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Indianized English in
Shashi Deshpande's *That Long Silence*

J. Sundarsingh, M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D.

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The language of Shashi Deshpande's *That Long Silence* is evaluated based on Braj B. Kachru's theory of Indianization and the finding unravels the inevitable truth that English language is no longer a foreign language but very much the language of Indian society. The study also confirms Deshpande's view that Indian expressions can be easily managed in English language. Especially women writers find themselves more comfortable while writing in English as they are free from cultural complications of their first language. Thus Shashi Deshpande is able to bring out the inner feelings of Indian male self and female self without any restriction of authorial self in her *That Long Silence*.

GENERAL PERSPECTIVE

Writing in English grants an Indian writer an advantageous position of distancing himself/herself from the readers so that he/she could express his/her views without any social, spiritual or personal inhibitions. However, India is known for cultural diversity as well as linguistic diversity, which result in disintegrated national identity of English language.

The primary function of a language is to facilitate effective communication. In Indian diverse society, if a person is successful in expressing himself in a particular language, it is his language, no matter whether it is his first language or second language. Whether it is formal situation or informal situation, some of the learned people in India get inclined to English

expressions more frequently. It is a familiar scene in regional TV shows, market places, booking counters and common places.

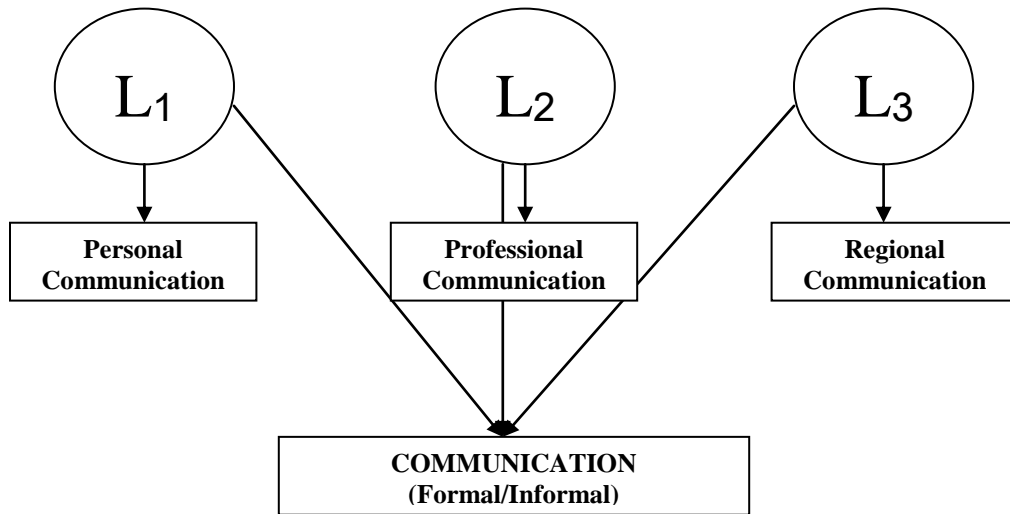
Shashi Deshpande says that she found herself comfortable in using English language for all of her expressions. However she admits that as a writer, she faces a lot of ‘problems and paradoxes’ of the English language in India (2003:65). It is interesting to note that she is still writing in English. Language is a vehicle that carries the load of one’s ideas and emotion and interests. Language is used in a way in which it is assimilated by the speaker. But in double-language or triple-language social system, it is difficult to ascertain which language carries more loads – either first or second or third. In the Indian context, the first language plays a vital role in sharing one’s intimate emotions, whereas the second language helps him to acquire more knowledge as it is the language of higher learning.

“There is a growing realization that English is needed to interact internationally in trade, industry, tourism, politics and higher education” (1998:2). Thus in India, languages are selected for expressions according to situations as the land has many regional languages. It may be either first language or second language or bilingual or third language.

For example, the people from Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Kerala are familiar with three languages, viz. their mother tongue, Hindi or the language of neighbouring state and English. In Tamil Nadu Hindi is still approached indifferently and hence English and neighbouring languages dominate more.

Similar situation prevails in North India wherein either three-language system or two-language system is followed. Hence it may be suggested that one’s first language (L_1) is used for expressing one’s personal ideas, second language (L_2) for professional ideas and another language

(L₃) to interact with the people of neighbouring/other states. The following diagram throws more light on the language situation in India.



