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## **Impact of Gandhian Ideology on Indian English Novelists**

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**Abstract**

This paper is an initiative to study the impact of Gandhian ideology on Indian English writers in twentieth century colonial India. The pioneer of Indian Independence struggles Mahatma Gandhi not only fought for India's freedom but also Indians' freedom from poverty, injustice, inequality, untouchability and other evil practices. Gandhi had a lasting influence on Indian English writers such as Mulk Raj Anand, Raja Rao, R. K. Narayan. These writers were influenced by Gandhian philosophy of truth and Non-Violence and translated his philosophy into their classic novels such as Mulk Raj Anand's *The Sword and the Sickle* and *Untouchable*, R. K. Narayan's *Waiting for the Mahatma* and Raja Rao's *Kanthapura*. In R K Narayan's *Waiting for the Mahatma*, Gandhi has been portrayed as the dominant motif. Mulk Raj Anand's Novels reveal the deep influence of Gandhian ideology. His first novel *Untouchable* depicts a reality of distinction between the people of India on the basis of caste inequality. Gandhi came as savior for millions of oppressed and downtrodden Indians.

**Keywords:** Gandhian ideology, Indian Writing in English, Mulk Raj Anand, R. K. Narayan, Raja Rao, inequality, ideology, principles, oppressed.

Indian English writers of twentieth century colonial India are supposed to be the ambassadors of Mahatma Gandhi, his ideology and of course his struggle to get India free. Writers such as Raja Rao, R. K. Narayan and Mulk Raj Anand through their novels and short stories spread the message of Mahatma Gandhi. These writers were instrumental in infusing the sense of 'nationalism' through their writings. They vehemently followed the Gandhian philosophy of life best on Non-Violence, Satyagraha, Love, Simplicity, social evils etc. They got their inspiration from Gandhi and compared his philosophy to Marxism and Freudian philosophy of life. All these writers adopted Gandhian ideology and they sought motivating moral force in Gandhi.

R. K. Narayan's novel *Waiting for the Mahatma* published in 1955 is all about the entry of Mahatma Gandhi in Indian freedom struggle. Although the novel came up in 1955, the events narratives and characters make us acknowledge as a Gandhian novel. Narayan presents Gandhi as one of the characters in this novel. The struggles, political characters, and

philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi have been elaborately presented in the novel. Undoubtedly the novel is based on the love affair of Bharti and Sriram but with the development of the novel we find Gandhian philosophy throughout. The novel establishes a correlation between the common Indians and the champions of Indian struggle movement Gandhi and his contemporaries.

The novel opens up with the introduction of Sriram and Bharti. This is the initial stage of the novel. Further progress develops and intertwines their relation with Gandhian philosophy and their involvement in freedom movement. This is seen as Gandhi's influence on mass. Not only Bharti-Sriram but also the self-centred Municipal Chairman, Natesh Kumar finds himself following the path of truth and Non-Violence in his speech. Natesh Kumar joins a public meeting at Nallappa's Grove in Malgudi where he is deeply influenced by Gandhi's call of following Non-Violence to force the British to leave India. Such was the impact of Gandhian ideology during the independence struggle movement. Natesh Kumar is stunned to know that Gandhi urges Indians to avoid any sort of hatred against the British. This is the unique methodology of Mahatma Gandhi which he adopted throughout movements- Non-Cooperation Movement, Dandi March, Champaran Movement, Khilafat Movement and finally 'Quit India Movement'. Gandhi's main focus was to avoid any sort of violence. This was the greatest strength the Mahatma had. Bharti and Sriram join him in this cause. Another revolutionary step which Gandhi took was the call for abolition of the caste system Indian society. He was not only a freedom fighter but also a social reformer against all evil practices prevalent in the society. Through Non-Violence, Gandhi meticulously brought people together at a single platform to struggle for Indian independence:

“Presently Mahatmaji ascended the platform and Sriram hastily took his eyes off the ladies and joined in the hand clapping with well-timed devotion and then in the singing of *Raghupati Raghav Raja Ram*. After that Gandhi spoke on non-violence and explained how it could be practiced in daily life. 'It is a perfectly simple procedure provided you have faith in it. If you watch yourself you will avoid all actions, big or small, and all thoughts, however obscure, which may cause pain to another [...] 'When someone has wronged you or has done something which appears to you to be evil, just pray for the destruction of that evil. Cultivate an extra affection for the person and you will find that you are able to bring about a change in him. Two thousand years ago, Jesus Christ meant the same thing when he said, 'Turn the other cheek'” (Narayan 21).

