, 91)

The character Gopal, who walks out on his wife Sumi and daughters without informed nothing. He feared not able to do his duties as a husband and a father. But she reacts differently and does not ask for any explanation from her husband. She suffers silently and does not show her pain and sorrow to the society. She wants her daughter's life to be untouched by unhappiness. "I want

her to enjoy good things in life, want her to taste life. I want her to relish it and spit it out because she finds it better." (MT, 220)

Sumi comes forth as a new-woman with a new understanding and consciousness, all set to begin her life a new and confidently as a teacher and creative writer. Unfortunately, she meets an accident with her father. It is pity that Sumi dies when she was taking up a job to support herself and her daughters. She would have become an economically independent woman with modern and matured outlook towards life, and at the same time, a loving and responsible mother. The journey of Sumi from her 'death like silence' to 'blocking out' all unpleasantness and getting on with life is a remarkable accomplishment. As Vimala Ramarao says, "She does not want pity; she would do anything for pride." (Rama Rao, 257)

The novelist has projected women like Saru, Jaya and Sumi in all her writings with contemporary realistic characters. Traditionally she characterizes women as ideally warm, gentle, dependent and submissive. She talks about Indian women who are bothered only about their survivals at all costs does not understand about being equal with their men; they have other priorities in life. Only the educated middle class women are more concerned about development and asserting their identities and aspiring for an equal partnership with males. By having a balanced view of Indian feminist ideals, the women can also hope for better co-operation from men, an identity of their own and an equal partnership in society.

Deshpande knows the worth and sagacity of marriage in the Indian society. She is not against Indian marriage. Her need is honourable adjustment between wife and husband where the dignity and honour of the wife is safe and secured. She does not like to change the husband, but to make changes in the husband's attitude and behaviours towards his wife in the light of modernity. Her ideology may not be of the type what the radical feminists hold, but she has her own brand of feminism.

The mother-daughter and wife-husband relationship has always occupied an important place in Deshpande's fiction. She provides new ideals for a better husband-wife relationship. She likes to create the new atmosphere and widen the scope where the wife and husband may live together happily and satisfactorily. She also likes to maintain a balance between tradition and modernity. She does not regard all traditions awful and harmful. According to her, traditions regarding marriage must be preserved, but not at the cost of victimization and suppression of women. So the novelist seeks the solution to the problem not through divorce but in changing the attitude of the husbands towards their wives.

Thus, her novels stress the idea of preserving the rights and independent and the identity of women. She also reasserts that women are more conscious of the same ideology. By aware of the exploitation, suppression and discrimination of women in the society the women folk should have the courage and awareness to fight against the injustice prevailing. In the battle either single or in collective measure, women should reach the level of success or defeat. But they should endeavor consistently for the welfare of the victims. For this traditional attitude as a woman and wife must change. Silences as well as endurance will not a remedy and escapism is not a solution. As mentioned above the new strategy is the only weapon for meaningful life as undergone by Saru, Jaya and Urmi in Deshpande's novels. The novelist tries to convey the society that need of the

compromise as a survival strategy in this transitional phase, is not a total revolt but a gradual change in the society for which everyone has to put some effort to bridge the gap between sadness and happiness and the old and the new generation.

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Bridging the Gap*: Revisiting English for Specific Course for Engineering Students
Ajit Kumar Pradhan

Background of the Study

There has been a consistent demand for the learners to join English language courses which would cater to their specific academic and professional demands. These demands are more visible in professional courses like Bachelor of Engineering, Master of Business Management and so on. Although English courses are offered in the technical institutes in India, there is a need to survey whether those courses have been designed keeping the needs of the learners into account. Further, there is a need to find out how effectively these courses are being delivered.

Based on the above issues, the present study makes an attempt to find out how far English language needs are being addressed by the English curriculum and syllabus of Biju Pattnaik University of Technology, (BPUT), which is the only government technical university of the state Odisha, India. Further, there has been an attempt to find out how effectively the English courses are being transacted in the classroom.

Statement of the Problem

Communication skills in English play a very significant role in the career of engineering graduate. According to NASSCOM-McKensey report (2010) on extending India's leadership of the global IT and BPO industries, only 25 percent of technical graduate students are suitable for employment in IT and BPO industries. This report further states that the major problem of India lies in 'skills of its workforce'. It further suggests that education system in India does not provide enough training to work in IT and BPO sectors. The report poses concern with the issue of employability rather than employment of the technical graduates in India as they lack adequate skills in communication skills in English language.

In this context, there is a need for an extensive survey in the English education program in engineering colleges/institutions to find out the effectiveness of the course and identify if there is any gap between the learners' needs and the inputs given to them.

The Concept of ESP

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is a movement in the field of English language teaching where the content of the course is specified and based on the academic and professional needs of the learners. Although, courses of English for General Purposes (EGP) are also based on needs analysis where learners are taught to use of their knowledge of English, 'they will not be able to clearly specify what this use might be' (Duetch, 2013). Long (2005: p.9) succinctly clarifies the distinction between ESP and EGP.

General (language for no purpose) courses at any proficiency level almost always teach too much, e.g. vocabulary, skills, registers or styles some learners do not need, and too little, e.g. omitting lexis and genres that they do. Instead of a one-size-fits-all approach, it is more defensible to view every course as involving specific purposes.

It is evident from the above view of Long (2005) that English for General Purposes (EGP), courses are designed based on 'general' needs of the learners. While ESP courses focus more on specific and immediate needs of the learners, EGP courses may not focus on specific needs of the learners. There have been various views given on the concept of ESP by many researchers.

Defining ESP: Many Perspectives

The concept of ESP has been defined in different ways by many researchers. Mackay (1981) believes that ESP is generally used for 'utilitarian' purposes. The students of ESP learn language to use it in their academic and professional careers. Further, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) consider ESP as an 'approach' instead of a 'product'. It means that ESP does not involve a particular type of language, teaching materials or methodology. The teaching materials and methodology depend more on the learners' interests, and learning styles. Thus, ESP is considered as an 'approach', as the teaching materials and methodology evolve from the ESP classroom, which may not be pre-determined. While Robinson (1991) highlights ESP as 'goal-directed', some others (Strevens, 1988; Robinson, 1991; Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998) emphasize how the goals meet the needs of the learners. According to Dudley-Evans & St John (1998), ESP applies the methodology and activities of the specific discipline it serves and uses the language, skills, discourse, and genre appropriate to that discipline. Strevens (1988) considers ESP related in content, in themes and topics, related to particular disciplines and occupations. Further, Robinson (1980, p.2) considers materials development as a significant aspect in ESP course development. According to her "Quintessential ESP, if we can pinpoint it, is perhaps this materials produced for use once only by one group of students in one place at one time". Dudley-Evans and St. Johns, (1998) provide a comprehensible inventory of ESP courses. They divide ESP into two categories: absolute and variable characteristics.

Absolute characteristics:

- ESP is designed to meet specific needs of the learner;
- ESP makes use of the underlying methodology and activities of the disciplines it serves;
- ESP is centred on the language (grammar, lexis, register), skills, discourse and genres appropriate to these activities.

Variable characteristics:

- ESP may be related to or designed for specific disciplines;
- ESP may use, in specific teaching situations, a different methodology from that of general English;
- ESP is likely to be designed for adult learners, either at tertiary level institution or in a professional work situation. It could, however, be used for learners at secondary school level;

- ESP is generally designed for intermediate or advanced students. Most ESP courses assume basic knowledge of the language system, but it can be used with beginners.