As it is shown in the above diagram, the languages are primarily meant for communication and there is a possibility of using all of them in both formal and informal situations. In such a situation there is always a conflict among these languages in achieving prominence in usage and public recognition. At the same time there is a chance of one language interfering with another language. Thus language interference influences both the speaker and the language itself.

ENGLISH IN INDIAN FICTION

It is found that English in India is complicated contextually and its role in Indian fiction is yet to be explored effectively. While expressing her views on writing in English, Deshpande reveals that she has chosen English for her writing since it has come to her naturally (2003:65). She also adds that after having chosen English for her writing, she is concerned of her audience

who knows simple English. Thus she makes her characters speak the language of common men and women. G.V. Desani, a notable Indian writer describes his own stylistic experimentation in the following lines: “I have chosen the craft of writing. And my entire linguistic creed... is simply to find a suitable medium. I find the English language is that kind of medium. It needs to be modified to suit my purpose.” (quoted in Ann Lowry, “Style Range in New English Literature”, 1996:284).

There is another aspect of using English in Indian fiction. Indian writers are conscious of the speakers of English in their novels. The characters are both illiterate and educated. The writers are conscious of the characters and allow the characters to speak the language in their own way. In other words they make the characters speak English which has mother tongue interference. Ann Lowry in “Style Range in New English Literatures” says “All three authors (R.K. Narayan, Mulk Raj Anand and V.S. Naipaul) ... are quite capable of writing and speaking standard English, but this is not true of their fictional creations....” (1996:287). It is obvious that the standard of English gets altered to suit the local condition. At the same time English helps the authors to educate the Indian society and make it known to the world.

INDIANIZATION

This paper analyses *That Long Silence* based on Kachru’s examination of the linguistic aspects of the Indianization of the English language in India with special reference to his contextualization, Indianness and lexical innovations. “The Indianization of the English language is a consequence of what linguists have traditionally termed interference” (1983:1). As English has been used by Indians in Indian society for years, it is possible that the language gets Indianized or gets used to Indian society. As Raja Rao says:

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As long as we are Indian – that is not nationalists, but truly Indians of the Indian psyche – we shall have the English language with us and amongst us, and not as guest or friend, but as one of our own, of our caste, our creed, our sect and of our tradition (as quoted in 1983:2).

It is obvious that English affects the ‘thought life’ of Indians in a way that impacts his/her personal situation, professional situation and interpersonal situation. Kachru again says, “Indianisms in Indian English are, then, linguistic manifestations of pragmatic needs for appropriate language use in a new linguistic and cultural context” (1983:2).

Kachru is concerned of the outcome of the typical linguistic and contextual characteristics of the Indianization of the English language. Indian mind has been influenced by the language interference and its comprehension of the world and the expression of the worldview get Indianized as the idea is Indian and in the process English also gets Indianized.

Thus the process of Indianization is given prime importance in the linguistic study of Indian English. Kachru says that “the non-native varieties of English share a number of processes marking their non-nativeness in grammar, vocabulary and the use of rhetorical devices in various functional styles” (1983: 12). He also makes it clear that by stating Indianization”, he is not highlighting the ‘deviation’ but ‘providing’ “the clues for the identity of this variety of English through the Indian characteristics in Indian English at various linguistic levels.

CONFLICT BETWEEN INDIANIZATION AND WESTERNIZATION

In India there is always a conflict between Indianization of English and Westernization of English due to obvious reasons. The arrival of English in India is due to western invasion and its prolonged stay to the extent of claiming permanence is due to its ‘use’ in India. Deshpande, while representing Raja Rao’s statement regarding the realistic situation of English in India, says “that one has to express in a language that is not one’s own” (2003:71). Ruskin Bond expresses his

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view that English is flourishing in a better way in India only after Independence (quoted 1998:13). Yamuna Kachru, in her “Expanding Notices of English” says that English language in India is now considered “an equal of the indigenous languages of India” (1992:126). Raja Rao says: “We cannot write like the English. We should not. We can write only as Indians” (quoted 1998:16). In one’s native social setting, using a foreign tongue for communicative purpose always demands linguistic innovations and thus the structure of the language gets modified/alterd. Kachru calls such Indianism ‘deviations’ and highlights that “Indianism in Indian English are, then, linguistic manifestations of pragmatic needs for appropriate language use in a new linguistic and cultural context” (1983:2). Kachru also quotes P.E. Dustoor in the following lines to emphasize his point:

There will always be a more or less indigenous flavour about our English. In our imagery, in our choice of words, in the nuances of meaning we put into our words, we must be expected to be different from Englishmen and Americans like (Quoted Kachru, 1983:4)