Gandhi himself became an epitome and semblance of simplicity. He did menial jobs such as cleaning the sewage and toilet, washing his cloth himself and making his own cloth using the handloom popularly known as 'Charkha'. He visited famine- hit villages near Malgudi which generated the ray of hope of hundreds of suffering farmers. He was highly opposed to the caste system and untouchability. Sriram has presented his views in the following words:

“When Mahatmaji spoke of untouchability and caste, Sriram reflected, 'There must be a great deal in what he says. We always think we are superior people. How Granny bullies that ragged scavenger who comes to our house every day to sweep the backyard!' Granny was so orthodox that she would not let the scavenger approach nearer than ten yards, and habitually adopted a bullying tone while addressing him. Sriram also took a devilish pleasure in joining the baiting and finding fault with the scavenger's work, although he never paid the slightest attention to their comments. He simply went about his business, driving his broom vigorously and interrupting himself only to ask, 'When will master give me an old shirt he promised so long ago?’ (Narayan 22).

This shows the concern Gandhi had for the Harijans. All these things inspired Sriram and hundreds of thousands of other Srirams all over India which helped Gandhi successfully lead the freedom movement. This impacted on common Indians so much so that they even stopped buying English biscuits. They started rebuking the Indian shopkeepers for selling English goods:

“Have you no sense of shame?’ Sriram asked.

‘Why, why what is the matter?’ the other said, taken aback and then said,

‘Hey, give me the money for what you took and get out of here. You are a fellow in *khadi*, are you? Oh! Oh! I didn’t notice. And so, you think you can do what you like, talk as you like, and behave like a rowdy’.

‘You may say anything about me, but don’t talk of this dress. It is – it is – too sacred to be spoken about in that way’ (Narayan 91).

R K Narayan has presented Gandhi who becomes a source of inspiration and a ray of hope and support for millions of destitute and socially neglected people. *Waiting for the Mahatma* has been presented in a fictitious form in which twenty century colonial India has been depicted. R K Narayan has successfully popularised the real Mahatma Gandhi, the advocate who came from South Africa to fight against the injustice to the Indians by the British through his fictitious Gandhi, a character of his novel *Waiting for the Mahatma*. Sriram and Bharti relation has been presented as a tool to present the greater message of the novel-the political situation of colonial India.

Another luminary of Indian English writer is Raja Rao, who was the contemporary of R K Narayan. His first novel *Kanthapura* was published in 1938. In this novel there are three types of experience that have been mentioned - the political, the religious and the social. Throughout the novel there is an imprint of Gandhian thought and his struggle for freedom of India. Unlike *Waiting for the Mahatma* there is no character as Gandhi in Raja Rao’s *Kanthapura* but Gandhi’s virtual presence, his thoughts and a large number of his ideological comrades are present in the novel. This novel is all about rural India here an obscure Indian

village Kanthapura being influenced by the Gandhian ideology and the cause of Indian freedom. The protagonist of the novel is a young villager called Moorthy, who is highly influenced by Gandhi. In his Introductory note to *Kanthapura*, C.D. Narasimhaiah mentions the following points:

“The impact of Gandhi on our villages was the impact of a dynamic religion through one of its supreme practitioners; of idealism and a sense of purpose and urgency on a people who had virtually ceased to live, with resignation writ large on their faces. It was Gandhi’s greatness that he produced hundreds of little Gandhis throughout the country” (Narasimhaiah x).