Paltridge and Starfield (2013) also succinctly state that "*ESP refers to the teaching and learning of English as a second language where the goal of the learners is to use English in a particular domain... ESP courses, then, focus on the language, skills, and genres appropriate to the specific activities the learners need to carry out in English*". Keeping the specific nature into consideration Widdoson (1983) consider ESP courses as 'training' and on the other hand EGP courses as 'education'. However, Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) disapprove Widdowson by stating that, there are EGAP (English for General Academic Purposes) courses, which are 'education' oriented by developing general competence across many disciplines. Thus, this leads to the further issue of 'specificity' of ESP course design.

There have been different views on the issue that how specific should English for 'specific' courses be. (Hutchinson and Waters 1980; Hyland 2002). There are two varieties of courses emerge from the issue i.e wide-angle ESP courses and narrow-angle ESP courses. Wide-angle courses attempt to enhance the skills which are common across different disciplines. English courses in engineering discipline in India can be an example of wide-angle course, where the students from all the branches of engineering programme study English in the same class. However, English for Mechanical Engineering Students Course, English for Computer Science Students Course and so on can be more specific English courses, which would be based on the principles of 'narrow-angle' course design.

Based on the definitions and views on ESP, the following observations can be made.

- ESP students are generally adult learners, a homogeneous group in terms of learning goals, not necessarily in terms of language proficiency. Thus, ESP courses are based on the assumption that the learners have already acquired some basic knowledge of language system.
- ESP courses are based on the learners' academic and professional needs, which may be based on learners' disciplines.
- The teaching methodologies and materials should be based on the interests and needs particular group of learners. As needs and interests vary and evolve, the materials and methodologies should also change accordingly.
- ESP courses save lots of learning time than EGP courses.

There is a need to understand which forces were behind the emergence of ESP in order to place ESP in the present context of teaching and learning.

The Present Study: Sample and Tools for Data Collection

The study is carried out in five engineering colleges of Odisha situated in different geographical locations so that they represent various regions of Odisha. These engineering colleges are located both in urban and semi-rural settings. The population for the study includes the first year engineering students (300 numbers), teachers of English (20 numbers), teachers who teach other than English (core subjects) (10 numbers), and administrators of engineering colleges (8 numbers)

to obtain a proper perspective of the problems and issues involved. The following tools were used to collect data for the study.

- Questionnaires
- Interview protocols
- Classroom observations
- Field notes

Findings of the Study

The findings of the study are based on the data triangulation among research tools like questionnaires, interview protocols, classroom observation checklists, and field notes. In order to obtain different perspectives on some issues, some questions were intentionally asked to both teachers and students, and later verified through classroom observation. The findings of the study can be categorized under the following ways.

Learners' Learning Difficulties

Learning difficulties include specific difficulties related to understanding language. It is evident from both teachers and learners responses from the questionnaires and classroom observation. Some students face learning difficulties like understanding lectures, taking notes, asking questions in the class, responding to questions, participating in classroom interactions, and writing term papers and reports.

Learners' Learning Styles

Learners' preference on their learning styles is significant as it can be a useful in the selection of teaching materials and methodology. In order to understand learners' learning preferences, questionnaires were administrated. Further, interviews were taken with the learners to understand more about their learning preferences.

Learners prefer interactive mode of teaching than the 'traditional' lecture mode. From the learners responses it has come to the notice that learners wish to be corrected when they make mistakes. They are interested to work on 'problem-solving' activities. Learners are motivated to work in pairs and groups, rather than individually. Further, learners prefer to write notes from the textbook and listening to lectures. Regarding outside preference of learning modes, learners prefer talking to friends, browsing web-sources and watching English shows on television. Their preference on topics to be discussed in the English sessions are more on engineering topics than topics related to novels and short-stories on general themes.

Learners' Language Needs

Learners' language needs provide significant input for the development of their courses and teaching materials. Learners' English language needs are found through many sources like questionnaires, interviews, field notes and existing literature. The English language need of the

learners' include in the areas of the four basic skills i.e. listening, speaking, reading and writing. Any ESP course should cater to the specific needs of the four areas.

Teaching Materials used by Faculty

There is a significant difference between what teachers believe and practice, especially related to the use of teaching materials. Teachers, responding to the use of teaching materials mentioned the use of teaching materials from difference sources like internet, reference books, newspaper and journals. However, during the classroom observation, especially in 'theory' classes, teachers tend to dictate notes without referring to the various sources.

Teaching Methodology adopted by Faculty

Teachers of English responded that they use 'interactive methodologies' for classroom transaction such as group work and pair work, tutorial groups, informal lectures etc.. From the classroom observation, it has come to the notice that teachers prefer 'lecture modes' in the 'theory' classes, where teachers explain certain concepts through giving lectures. However, during the language laboratory classes, teachers tend to give scope for interaction through language activities and games. Thus, the language laboratory classes are more interactive and effective than the theory classes. Like teaching materials, in case of teaching methodologies there is a gap between what teachers believe and what they really practice.

Evaluation Pattern

The evaluation system is based on both internal and external evaluation, where international evaluation carry 30 percent weight and external evaluations carry 70 percent weight in the theory examination. Evaluation for laboratory classes is carried out by the concerned teachers. There are suggestions to include assignments, presentations through continuous evaluation system rather than term end evaluation.

Suggestions and Recommendations

For effective teaching and learning of English language in engineering colleges in Odisha, it is necessary to take a few measures to help achieve the overall goal of teaching English. These measures have been formulated in the form of recommendations. These recommendations have been specifically directed to policy makers, and administrators, and English language teachers.

Recommendations for Policy Makers

The syllabus of Communicative English course fulfils partial goals and objectives of the learners. There is a need to modify the existing syllabus keeping the needs of the learners. Further, the prescribed textbook needs modifications, taking learners' background into account. As most of the learners expect to deal with topics related to their field of study, engineering topics should be included in the textbook.

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There is a need to restructure English language program in engineering education. Out of the eight semesters of engineering program English language course is offered only in the first three semesters in BPUT. There is a need to split the English course throughout the eight semesters. As per the existing syllabus the skills of facing interview and group discussion for getting a job are in the third semester. By the time students reach seven or eight semester, they forget those skills due to lack of practice. Thus, there is a need to split English program according to the specific needs of the learners in each semester.

As it has been found from this study, learners get more opportunities to use language in the 'language laboratory' classes than the 'theory' classes, there is a need to minimize theory classes. English language classes should be dealt in the mode of 'laboratory' than 'theory'. The examination system needs to be upgraded, where there should be more comprehensive continuous evaluation, with the mode of presentations, assignments, role plays so on, rather than end-semesters evaluation pattern.

One of the major issues in the English language education in engineering education is related to the process of the recruitments of language teachers. In order to teach English language in the technical institutions under the purview of BPUT, there is no pre-requisite of any pre-service teacher training programs. Further, there is lack of structured in-service training programs for the language teachers. English teachers who are recruited are generally from English literature background without any proper training in language teaching. Thus, there is an urgent need to train the language teachers.

Recommendations for Administrators

It has been found that the teachers of English are not satisfied with the administrators due to the lack of encouragement from them in the form of 'professional development' to undertake research. The focus has been more on the completion of the syllabus and end-semester results of the students. The evaluation is carried out more on the 'product' like examination results than the process of teaching and learning. Further, there is a hierarchy between teachers belonging to 'humanities department' and those of 'core-subject teacher'. Core subject teachers, who teach engineering subjects like mechanical, electronics, computer science etc. get higher salary packages than the teachers from the humanities department. One of the teachers of English, during the field study, considered herself as 'the secondary citizen' among the teachers for the same reason. There is a need to provide equal opportunities to all the faculty members, without any biases towards disciplines.
Administrators should not only equip English language laboratory with suitable equipment and language learning software, but also monitor its' effective use. One of the issues that evolve from the classroom observations and interaction with the faculty members is the lack of proper system of monitoring to find out effectiveness of classes. Although students' feedback on teachers is taken in some of the institutions, it has not been properly implemented and standardized.