J.R. Firth, considering the most complicated cultural and linguistic problems, has had his own reservations on the standard of Indian English. The same view is shared by most of the prominent British and American linguists. Though he puts forth a warning for those who advocate “Indian English”, Kachru realizes that by 1964 English was already Indianized (1983:8). It was soon realized that English will continue influencing ‘thought life’ of Indians and their social behaviour. The tendency to project Indian culture through Indian writing for International familiarity and recognition will continue to tempt the Indian creative writers to attempt their expression through ‘English language’. Satish C. Aikant suggests in his “English in India: The Discursive Formation”, that Indian writing in English paves the way for bringing together English and other regional languages in India and thereby ‘English as one of the Indian languages’ and ‘Indian writing in

English as subcategory of Indian literature' can be validated more strongly (Ram Sewak Singh and Charu Sheel Singh, ed. 1997: 1 &16).

AUTHORIAL POINT OF VIEW

Deshpande's views on English in Indian context are positively affirmed here due to two specific reasons. First her stance reflects the linguistic viewpoints of Kachru (the model used for present study), Raja Rao, Yamuna Kachru, Omar N. Koul, Jean D'Souza, Mehrotra and others. Secondly, the researcher would like to evaluate her work in the light of her 'mind style' "that most of us use the language (English Language) as our own, we are neither daunted by its foreignness, nor compelled to use it the way the British do" (2003:76). She states categorically that this language is under her (creative writer) control and enables her to express the realities comfortably. As far as the status of English in the present scenario, she says:

"It is no longer the preserve of the elite or the upper-middle classes, of the administrator and the scholar; it has penetrated much deeper into Indian society and is being enthusiastically embraced by more varied classes and kinds of people" (2003:64)

In this context, the researcher would like to quote the words of Jean D'Souza to support the general claim of Indianness in English Writing in India. He says, " It is only when academics take the time to listen to the voices of ordinary Indians that we will begin to understand the place of English in the country and the role it plays in the lives of the aam janta (common people)" (World Englishes, p. 145). To link his views with Deshpande's, the following is quoted from her essays:

Not only is the language my tool, the language, as it is spoken in our country, is what some of my characters will be speaking; it is also the language all my readers will be familiar with"(2003:64)

She says that her choice of English for fiction writing does not alter her position in the society. Instead her writing in English is modified according to the needs of her society. She, nevertheless, admits that writing in English has its own difficulties as the novelists go through the intricacies of human lives and express the details of every day living. However “there is no sense of being traitors to our real selves when we express ourselves in English, because this English speaking self is one part of our Indian identity” (2003:76). Language has the tendency to reflect its own culture, but it is doubtful whether the profundity of the culture can be expressed through English language.

Deshpande makes it clear that she has chosen English not to deal with the ‘external culture’ but to describe, as her first priority, the ‘internal landscape’ of the relationships between men and women and in the process to bring “the language and the Indian milieu comfortably together (2003:77). She is curious to know, like experts who closely observe the climatic changes of English language in India, “whether our writers will be able to develop an English which can be entirely our own, a language which we can feel comfortably sure will be able to convey the truth – both the small truths and the great one – of our lives, language that will carry our real voices, yet be neither comical or absurd” (2003: 80)

English can be considered one of the Indian languages, keeping in mind its four hundred years of stay in India and its dominant role in the lives of the most influential Indian middle-class and upper class people. Moreover an expression in the language is treated more refined and acceptable in Indian society. Besides, writing in English is more advantageous as the “language gives an element of freedom from the taboos and conventions that bind women in their mother tongue.... There is often a sense of being judged as a person for the things the writer says, a sense of being scrupulously scrutinized”. (The Writing, P.77)

Deshpande further justifies her writing in English saying that she is basically a story-teller and her concern is for the lives of men and women. She is able to express well in English, though it is being influenced by mother tongue (Ibid., p. 75 & 78). She goes on to reveal her mind in this context, concerning the kind of language she wants to evolve:

As for me, I am a story-teller. Language is my tool and I want the best language I can use, like a cook needs the best ingredients. Ultimately, however it is the medium through which my story has to reach the reader. The best compliment I have had from a reader – and one who was a writer at that – was, “I thought I was reading a Marathi book when I was reading your novel. (2003: 81)

Hence it is very clear that the novelist is for Indianization of English language. In this context Kachurian model of Indianization is applied to evaluate the language of *That Long Silence* briefly.