Moorthy, an ardent follower of Gandhi and his philosophy, joins the movement at the very young age. He is highly convinced of the Gandhian ideology of truth and Non-Violence. The novel *Kanthapura* is not only about the struggles of Mahatma Gandhi to make India from the brutal regime of the British but also Gandhi’s concept of how to cater to the intricate problems of persisting poverty, illiteracy and inequality in the society. Gandhiji, undoubtedly led Indian independence movement but after reading *Kanthapura* and even Gandhi’s own autobiography I am constrained from my opinion that Gandhi Ji worked much more for the upliftment of the socio, economic cultural and political state of rural India. His endeavour to consolidate rural economy by promoting Khadi and village industry is a testimony to my opinion. According to Raja Rao Gandhi Ji was highly opposed to the addiction of toddy and liquor by the common rural folk. His appeal was taken as a word of the God. The people of Kanthapura and its periphery started swearing in his name not to touch toddy and liquor. Common folk songs were written by the people:

“Our king, he was born on a wattle- mat,  
He’s not the king of the velvet bed,  
He’s small and he’s round and he’s bright and he’s sacred,  
O, Mahatma, Mahatma, you’re our king, and we are your slaves.

White is the froth of the toddy, toddy,  
And the Mahatma will turn poison into nectar clear,  
White will become blue and black will become white,  
Brothers, sisters, friends and all,  
The toddy-tree is a crooked tree.  
And the toddy milk is scorpion milk,  
O king, O king, when will you come?” (Rao 197).

All these reflect Gandhi’s impact on Indian people and Indian English writers. Raja Rao is among them. In *Kanthapura*, we find an impact of Gandhian ideology in the writings of Raja Rao so much so that he has presented Gandhi as a social reformer. And these movements by Gandhi helped him achieve his dual target of making India free by bringing people of every

walk of life together at a single platform of nationalism and improving the financial, social and political condition of rural India.

Thus, *Kanthapura* practically impacts people of rural India to shun all evil practices, join hands to fight for a greater cause, accept Gandhi ji as their saviour which ultimately empowered Gandhi to lead the independence movements successfully.

Another prolific Indian English novelist Mulk Raj Anand was also a promoter of Gandhian ideology. His novel *Untouchable* has a great impact of Gandhian ideology of untouchability, its root, its impact on the society and Gandhi's parallel struggle to dispel all such evil from the society have been elaborately mentioned in it. *Untouchable* is also about social inequality based on casteism. The pangs of the protagonist of the novel Bakha vividly represents millions of destitute downtrodden of India. Mulk Raj Anand has presented the atrocities of Hindu Brahmin towards the Dalits. They called them 'untouchable' which ignited Mulk Raj Anand to be the voice of millions of 'untouchables' as called by the Hindu Brahmins. According to Anand upper caste Hindu Brahmin exploited the untouchables and even Bakha's sister Sohni was molested by the priest of the village temple. Anand records a famous speech of Mahatma Gandhi in which he talks about the rights of untouchables:

“As you all know, while we are asking for freedom from the grip of a foreign nation, we have ourselves, for centuries, trampled underfoot millions of human beings without feeling the slightest remorse of our iniquity. For me the question of these people is moral and religious” (Anand 136).

Bakha being an unlettered downtrodden Indian couldn't understand what Gandhi wanted to say about untouchability and what was his vision for these neglected Indians. Gradually Bakha got to understand that Gandhi was his saviour.

“I regard untouchability,' the Mahatma was saying, 'as the greatest blot on Hinduism. This view of mine dates back to the time when I was a child” (Anand 137).

Now Bakha realises that there is someone who raises his voice in favour of Bakha and his community. He is highly impressed with the speech of Gandhi when the latter clearly announces:

“Two of the strongest desires that keep me in the flesh are the emancipation of the Untouchables and the protection of the cow” (Anand 140).

Bakha's respect for Gandhi dwindles after the famous advocate and poet N.N. Bashir is critical of Gandhi and his ideology. Later on, Bashir acknowledges the Gandhian way of life and comes in favour of Gandhian ideology:



“He has his limitations, but he is fundamentally sound. He may be wrong in wanting to shut India off from the rest of the world by preaching the revival of the spinning-wheel, because, as things are, that can’t be done. But even in that regard he is right. For it is not India’s fault that it is poor; it is the world’s fault that the world is rich!...” (Anand 142).