Recommendations for Teachers of English

Teachers of English play a significant role in the enhancement of English language competence of engineering students. One of the key responsibilities of ESP teachers is to conduct

'needs analysis' and design materials. There is always a scope to supplement the existing textbook. Further, teachers may take students into confidence in developing teaching and learning materials. As ESP learners are adult learners, they can help the teachers in designing materials to a large extent.

While designing internal tests, teachers should pay more attention to design 'authentic' language tests rather on 'theoretical' issues or on 'memory based' questions. Teachers of English need to assess their learners periodically in many different ways like presentations, assignments, project work and so on. Thus, there is a need to implement diverse evaluation pattern.

As learners are quite interested to learn English through the medium of technology, teachers should incorporate technology in their teaching. English lessons may include audio-videos, PPTs, use of internet and so on to make the class more interesting and effective.

Although, teachers of English do not feel 'collaboration' with core-subject teachers is feasible due to time and other issues, there can be an attempt by the English language teachers to interact and audit 'core-subject' classes to find out the language needs of the learners. Developing English language competence of engineering students should be a collaborative afford between English language teachers and teachers who are teaching core-subjects.

Conclusion

There are many issues of engineering education which need to be explored. The present study focuses only on academic English language needs of engineering students by investigating the teaching and learning process of English in engineering colleges under the purview of BPUT. The field of ESP research is progressively expanding due to the need of evaluating and developing need-based courses. Further research can be carried out taking industry needs of the learners into account.

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Students' Perception of Teachers' Competency for Teaching English as a Foreign Language

Andrew Philominraj, Carlos Arévalo & Maria Bertilla

Introduction

These days, the need to learn English as a foreign language is on the rise because it is undoubtedly the language for international communication. (Harmer, 2000, Brown, 2007) English has become a major issue for governments, curriculum designers, educators, and parents (Cameron, 2003). Undoubtedly, the Chilean national curriculum clearly states that English is a tool that allows global communication and, at the same time, allows access to vast knowledge of information and technology, which in turn allows countries to meet the demands of the global society (MINEDUC, 2012).

Perceptions about the quality of a certain school subject or its effectiveness vary according to students' needs and goals. These variations also depend on their environment, culture and, at the same time, their previous experiences and expectations. The beliefs and convictions of individuals foster actions that lead to their goals. There are several investigations in the area of language learning which have produced outstanding findings about the effects of individual beliefs on the learning of the L2 (Torshizi, 2016). Another study by Horwitz (1999) found that the students´ beliefs influence their actions and experiences. This almost leads, to a hasty conclusion that the students' beliefs are quite relevant in their understanding of their experiences in language learning. While examining the differences between school institutions, it was discovered that the lack of school supplies, book scarcity, and diverse student desires and aspirations, as well as teachers´ personal limitations, lead to failure in the teaching and learning of the second language (Hassankiadeh, 2013). Studies reveal that in traditional schools, teachers end up being very authoritative, which does not facilitate the learning process either (Pishghadam & Navari, 2010).

It is a fact that not all people learn in the same way and, generally, favor certain strategies that suit their own cognitive traits. This explains the difference manifested in their way of knowing (Catalán, et al., 2012). Providing students with quality instruction means they must be trained, not only on how to develop skills for the present, but how to develop them for the future so they are able to make decisions in different aspects of their lives. This implies that students must be trained within the framework of systematic formal education in order to learn to solve problems (Lucero & Mazzitelli, 2007).

This study explores the perception concerning teacher quality for teaching English as a foreign language to two-hundred high school students who are studying at municipal high schools in the O'Higgins region, Chile. Following the introduction is a brief review on English teaching methodology and the curriculum of English language used in Chile. Students' perception follows in a separate section, and the methodology used for this work is presented. Then the results obtained through a survey are discussed, and finally, the conclusion.

English Teaching Methodology

Teaching methodologies reflect the way teachers want to focus on the contents and objectives determined by the language curriculum. Appropriate selection of teaching methodologies also depends on the school environment and student learning styles (Burns & Richards, 2009). It should be pointed out that the importance of teaching English became evident in Chile due to the shift from a grammar-based approach to a more communicative approach, a change that was promoted by the Chilean Ministry of Education, (MINEDUC, 2004).

One of the first and foremost classic tools are school textbooks, which need to be modified according to learning needs and to the focus in which foreign language education is emphasized. In the 1990s, emphasis is placed on the development of reading comprehension skills (Villarroel, 1997). Teaching focused on behaviorist tasks such as grammatical rules and rote-memory had long left the classrooms (McBride, 2009). Instead, classes based on communicative activities took over, where the focus was on the expression of ideas, not on the analysis of the formal aspects. (Bell, 2005, Larsen-Freeman, 2013, Richards & Rodgers, 2001, Zanón, 2007). As a result, neither the extreme method of exclusive grammar analysis, nor the method based solely on open communication can fully teach a language in all its aspects. The note on striking a balance between these two opposing trends obviously lies on the teacher who plays an important role in finding that which is adequate and appropriate in teaching English in class (McBride, 2009).

The changes that have taken place in the teaching and learning of English in Chile come as the result of the creation of the pioneering and exclusive "English Open Doors Program" created by the Chilean Ministry of Education (MINEDUC, 2004). The introduction of this program meant that the rest of the school subjects in the Chilean educational curriculum had no similarity. The "English Opens Doors Program" (PIAP), created in 2003, aims at improving the level of English that students acquire from 5th to 12th standard, by defining National standards for learning English, professional teacher-training development and in-classroom support for all English teachers in the country. Furthermore, the PIAP offers constant training to teachers of English, through "Winter retreats" or "Summer Camps", which are activities of instruction on new methodologies and educational strategies.

Despite the efforts of the Ministry of Education in establishing English language program, and the learning objectives, it has been verified that high school students graduate with little mastery in the understanding of the written language as well as its basic levels of oral production, skills that are part of the fundamental objectives in the Chilean English program (King, 2007). On the low results in English in secondary education, a number of theories have emerged that seek to respond to this deficiency. One of them argues that the problem is due, in part, to the poor use of methodological techniques in the classroom, noting that they are not adequate for the type of content that is to be taught (King, 2007).

Another theory that seeks to respond to the ineffectiveness of English programs in Chile, considers that the difficulties are due to lack of infrastructure, along with economic and human resources (Wagner, 2001). Gaviria and Faustino (2006) claim as well that Spanish is the language that predominates in the Chilean municipal English classrooms where teachers and students only communicate in the L2 when consulting about short topics. In the Chilean context, the lack of

resources for teaching English in the educational system is a well known problem, which has dragged on for years (Cancino, 2007).

The English Curriculum in Chile

The purpose of the English curriculum is to provide students with the necessary skills to be able to use the language as a tool which will in turn allow them to access information, as well as be able to solve various types of simple communicative situations, both orally and written. (MINEDUC, 2009) Moreover, another important objective is to promote, progressively, students´ development of higher order cognitive skills, as well as their appreciation for other lifestyles, traditions and ways of thinking. The learning of English as a foreign language, therefore, entails personal training and growth, as well as targeting instrumental objectives for academic, labor and other purposes proper to the younger generation of learners. (MINEDUC, 2009)

The Curriculum of the foreign language-learning sector aims to develop foreign language skills through Core Objectives and Mandatory Minimum Contents according to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). This is due to the need of meeting the requirements of today's Chilean society, which demands that students improve their level of English in order to face global challenges. Within the curricular structure, the development of skills in listening, reading comprehension, and oral and written expression can be highlighted. (MINEDUC, 2009) This curriculum is transversal and can be applied to all types of schools. However, this is not the reality that is perceived in Chilean educational establishments.