TRANSLATIONS

By ‘translation’ Kachru means transferring Indianism into L₂ by either ‘rank-bound’ or ‘rank-shifted’ translation of L₁ item. The following are some of the interesting translation items from Indian language.

Title of the Novel: Indian sentence structure is found in the title:

That Long Silence

Hindi: Vah Lambi Khamoshi
Tamil: Andha Neenda Amaidhi

Other Items:

Whose father’s what goes
Chest beating
Child widow

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Bare table
House-proud woman
High steel bed
Straw mat
Oiled heads
Garbage strewn
Life-bearing
That upstairs uncle

REDUPLICATION OF WORDS

Kachru says 'reduplication' of words is found among Englishes other than American and British English (1983:12). In Indian context such 'function words' are found frequently in the same way it is said to be found in Kenyan English or Malaysian English (quoted Kachru, 1983:12). This is a typical repetition found in Deshpande's writing. It is due to mother tongue interference of the characters who are typically Indian. The following expressions reveal the way in which they use their L₁. This style makes the language appear more Indianized. Deshpande's aim is to make the Indian readers feel at home reading her text (Writing, 2003:78). The following instances make it confirmed that she had achieved her objective:

'Yes, yes, of course, two daughters.(165)

Yes, yes...yes, I'm holding on.'(170)

'Yes, yes, go ahead, that's right, don't change your plans, the fourteenth is fine, yes, yes, yes...'(174)

'Don't, don't,' I cried out again, but it was no use; they could neither see me nor hear me. (175)

'You don't understand, you don't understand anything,' Rahul cried out.(131)

'No, no, don't.'(135)

No, no, why did I have to bring Appa into this?(150)

'No, no, not at all.(165)

No, no, this was nonsense - my 'writer's imagination' running away with me.(167)

No, no, no.... come home, I said.Rahul, listen, I'm in the Dadar flat, in Dadar, Makarandmama's place, Dadar... Rahul come home...'(172)

No, no, behnji, better to have a son.'(28)
'I can't remember, I don't remember, no, no, no....'(116)
No, no, that one...(119)
'No, no, don't, I'll be all right.'(135)

'Mummy, Mummy' - somewhere I could hear a child's cries, somewhere a cooker was hissing angrily, but none of these sounds was real, they had nothing to do with me(125)
'Mummy, Mummy' ...I could still hear Rahul's shrill cry.(172)

'Raam naam satya hai, Raam naam satya hai.(124)

'Cheating, cheating' I wanted to cry out, the way we had as children when we knew we were going to be defeated.(121)

REGIONAL TERMS

Contextual restrictions are made by some of the kinship and neutral relationships and hence regional terms are used to indianize the expressions in English language. Exact English substitution for this mode of address is possible and it is profusely used in the present text as the story is based on Indian context. It may be noted a few items which are given under certain headings are already found in the glossary of the text with explanation. But the list given here is more exhaustive and meant for Indianization of English language. Hence they are presented under various heads (Kachurian model).

Kinship Address:

The following Indianized mode of address is found in the text. These items make the text appear more Indian than English.

S.No.	Kinship Item	Addresser	Addressee
1.	<i>Ai</i>	Jaya	Mother
2.	<i>Ajji</i>	Jaya	Grandmother

3.	<i>Anna</i>	Mohan	Father
4.	<i>Avva</i>	Prema	Mother
5.	<i>Dada</i>	Jaya	Elder Brother
6.	<i>Ma</i>	Nilima	Mother
7.	<i>Mai</i>	Nilima	Grandmother
8.	<i>Bai (Madam)</i>	Danu (Male Servant)	Jaya
9.	<i>Tai (Sister)</i>	Manda(Servant)	Jaya
10.	<i>Behnji(Sister)</i>	Nayana (Servant)	Jaya
11.	<i>Appaji</i>	Revati	Vasant (Father)
12.	<i>Monanna</i>	Vasant/Sudha	Mohan(Elder Brother)
13.	<i>Atya</i>	Jaya	Savitiri(Father's sister)
14.	<i>Jayatai</i>	Ravi	Jaya (Elder sister)
15.	<i>Kaka</i>	Jaya	Uncle(Father's Brother)
16.	<i>Kaki</i>	Jaya	Aunty(Uncle's wife)
17.	<i>Mama</i>	Jaya	Uncle(Mother's Brother)
18.	<i>Mami</i>	Jaya	Aunty(Uncle's wife)
19.	<i>Saheb</i>	Jeeja (Servant)	Mohan (Master/Sir)
20.	<i>Lekrus</i>	Jeeja	Grandchildren

Use of Regional Terms:

The following regional terms are used in the text:

Marwari
Sigree
Chawl
Hindi-chini bhai bhai
Tonga
Dhoti
Kaajal
Goondas
Paisa
Chal

Use of Hindu Mythology:

Frequent reference is made to Hindu mythology to refer to the traditional notions of women in Indian society. She uses all the mythological characters for ironical effect in the novel.