To conclude I am of the opinion that Gandhi left a lasting imprint on the Indian English writers. These writers got a tool to bring forth the social issues of twentieth century colonial India. They vehemently wrote through their novels against the class conflict, inequality, evil-practices and the cause of poverty in rural India. Gandhi became an ultimate source of inspiration for Indian English writers in the twentieth century. I think R. K. Narayan, Mulk Raj Anand and Raja Rao are the ambassadors of Indian English Literature who took forward the ideology of Mahatma Gandhi and tried to bring social changes through their writings.

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Impact of Gandhian Ideology on Indian English Novelists



human body. Through practical approach he has disproved this theory. “The Five Senses” is an essay written by D. H. Lawrence in his book *Fantasia of the Unconscious*. He has proved that the five senses of the human body are sensual to unconscious. In this paper I have tried to highlight the psychological, biological and metaphysical concept of Lawrence’s idea of unconscious. This paper also analyses different faculties to combine to adjudge the state of consciousness and unconsciousness. It is important to mention here that I haven’t quoted any critics’ view or opinion about “The Five Senses” theory of D H Lawrence. I have analyzed the topic and inferred what I understood in the “The Five Senses” from the book *Fantasia of the Unconscious*.

**Keywords:** *Fantasia Of The Unconscious*, D. H. Lawrence, consciousness, unconsciousness, psychological, sensual,

It is the human psychology that negative or controversial aspects of a person is remembered for long. S/he is not revered for the good deeds and legacy s/he leaves behind him. So is the case with David Herbert Lawrence. Lawrence, the follower of Charles Dickens in many ways has been misunderstood and tagged as sexist. This is a dogma which can be driven away only by knowing the ideology of Lawrencian era. D. H. Lawrence was born on September 11, 1885 in coalmine town of Eastwood. He was the fourth child of Arthur John Lawrence and Lydia, née Beardsall, a former schoolmistress. His father was an illiterate miner. Lawrence spent his childhood in Eastwood and attended to the local school. Since his childhood, Lawrence had been a genius mind which helped him earn scholarship to study at the Edinburg University.

Here it is important to note that Lawrence began his life in an environment of freedom from any restricted tradition or institution. He was not guided upon by anyone but the “Inner Light”. His free ideology provided him an opportunity to plunge into the Fantasy and explore the psychology of life. This is why Lawrence always used ‘L’ for life. His quest for life encouraged him to come up with books such as *Fantasia of the Unconscious*, *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious*, *Studies in Classic American Literature* etc. He wrote his first novel *The White Peacock* at the age of twenty-four. Lawrence shared his philosophy of relationship and the intricate problems he encountered during his life in his poetry. He got in - depth excellence in composing poetry. This excellence reached to such an extent that he started believing that ‘Civilization had corrupted the natural behaviour of human being’. According to Lawrence ‘Physical fulfilment was the clue to recovery of human dignity and happiness’.

*Fantasia of the Unconscious* was published in 1923. This book helps us know about the psychology of Lawrencian ideology of life, world, thought, idea and metaphysical world. The two books *Fantasia of the Unconscious* and *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious* are exemplary works on such an intricate issue as the one we discussed. These books are all about biological and physical state of human beings. Through these two books Lawrence, has attempted to understand how the social institutions and individuals could not understand the principle of ‘unconscious state’. They both have proved futile in establishing family relation in creative life.

Lawrence is of the opinion that there should be a thorough change in educational system to incorporate unconscious state of life which leads to study different fora of psychology. He extensively explored the subject of unconscious with simulated examples and arguments along with flexible prose-style. All these prompt us as excitedly as the created sensation during the age of Lawrence nearly hundred years ago.

“The Five Senses” is the fifth chapter of the book *Fantasia of the Unconscious*. In this chapter Lawrence begins with the scientific point of view about ‘human body’. According to this view, the human body is a sort of complex mechanism consisting of innumerable intricate machines which works day and night. This mechanism is controlled by the human will i.e. intelligence. But Lawrence is highly opposed to the notion. He puts forward his argument that once the soul or spirit is formed, it remains inactive within human body which science could not explain. He argues:

If anything goes wrong with the machine, why, the soul if forgotten instantly. We summon the arch-mechanic of our day, the medicine-man. And a marvelous earnest fraud he is, doing his best. He is really wonderful as a mechanic of the human system. But the life within us fails more and more, while we marvelously tinker at the engines (Lawrence 55).