As a component of the learning assessment in Chile, the MINEDUC uses the SIMCE (Standardized test) instrument to verify students´ learning achievement, from elementary to secondary education. In none of the many formal documents associated with the SIMCE is there a definition of "quality of education" (Phelps, 2014), so it can be observed that this evaluation instrument does not specifically assess real learning. The controversy surrounding the SIMCE refers to a variety of aspects. The most emblematic is perhaps the very popular use given to SIMCE by the media as a popular ranking tool for all the educational establishments. This is carried out as much as it becomes visible and supports a vision of the educational service based on the market functioning. It is not just a mere conceptual or ideological critique of those who prefer education not to be regulated by the market; It is also about the stigmatization suffered by teachers, principals and students of establishments with very low results, which coincidentally are the poorest municipalized establishments. (Ortiz, 2012)

Students and Perception

One of the main disciplines that has been in charge of the study of perception has been psychology. In general terms, this field has traditionally defined perception (Rock, 1985; Day, 1981) as the cognitive process of consciousness which consists of the recognition, interpretation and significance for the elaboration of judgments concerning the sensations obtained from the physical and social environment, in which other psychic processes are involved, such as learning, memory and symbolization.

Perception is not a linear process of stimulus and response about a passive subject. There are a series of processes in between which are in constant interaction and where the individual and society have an active role in shaping the individual perceptions of each social group (Melgarejo, 1994). Furthermore, students' perceptions show the importance of discussing all the educational offers provided by the Chilean educational market and their implications on students´ integral formation. Moreover, the culture of performance and auditing demands such standards, which in fact are not clear about their active role as citizens. Therefore, spaces and permanent instances should be promoted so that students can integrate their discourse with action, exerting their critical citizenship. For this to happen, a school is needed where civic education training is practiced daily, with a social justice commitment (López, A. & García, C. 2015).

Research Methodology

Quantitative research involves data collection procedures, which mainly translate into numerical data analyzed predominantly by statistical methods. (Zoltán, 2007). Hence, the main objective of this study was to explore the perception of municipal high school students in the O'Higgins Region, Chile, using a Likert scale survey with closed-ended questions.

The questionnaire applied involved eight questions about students' perceptions of charisma, intellectual stimulation, individual consideration, psychological tolerance, inspirational motivation, individual consideration, idealized influence, and leadership aimed at teachers of English. The questionnaire was applied to two hundred students, 56% of which correspond to females and 44% to males who attend municipal high schools. The confidentiality of their answers was made clear in the survey. The information was collected online, thus students responded freely and without any pressure from the researchers who subsequently processed all of these results (Méndez, 1999).

Results and Analysis

The perception of charisma showed that 77.5% of the students surveyed considered their English teacher to be kind and reliable, a quality that allows teachers to maintain effective communication with their students and the people around them. However, 6% stated that they did not observe these characteristics in their teacher. Hence, it is important to emphasize that charisma is one of the competences that every teacher should handle to the fullest, since it is the fundamental basis of interpersonal relationships. Furthermore, when analyzing the item on intellectual stimulation, it is evident that 55.5% of the population surveyed stated that their teacher, in fact, encourages them to perform their tasks by coming up with new ideas and therefore contributing to the intellectual stimulus which should be fostered by all educators in their job performance.

Good communication process established between students and teachers can be noted from the results obtained regarding personal consideration. Thus, 77.5% of the population surveyed stated that their teacher listened to them when they have required their assistance, which means teachers actively listen. On the other hand, 4% stated that they completely disagree, since they do not observe that type of competence in their teachers at all. From this analysis, it can be inferred that there is a good communication process at the center of these educational institutions.

When analyzing the perception about psychological tolerance, it is observed that 77.5% of the population surveyed assumes that their teacher is tolerant of their students' errors, which is one of the characteristics that every teacher must have. This is because the more tolerant teachers are with their students, the more they can generate a trustful interrelationship that allows better development of the individual. Furthermore, it is important to note that 11% stated that they completely disagree with this statement because their teacher does not demonstrate any tolerance towards them. This percentage, although not high, needs to be cautiously observed so that it could be considered for improvement. In light of the results obtained in the perception of inspiring motivation, it can be said that 50% of those surveyed considered that their teachers tend to be optimistic and motivating in their job performance, while the remaining 50% considered the opposite. When evaluating the perception about individual consideration, 75% stated that their teacher considers their needs as students at all times. However, it is necessary to emphasize that the data obtained ought to be higher since it is basically the role of the teacher to assist students in their academic tasks to obtain good and meaningful learning achievement. 5.5% of the students stated that they do not agree with this, since they believe that the teachers at their educational establishment have not yet developed this competence.

It is evident that teachers, according to their students, transmit confidence and enthusiasm; Thus, the perception of the idealized influence showed that 67.5% of those surveyed fully agree with the aforementioned statement, leaving a remaining 5.5% to be in full disagreement, since, according to them, the teachers at their educational establishment do not possess these characteristics. There is no doubt that most of the students believe their teachers effectively demonstrate leadership skills in their job performance since 50% of the population has perceived it, in terms of job performance. It is important to mention that the teachers surveyed in general had the characteristics proposed by Bass (1985) in his model of transformational leadership. The remaining 22.5% stated that they did not agree with this for according to them, the teachers at their educational establishment, are not good leaders.
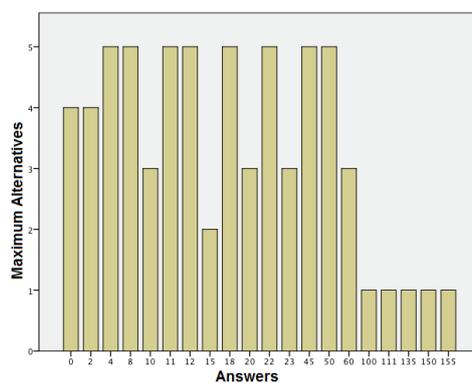

Fig.1 Maximum of Alternatives and Responses

Fig. 1 can be analyzed, with this graph, where the respondents´ tendencies are preferentially towards the *totally agree* alternative, validating this information with the frequency in the students' answers, which is perceived in Fig. 2. Therefore, it can be stated that the best way Chilean students learn English is to have a kind and reliable teacher in the classroom. The teacher must also be a good listener in order to be of support to their students. It is also vital for the teacher to be tolerant

to student's errors or mistakes in the course of their learning, without disregarding each student´s individual needs.

Answers

		Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Accumulated percentage
Valid	0	4	8,5	10,0	10,0
	2	1	2,1	2,5	12,5
	4	2	4,3	5,0	17,5
	8	2	4,3	5,0	22,5
	10	2	4,3	5,0	27,5
	11	3	6,4	7,5	35,0
	12	2	4,3	5,0	40,0
	15	5	10,6	12,5	52,5
	18	1	2,1	2,5	55,0
	20	2	4,3	5,0	60,0
	22	1	2,1	2,5	62,5
	23	2	4,3	5,0	67,5
	45	3	6,4	7,5	75,0
	50	1	2,1	2,5	77,5
	60	1	2,1	2,5	80,0
	100	2	4,3	5,0	85,0
	111	1	2,1	2,5	87,5
	135	1	2,1	2,5	90,0
	150	1	2,1	2,5	92,5
	155	3	6,4	7,5	100,0
	Total	40	85,1	100,0	
Lost	System	7	14,9		
Total		47	100,0		

Fig. 2 Frequency and percentage of answers
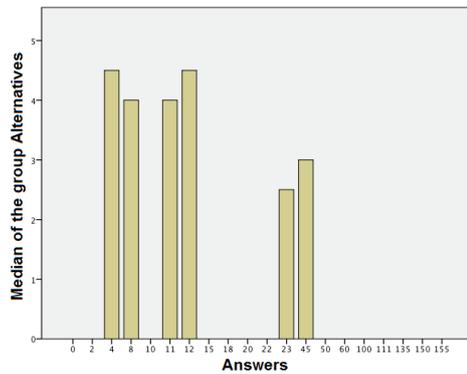

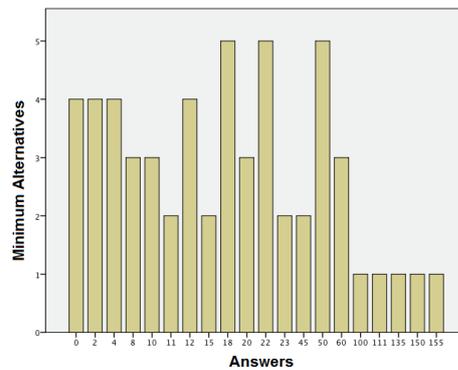**Fig. 3 The mean of survey answers**   **Fig. 4 Answers above average**

Fig.3 and Fig. 4 show that for these students, it is meaningful that their teacher provides encouragement and motivation to be able to create new ideas, and, just as meaningful, is for the teacher to be optimistic and motivating, in order to transmit enthusiasm and trust. Moreover, it is important for the teacher to be a leader in his/her professional performance.