S.No.	Mythological Characters	Contextual Significance (Ironical implications)
1.	<i>Maitreyee</i> – (Knows her aim in life)	Jaya does not know her aim in life
2.	<i>Yajnavalkya</i> – (Allows woman free choice)	Mohan does not allow free choice
3.	<i>Gandhari</i> – (Bandaged her eyes because her husband was blind)	Jaya closes her eyes to whatever Mohan does
4.	<i>Dasarath</i> – (symbol of retribution)	Jaya fears her punishment of Mohan leaving her
5.	<i>Sita</i> – (faithful wife)	Jaya faithfully following her husband into hiding due to her husband's wrongdoing
6.	<i>Savitri</i> – (faithful wife)	Jaya faithfully following her husband into hiding due to her husband's wrongdoing
7.	<i>Draupadi</i> – (faithful wife)	Jaya faithfully following her husband into hiding due to her husband's wrongdoing

Regional beliefs, Customs, Caste and Religion:

There are many Indian terms used to reveal the belief system, religion and custom of the people of India.

Sacred cow
Tulsi puja
Raam naam Satya hai
Purity rituals
Padre
Kartalika
Kumkum
Haldi
Diwali
Brahmin
Moksha
Mudras
Ganapati festival
Yathe cchasi tatha kuru
Ghost
Mangala-Gouri puja

Food Items:

The following Indian food items are transferred into English as given below:

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Battatawada
Chapatties
Dal
Chutney
Bhakries
Puri bhaji
Shira
Ladoos
Bhajias
Samosas

CONTEXTUAL DEVIATIONS

Collocations in the Indian context are said to be deviant from L₁ and are called collocational deviations. In the novel, the following collocations are made. The present study is restricted to Indian context and also to the usage of English by characters only. Though Kachru's 'lexical innovation' deals with broader aspect of South Asian English, certain linguistic aspects are used for present study.

Collocations:

The basic concepts of collocational deviation taken for the present evaluation is based on the context in the novel. Kachru suggests two basic concepts of collocational deviations. The first variety is the collocation of L₁ items for L₂ context (Type I) and secondly collocation of L₁ and L₂ varieties for L₂ context (Type II). The varieties found in the novel are given below:

Type I	Type II
<i>beaten rice</i> <i>chest beating</i> <i>child-widow</i> <i>confined animal</i> <i>dirt-cheap</i> <i>dying fire</i> <i>female complaint</i> <i>female operations</i> <i>house warming</i>	<i>ceremonial occasions</i> <i>kumkum stains</i> <i>other-Ajji</i> <i>Padre school</i> <i>puja things</i> <i>purity rituals</i> <i>sacred cow</i> <i>sacred thread</i> <i>turmeric-dyed thread</i>

<i>house-proud woman</i> <i>life-bearing</i> <i>lunch-carrier man</i> <i>motherly breast</i> <i>non-Matric</i> <i>oiled heads</i> <i>self-mortification</i> <i>shaven widow</i> <i>straw mat</i> <i>tea things</i>	<i>upper caste</i> <i>woven-leaf plate</i>
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Derogatory Expressions

It may be difficult to describe something embarrassing in one's own language in Indian context. Such expressions are impossible in public situations for women and L₂ gives them freedom to express whatever they want to say. The narrator expresses without any compunction the 'dirt' of human life and living. The following are some of the examples from the novel:

*For I'm not writing of all those innocent young girls I've written of till now; girls who **ultimately mated themselves** with the right men. Nor am I writing a story of a callous, insensitive husband and a sensitive, suffering wife (1)*

*She had begun wearing a sari when she was barely thirteen, pulling the end of it scrupulously round her shoulders, covering herself fully, as if to hide her **barely perceptible breasts** from possibly lecherous males (21).*

*'And never mind if their **bottoms are exposed**, 'Appa had laughed. 'As long as the intruder doesn't know **whose bottom it is**, they feel safe' (51).*

*A nauseating whiff of **human excreta** came to me from the road bordering the slums (55).*