Conclusion

In an already globalized world, the mastery of the English language becomes fundamental. It is of vital importance, that teaching be effective and that it creates new empowering tools for

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today´s younger generation who are constantly seeking and analyzing new sources of information, recreation and communication to achieve the goals they have set for their future, both personally and professionally. In the case of English, due to the complexity and competitiveness in the world of teaching and learning a foreign language, this generation, demands, as results have shown, that the education professionals be motivating, optimistic, friendly, reliable, and provide support for their students. They also expect their teachers be tolerant to errors made by their students in their learning process, and also consider students´ individual needs.

Given the universe of students, it is not so easy to define a specific method in order to achieve English language communication skills. (Philominraj, 2015) By realizing that neither the extreme method of exclusive grammar analysis nor the method based solely on open communication can fully teach a language in all its aspects, the teacher has to face the problem of how to strike a balance between these two opposing teaching trends. (McBride, 2009)

Since the 90's we are in an era that can be called post-methodological. In it, the teacher has to select the combination of techniques that work best in their context and with the students with whom they work because, as Kumaravadivelu (2003) points out, the concept of method ... "is very inadequate and very limited to satisfactorily explain the complexity of the management of language teaching around the world". Focusing primarily on closed classroom instructional strategies, ignoring the motive or reason for classroom achievement or failure depends largely on multiple factors, such as teacher cognition, student perceptions, social needs, and institutional constraints, all of which are inextricably interconnected.

This interconnection between the students' perception based on the results and the previous study. It clearly shows that as long as there is no change in education from its pragmatic and mercantilist paradigm, the individualism and lack of empathy in society, we would continue to have results such as the ones found in this study, which says nothing new. However, it deepens our great failure in the teaching of this powerful language.

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Replication of Mathew Peacock's Experimental Work on Authentic Materials to Improve the Level of Motivation of the Learners in the Context of Bangladesh

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Introduction

The use of authentic teaching materials has long been a burning issue among the academic circle around the globe since the introduction of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach. The practice of using authentic teaching materials in language class to increase learners' positive motivation towards language learning has always remained a challenge for the language pedagogues (Richards, 2001).This issue has further been intensified when it comes to the local context of the author due to the limited research initiatives attempted here. Apart from this, there are lots of misconceptions about the definition, selection and adaptation of authentic teaching materials among the language teachers. Due to this reason, the language teachers at the tertiary level in Bangladesh face the mammoth task of retaining students' motivation in classroom using authentic materials. Hence the objective of this paper is to find out whether the findings of similar studies conducted in English as Second Language (ESL) context worldwide can be replicated in the English as Foreign Language (EFL) context like Bangladesh.

The definitions of authentic materials vary due to the variations of literature and context. The most common of these definitions highlights the gist of the characteristics of authentic materials as 'exposure to real language and its use in its own community'. Rodgers et al. (1988) define the term authentic as an input as 'appropriate' and 'quality' in terms of goals, objectives, learner needs and interest and 'natural' in terms of real life and meaningful communication. Most of the proponents of this view define authentic input as teaching materials which are designed specifically for the native users. They [3], (Peacock, 1997) define authentic materials that are used to fulfill some social purposes in the language community; not for language teaching in classroom. Apart from this, the study has also exploited the definition of 'motivation' put forward as interest in and enthusiasm for the materials used in class; persistence with the learning task, as indicated by levels of attention or action for an extended duration; and levels of concentration and enjoyment (Peacock, 1997).

Authentic materials have further been defined as to give special emphasis on spoken and written language samples (Nunan, 1999). He defines authentic materials as spoken or written language data that has been produced in the course of genuine communication, and not specifically written for purposes of language teaching. In fact, in his teaching he encourages his students to bring into the classroom their own samples of authentic language data from "real-world" contexts outside of the classroom. They practice listening to and reading genuine language drawn from many different sources, including TV and radio broadcasts, taped conversations, meetings, talks, and announcements. They also read magazine stories, hotel brochures, airport notices, bank instructions, advertisements and a wide range of other written messages from the "real world" in situations as they occur.

Gebhard (1996) offers more examples of authentic teaching materials EFL/ESL teachers have used. Some of his examples, which may serve as source material for lesson planning, are shown below:

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1. Authentic Listening/Viewing Materials--TV commercials, quiz shows, cartoons, news clips, comedy shows, movies, soap operas, professionally audio-taped short stories and novels, radio ads, songs, documentaries, and sales pitches.

2. Authentic Visual Materials -- slides, photographs, paintings, children's artwork, stick-figure drawings, wordless street signs, silhouettes, pictures from magazines, ink blots, postcard pictures, wordless picture books, stamps, and X rays.

3. Authentic Printed Materials -- newspaper articles, movie advertisements, astrology columns, sports reports, obituary columns, advice columns, lyrics to songs, restaurant menus, street signs, cereal boxes, candy wrappers, tourist information brochures, university catalogs, telephone books, maps, TV guides, comic books, greeting cards, grocery coupons, pins with messages, and bus schedules.

4. Realia (Real world objects) Used in EFL/ESL Classrooms -- coins and currency, folded paper, wall clocks, phones, Halloween masks, dolls, and puppets, to name a few. (Realia are often used to illustrate points very visually or for role-play situations.)

Literature Review

Abundant volume of literature discusses ways and means of exploiting authentic materials in classroom teaching. Rodgers et al. (1988) claim the usage of authentic materials as mostly encouraging for both cognitive and affective purposes. Both the purposes of using authentic materials are quite relevant to this current study. In cognitive terms, it is argued that authentic materials provide the necessary context for appropriately relating form to meaning in the language acquisition process whereas in terms of effect, authentic texts/ inputs are regarded as motivators and as a means to overcome the cultural barrier to language learning [9]

Although there is a pedagogical tendency and argument in favour of authentic materials and learners' motivation available in the ELT circle around the globe, there exist very few explorative and experimental studies; unfortunately no such attempts have been found in the local context of the author. The study of authentic materials and its connection with learners' motivation has gained attention since the orientation of CLT approach in the language teaching enterprise since 1970s. M. Peacock (1997) for the first time conducted an experimental study in the form of a classroom research project to investigate whether authentic teaching materials increase classroom motivation of learners. He exploited the definition of motivation in its various components such as adopted learner interest, persistence, attention, action and enjoyment. He conducted his study among two-beginner level EFL class participants; one group was experimented with the authentic materials and the other with artificial teaching materials. He primarily used observation and survey questionnaire for this study. The findings of his study indicate that while on-task behaviour and observed behaviour of the learners increased significantly when authentic teaching materials were used whereas self-reported motivation only increased in the second half of the duration of the experiment.

Another study by Gonzalez (1990) on the issue of authentic teaching materials and learners' motivation has direct relevance with this current study. He studied the effect of authentic teaching materials on learners' attitude, motivation, and culture and language achievement. He collected 43 samples for his study from four different classes studying Spanish as foreign language. Her study ended up with the finding that there was no significant difference in learners' motivation when authentic materials were used Gonzalez (1990 p. 106), however the result was based on response to

only one question in one self-reported questionnaire. In addition, the opinions recorded in her teaching logs clearly demonstrated the learners' favourable reaction towards the usage of authentic materials due to its natural and real language input.

Sources, Selection and Adaptation of authentic Materials:

For fresh teachers, finding the right source and choosing the right type of materials suitable for his learners is always a challenging task. Gebhard's (1996) observation is very relevant in this connection. He mentioned the unlimited sources for teaching authentic materials. For many who live in countries where English is a foreign language, it is simply a matter of searching creatively. Teachers in urban areas of these countries can access authentic materials from cable TV, English language newspapers and magazines, and even from popular music on the radio. In large cities, modern grocery and department stores carrying imported products and the tourist industry such as hotels can offer useful authentic resources. Or else, during travel to English-speaking countries, teachers could pick up useful materials that could be adapted for their English lessons.

Differences between Authentic and Non-authentic materials

Porter and Roberts (1981) highlight several differences between authentic materials and non-authentic/ artificial teaching materials in terms of spoken language. For example, conversations recorded for language texts often have a slow pace, have particular structures which recur with obtrusive frequency, and have very distinct turn-taking of speakers. Also, hesitations (such as "uh's" and "mm's") are often missing, and sentences are very well-formed with few if any mistakes. In other words, what the language learners hear in class is different from the language in the real world. In many cases, the language heard in classrooms is a stilted use of spoken language, and authenticity is lost because of a need to teach specific language points in a way that some teachers feel would be more understandable for learners.

Research Design of the Study

For this study, the researcher adopted and replicated the experimental study conducted by M. Peacock (1997) and then justified whether the authentic teaching materials could be used among these EFL learners to enhance their positive motivation in language classroom. For this purpose, the researcher randomly chose tertiary level students from both public and private university for administering the survey questionnaire. In this connection, the researcher conducted a semi-structured interview with the ELT teachers having the experience of teaching the engineering learners. Apart from this, a two-tier classroom observation checklist was administered during class session.

Sample and population

Two hundred fifty undergraduate level learners were randomly chosen for survey. Out of them, 25 students were selected for the observation and 10 ELT teachers have been chosen for semi-structured interview and focused group discussion as primary samples for this study. Since this set of sample truly represents tertiary level learners, all undergraduate learners can be treated as the population for this study.

Data Collection Tool/s

As the study falls within the purview of social sciences research, apparently semi-structured interview, survey questionnaire and classroom observation checklist have been chosen as primary instruments for the data collection of this study. However the same classroom observation checklist was administered on two different occasions; one while using the artificial teaching materials and the other while experimenting with authentic teaching materials.

• Designing and Administering the Data Collection Tools

In case of the Survey Questionnaire (SQ), the researcher adopted the Likert Scale (1-low to 5-very high) to design the quantitative data collection instrument for this study. The questionnaire contains 15 items covering the various shades of motivation issues such as attention, likeness, dislikeness, comfortable/ uncomfortable, interested, reluctant etc. in connection with authentic teaching materials.

  - Classroom Observation Sheet (COS)
Classroom Observation Sheet was designed keeping the standard Classroom Observation Checklist (COC) criteria. Careful attention was given so that no relevant issues went missing in the present classroom observation tool. The COS comprised primarily of the same areas of motivation in connection with authentic teaching materials which were duly covered in the survey.

  - Semi-structured Interview
A semi-structured interview was designed in advance complying with the items and issues addressed in the survey and classroom observation checklist. The interview questions consisted of the same areas of motivation that were covered in the survey and COS.

All these research instruments were then duly piloted to see if there was any redundancies in the items, to see the nature of the responses from the target samples and if at all there was any scope for further improvement of the internal consistency and reliability of the study tools before final administration. It must be acknowledged that the piloting and final administration of the tools was conducted in the existing and random and natural setting and hence there was no biasness involved in the study.

Method/s of Data Analysis

At the end of the data collection procedure, the data was analyzed using repeated Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) and Multivariate Analysis of Covariance (MANCOVA) (Huberty, J. C & Martha D. P. 2000), Correlation studies as well as descriptive statistics such as overall mean score. Repeated multi-variance applied to see whether and to what extent there exist variations and similarities of effect between the usage of artificial and authentic teaching materials in class and in what way the authentic teaching materials have significant impact on the learners' positive motivation in the pedagogic context.

Data Collection and Analysis

The aim of the study was to cross check whether the experimental study conducted by M. Peacock (1997) that hypothesized the significant role of authentic teaching materials vis-a-vis the tailored or artificial teaching materials to be replicated in the local context of the author. Hence the specific research objective of this study was to verify whether the on-task behaviour, observed motivation and self-reported motivation would increase/ decrease significantly as it proved significantly effective in case of Peacock (1997). In this connection, data was collected over a period of three-week (10 times in each class on 20 different sessions/days). Since the study design did not have any space for control group which is a common trend in experimental study, the researcher used both artificial and authentic teaching materials every day in both classes to observe whether the new types of study materials had any impact on the learners' motivation level keeping with the same teacher and teaching methodologies.

During this period of experiment, both the sample classes were mostly engaged working in groups of 5 doing the similar types of group works though not exactly identical. Hence the daily activity consisted of a discussion in groups of 5 on a specific topic assigned to the samples.

For this present study, a piloting (Blaxter et al. 1998) was also done to increase the reliability and validity of the whole construct. Like the study referred, the main focus of the study at this pilot stage was to improve the internal construct of the data collection tools required to measure on-task behavior, overall class motivation and self-reported motivation of the participants. Three main data collections tools such as classroom observation sheet-1, classroom observation sheet-2 and self-report learner questionnaire were administered for this study. Since this attempt is more of an experimental study rather than a qualitative one, the COS-1 was used to measure the learners' on-task behavior in terms of quantity or number of scores such as '2' for learners when they were found 'on-task' and '1' when they were off-task. The observer/s kept entering the observed learners' score until all learners were observed following the same procedure 20times. In this manner, a whole class's "on task behavior percentage" for that particular day could then be calculated. 'In the same trend, Observation sheet-2, containing eight relevant items addressing the issues connected with motivation, was used to elicit and measure the sample participants' overall class motivation generated by the authentic materials in use as demonstrated by levels of learner interest, zeal, activity, diligence with the learning task, concentration and enjoyment during class. In the second observation sheet, each item was scored on a scale of one (low) to five (high). Observations were made while the activity using the authentic/ target teaching materials was drawing to a close. In this manner, a daily total score for each class of between 8 to 40 was thus produced. The final data collection tool was a highly structured, anonymous, self-report learner questionnaire which aimed to measure the levels of motivation generated during class by the teaching materials in use. The questionnaire specially focused and consisted of seven closed items on a semantic differential scale of adjectives expressing motivation (e.g. interesting, boring/enjoyable, unenjoyable etc.). Questionnaires were completed by the sample learners at the end of the daily activity so that they could use their experience of the benefits of authentic materials in classroom & give their opinions based on their experiential learning.

Each item scored from 1 to 5, making a total of from 7 to 35 for each complete questionnaire. From this total a class means score for the day was computed. The questionnaire was

designed in English (L2). However before the administration of the questionnaire, it was simplified before the learners to make them aware of its objective and to avoid further misunderstanding. Apart from this, any extempore query emerging from the context was also clarified. Hence there was no need for translating the questionnaire from L2 to Bengali (L1). In addition, qualitative data was collected through short interviews (three to five learners each day), designed to allow learners to give in their opinions in their own words on the teaching materials used that day.