INDIAN CONTEXTS

Kachru's 'transfer of context' makes a mention that the culture (C₁) of L₁ users can be transferred into L₂ and in the process L₂ get Indianized. Since *TLS* deals with middle class and its attachment with lower class, the whole text appears contextually Indian. Certain terms and

descriptions can be understood only by those who are familiar with Indian society and systems. Deshpande has pictured the Indian family, men and women and society using Indianized English which can be appreciated for its literal and linguistic values only by Indian readers and scholars. A few selected examples are given below from *TLS*:

Indian Middle Class Families

In the following passages the typical Indian middle class families are shown with a right lexical selection and appropriate sentence construction. The context of situation is used for ‘westernization of Indian society/culture’. Deshpande says “The most important factor is that language is culture specific” (2003: 69) and hence the cultural overtone is transparent in the following passages.

Well-educated, hard-working people in secure jobs, cushioned by insurance and provident funds, with two healthy, well-fed children going to good schools (5).

Life would go on for us as before, punctuated by dreary quarrels, the children's successes and failures, their estrangement from each other, from us, our resentment and bitterness, old age for us, perhaps widowhood for me - this was our future. Nothing else was possible for people like us (4).

Stay at home, look after your babies, keep out the rest of the world, and you're safe (17).

Ajji, a shaven widow, had denuded herself of all those things that make up a woman's life. She had no possessions, absolutely none, apart from the two saris she wore. Her room was bare, except for the large bed on which my grandfather had slept, a bed which, ever since I knew it, was unburdened by a mattress (26).

Don't forget, he keeps the kumkum on your forehead. What is a woman without that?' (53)

LEXICAL INNOVATIONS

Deshpande makes use of innovations to form lengthy compound words and collocations with one word as synonym of the subsequent word. The following examples reveal the striking Indianization in Deshpande's writing

Lengthy Compound Words

The following compound words are found in her novel. Except three noun forms, all the other words are used as adjectives in sentences. It is interesting to find that the Kachurian 'rank-reduction' method is applicable in the formation of the following compounds:

Putting-up-with-Jaya's-strangeness face
Non-Matric
Battles-within-families (N)
Stooping-forwards-from-the-hip walk
Last-before-going-to-bed visit
Sharp-as-a-needle Shaila
Easier-to-live-with invention
So-much-desired flat
God-knows-what (N)
Looking-exactly-alike, ramshackle, drab buildings
God-knows-where(N)
Elder-sister-of-your-husband's look
Looking-after-others, caring-for-others women
Driving-on-to-madness contracting
Raring-to-go vehicles
Swaddled-in-a-sari bundle
Head-of-the-family manner
Holding-his-breath air

Sounds as Words

Transferring sounds into words is also common among Indian languages and Indian English. The following are some of the sounds in the novel:

Clang, clang, clang
Tick-tocked

Chum chum
Mau, mau
Tramp, tramp
Shoo
Tch, tch
Blah blah blah
Shoo-shooed

Unusual Collocations

The collocations are the set of words that go together. But here in the novel it is found that there are certain words that go together, as they are synonymously repetitive. The set of collocations used in the novel makes a 'revelation' of the style of Deshpande. She is very much an Indian author writing about Indian life in Indian English. The following examples speak for themselves:

acrid pungency(134)
Blankness.Nothingness(66)
born failures, born losers (45)
calculated and premeditated(101)
caressing and fondling(111)
casual or light-hearted(15)
cosy, comfortable(91)
disinterested. Indifferent(5)
dogged tenacity(42)
dolorous melancholy(26)
easy, facile(117)
filth and squalor(42)
for disaster, for a catastrophe(30)
hesitant, wavering, uncertain(15)
inept, bumbling(101)
love and romance(95)
malice nor meanness(109)
Matter-of-fact, prosaic(69)
nagging persistence(50)
nasty, mean(68)
neurotic, hysterical(147)
no more apprehension, no more fears.(30)

prying, curious(106)
pungent, acrid(36)
Raging, furious(81)
rambling inconsequential(163)
remote and detached(155)
The stillness, the silence(24)
trapped, confined(26)
vague and nebulous(91)
won victory(45)

CONCLUSION

The study reveals the effectiveness of English usage in Shashi Deshpande's *That Long Silence*. Thus the study makes a revelation that English language is very much an Indian language or rather an Indianized language. The selection of lexical items and the cultural overtones in Shashi Deshpande's novel reveal the significant characteristics of Indianized English.

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