The pilot study conducted on observation and survey items helped the researcher improve these data collection tools to detect any unforeseen pragmatic issues before finally using them. Further tests were carried out after the main study, during which a total of 20 hours class were observed and recorded and 40 each of observation sheets 1 and 2 were collected. In addition the researched also collected 250 learner questionnaires filled in by them at the end the activity with authentic materials in class along with the hand notes and summary of 25 student-interviews conducted on the spot. The sole purpose of using three different tools was to verify whether the learners' response was relevant and spontaneous.

The inter-rater reliability of observation sheet 1 was $r = 0.93$ ($p = 0.037$). This coefficient is based on correlation between the independent on-task and off-task frequency counts of a non-participant observer and the class teacher on five days of the pilot study. To assess inter-rater reliability, the whole class was videotaped on two consecutive days while the observation sheet 1 was filled in by the researcher. The aim of videotaping of the whole class was to ensure every single component of data collection in this context is not lost. Besides, when the researcher completed the observation sheets, he could cross check the responses and behavior of those participants by replaying the tape time and again. Hence the researcher believes these correlations are an indication of a high level of both inter-rater and intra-rater reliability.

The inter-rater reliability of observation for second sheet was $r = 0.87$ ($p = 0.0095$, $n = 9$). This coefficient of equivalence is based on correlation between the scores of a non-participant observer and the class teacher, who independently completed the exactly similar sheets during the week long pilot study. Additionally a half-split reliability check was carried out to check the internal consistency of the observation sheet, correlating totaled scores on items 1, 2, 3 and 7 against 4, 5, 6 and 8 over the week. The reliability for the overall research instrument was $r = 0.94$ ($p = 0.0046$) using the Spearman- Brown prediction formula (Carmines & Zeller, 1979) suggesting that a high level of both inter-observer and internal reliability occurred during the data collection in this study.

The evaluation of the internal reliability of the learner questionnaire was ensured during the main study through item analysis and a split-half reliability check both of which are essential method for improving the internal consistency of this instrument. Social studies and statisticians stipulate that as a rule, a value of at least 0.8 should be achieved for widely used instruments. In this way, correlations between scores for all items were computed, based on the 250 questionnaires forms successfully completed and duly collected. Significance levels were calculated $p < 0.001$ for correlations between all items. The split-half reliability check correlated total scores on odd items against even ones. The reliability for the complete tool was $r = 0.94$ ($p < 0.001$, $n = 250$) using the formulae mentioned, suggesting a high level of reliability.

Similarly all the data from observation sheets 1 and 2 and the learner questionnaires were analysed separately via repeated- measures multivariate analysis of variance, to investigate whether authentic teaching materials had a greater effect on motivation than artificial/traditional tailored teaching materials used in class.

Results and Discussion

Overall, learners were on task for 89% of the time when using authentic teaching materials, and 76% of the time when using artificial materials, a result indicating that authentic teaching materials significantly increased learners' performance when on task in classroom. The difference in mean percentages by type of materials was very significant at $p < 0.001$- that is there is less than one chance in a thousand that the difference between the findings of learners' behavior and performance in terms of motivation in class during the use of authentic materials and hence it did not occur by chance.

In case of figure 01, it shows a time-effect issue that there was an observable difference from the very first day of the study by type of teaching materials used in class. However it has become truly significant only from the second half of the study onwards which might also suggest that learners took time to adapt to the new perception of using authentic materials such as music and other audio clip for fill-in during listening, articles from newspaper, magazines and periodicals from the learners' area of profession and study, video clips such as movies, legendary speeches etc. used for teaching purpose. In addition, it further indicates that over time on-task behavior and relative performance decreased on the days when traditional and artificial teaching materials were used and on-task behavior and relative performance increased when authentic materials were used.
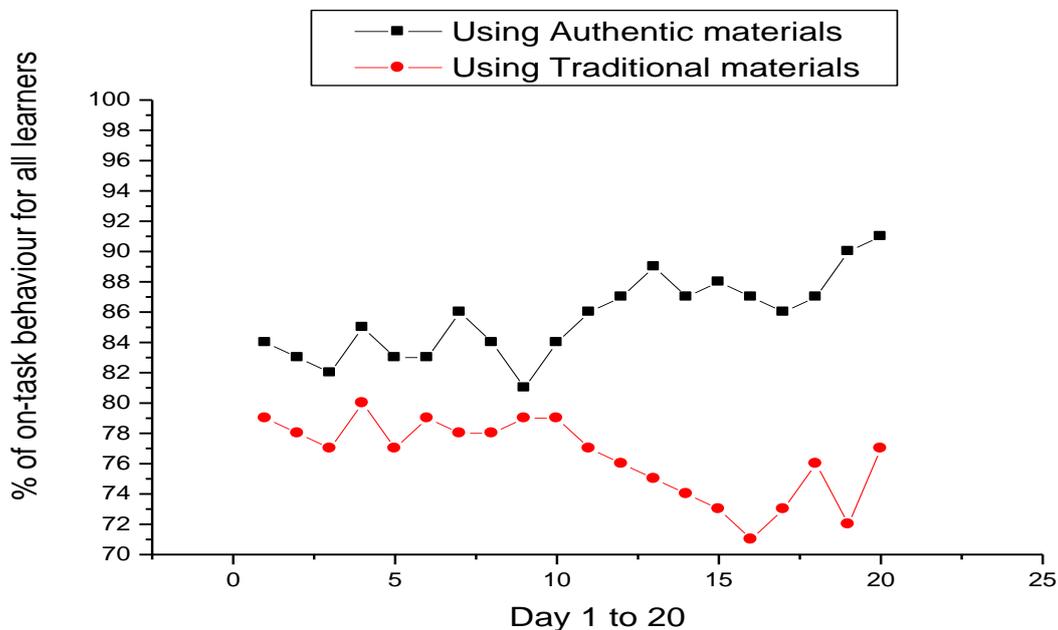

Figure. 01(Percentage of on-task behavior of all learners)

Similarly figure-02 indicates the findings for overall class motivation. The findings suggest that overall class motivation significantly increased specifically from the sixth day of the study onwards. In this case, the overall mean score for the experiment on authentic study materials is

30.85 (the highest value reading for a day- 36 and the lowest one -24) whereas the mean score for overall class motivation during the use of traditional teaching materials is 25.75 (the maximum individual day reading score -29 and minimum being 23). The difference is also observed between the standard deviations of the two types of teaching materials.
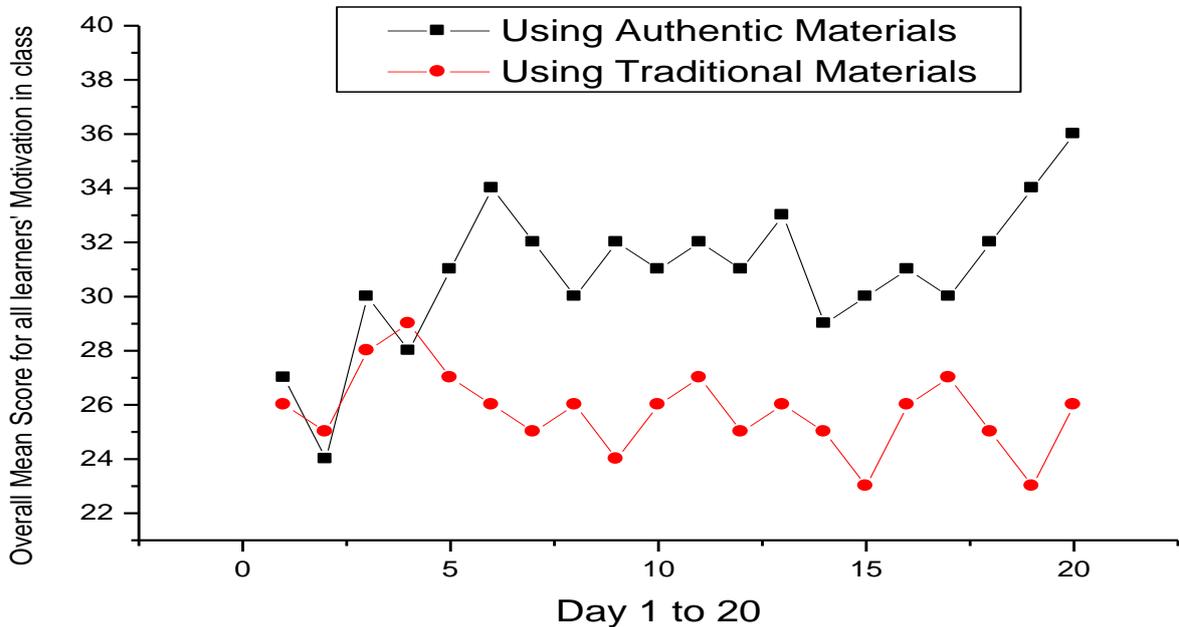

Figure-02 (Overall class motivation for all learners)

However the findings clearly suggest that the second and third weeks of the study was very significant as the learners started to become positively motivated towards the authentic teaching materials in classroom. Hence the difference in mean total scores was very significant at p < 0.001. The findings in case of overall class motivation brings out an element of surprise that it is the exact blueprint of the findings of on-task behavior of all learners. In this case as well, the difference by type of materials and its impact on learners; motivation becomes very prominent only after few days of keen observation from the part of the learners. The findings might suggest that the learners took time to adapt to the new type of teaching materials used in a new context.

For the survey, the learners' overall means score of the 250 sample participants took part in the questionnaire conducted from day 1 to 20 indicate a striking finding that there is no difference at all between the mean scores (authentic means score = 38.8 whereas artificial materials means score = 38.75 out of maximum 49) of all the sample learners for both types of teaching materials. i.e. authentic and artificial or traditional teaching materials. This difference between the impacts of using two types of teaching materials cannot be claimed statistically significant (p = 0.259, n = 250).

Figure 03 shows findings on the daily basis from the learners participated in the survey. Though the statistical findings suggest that there is no significant difference between the usage of two types of teaching materials to enhance the learners' motivation level as reflected in the overall opinions of the participants, the figures suggest something very interesting and relevant to this study. The figure generated through line-symbol graph clearly indicates that on day-01, there was no significant difference between the impacts of two types of materials as stated in the self-reported

questionnaire whereas the difference between the impacts of these materials started becoming significantly visible only from day 02 to 03. On day -04, the difference was not observed significant however the significant level of difference can be observed from day 05, 06, 07 and 08.
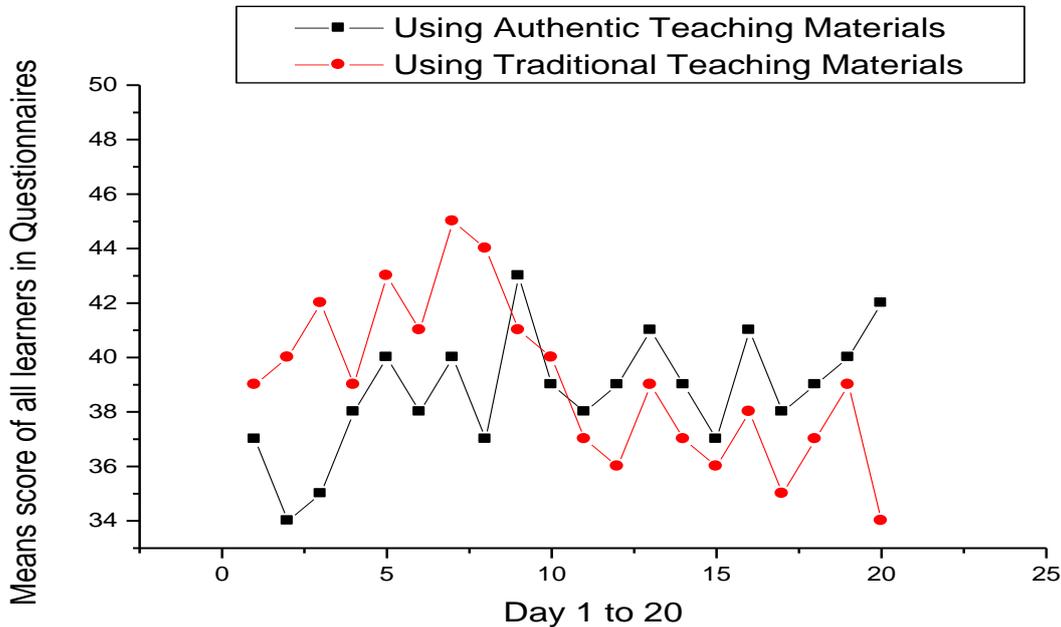

Figure-03 (learner motivation for two types of materials)

Interestingly on day -09, the mean score of authentic materials surpasses that of the artificial materials. Again on day 10 and 11, the difference is observed non-significant. From that day onwards the learners started finding the difference between the usage of authentic and artificial teaching materials. Hence the last nine days' findings seem to suggest that there is significant difference reflected in the participants' opinions stated in the self-reported questionnaire.

Overall findings from semi-structured interviews conducted with learners, open ended item response and ELT teachers' reflections on the use of authentic teaching materials to enhance learners' motivation against that of non-authentic materials also significantly supported the hypothesis in favour of using authentic teaching materials. The response from the interview was quite varied due the medium of conversation being English; otherwise the response would have been quite favourable.

Conclusion and Recommendation

In the light the of these findings, the researcher recommend that language teachers of adult EFL/ESL learners in Bangladesh context should be very careful in choosing, selecting, adapting and applying those resources in the classroom to fulfill their goal. They should try out appropriate authentic teaching materials in the classroom as they would increase learners' level of on-task behavior, concentration and engagement in the target tasks and activities more that the artificial materials. However unlike the findings of the survey for Peacock's study, the present study showed a significant difference of impact of authentic materials over artificial materials. In this experiment, most learners strongly recommended for the more use of authentic teaching materials in class rather than its counterpart. Hence the researcher claimed that the authentic teaching materials played a

significant role in positively motivating the learners in classroom compared to the artificial materials in the case of the present study. However this claim could not be generalized due to its small sample size and scopes as well as the low English language proficiency of the participant-learners as reflected in the open-ended items and semi structured interview. Nevertheless this study can be claimed a representative one in the context of tertiary engineering education in Bangladesh.

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ANNOUNCEMENT!

AN UPCOMING ISSUE

For an upcoming issue of IJELLS, it has been decided to focus on one of the prominent South African writers J M Coetzee, a 2003 recipient of Nobel Prize in Literature and has received much acclaim for this 'secretive author who made the outsider his art form'.

His works include, Essays in the form of two books, 'Inner Workings: Literary Essays, 2000–2005' & 'White Writing: On the Culture of Letters in South Africa', Letters, under the header 'Here and Now' and Novels

- Age of Iron
- Boyhood: Scenes from Provincial Life
- The Childhood of Jesus
- Diary of a Bad Year
- Disgrace
- Dusklands
- Elizabeth Costello
- Foe (novel)
- In the Heart of the Country
- Life & Times of Michael K
- The Lives of Animals
- The Master of Petersburg
- Slow Man
- Summertime (novel)
- Waiting for the Barbarians
- Youth: Scenes from Provincial Life II

Research articles are invited based on any of the works of Coetzee. The articles will be selected and published as a separate issue under IJELLS. The submissions are open now through December 2017. Extensions and further details will be shared soon.

The articles can be submitted as an email attachment to editor.ijells@gmail.com