Lawrence further argues that even if the human body is conceived as a machine, one cannot let such a machine function for a single day on its own but by unified control. He says that every machine has originated by its God or the indenture. Likewise, human body is controlled by some central God. He gives an example that the beetle toddles because its little soul commands it to. Similarly, a human child stands on its feet because of the command its soul gives it. Lawrence has compared a human being to a machine in order to convince us how a human body functions and how it is controlled by a mighty soul. For this, he compares the human body to a bicycle is made to move ahead by its God (human being) who sits on the saddle and apply force to move it to the desired direction. A bicycle has different parts which together help a man move it. Same is the mechanism of a human body. He says “In a child, the solar plexus and the cardiac plexus with corresponding voluntary ganglia, are awake and active. From these centers developed the great functions of body” (58).

Lawrence scientifically writes that the functions of vital organs of human body “Liver and Kidneys” are controlled by the solar plexus. He tells us the cause of fever and constipation. These disorders are caused due to sympathetic dynamism of the solar plexus. Likewise, the cause of anaemia, diarrhea, etc. are also caused due to stimulation of the voluntary midpoint. He plunges for the deep to tell us about important organs situated at the lower part of the human body. These lower parts are the controlled by the two centers. He writes “these organs work well or ill according to as there is a true dynamic psychic activity at the two primary centers of consciousness” (Lawrence 59). He moves ahead to explain how a dynamic psychic activity has a correlation between an individual and other individual concerned or the surroundings which affect his living condition. These conditions may be physical, geographical and regional surroundings.

According to Lawrence the upper part of the human body has two sophisticated subparts- the lungs and the heart. They both are controlled by “Cardiac plane and thoracic ganglion” (59). He goes on to elaborate that excessive emotional and sympathetic attitude cause the burning of lungs with oxygen. The result of this weakens the lungs. He says, “So it is just criminal to make a child too loving” (59). He warns us not to induce any child to love excessively as it may result in derangement and inevitable death. Lawrence is of the opinion that the doctors should try to know as to how there a relation between the working of primary organs and the dynamic psychic activity. He presents his arguments that “the dynamic psychic activity and the four-primary consciousness-centres – beyond these physical functions, there are the activities which are half-psychic, half-functional. Such as the five senses” (59).

Lawrence says that four out of the five senses, function through facial activities. According to him, the fifth- the sense of touch is perceived throughout the body. The nerves move to and fro and stops on the surface of the body. He says “Inwardly this is an inextricable ramification and communication” (60). He says how human physiology is designed and how a definite are-control functions from the four centers. He further says that on the back portion of the body the sense of touch is not sensitive. As for front portion, the breast is highly sensitive to sympathetic touch followed by the belly. But both- the breast and the belly have different stimulus of touch and they have distinctive psychic quality and result. It is perceived that the breast touch is observant of trembling inquisitiveness whereas the belly, when touched, gives a thrill of delight and covetousness.

Lawrence describes about the functions of hands and says that they are instrumental in delicate curiosity. And the function of elbows and wrists is to flow the dynamic psychic current. Similarly, the legs are instrumental in illimitable satisfactions and repudiations. He says that all the parts of the lower limbs- thighs, knees, feet etc. are highly active with ‘love-desire’. Knees also make a man feel weak when he feels flush of sympathetic desire. And it is hatred which produces the tension of the knees as hard as steel thus gripping the feet like hooks. Thus, Lawrence explains the four fields of touch – two sympathetic, present in front of the body from throat to feet and other two are resistant field, present in the back of the body from neck to heels.

According to Lawrence’s view of unconscious, there are basically two feels of touch which are, in terms of distribution, complicate “the face and the buttocks” (60). Both these fields have no any mode of sense communication. He juxtaposed these two fields. His further arguments are “The face is of course the great window of the self, the great opening of the self upon the world, the great gateway” (61). He practically convinces us that most of our communication is established with the outer universe through the means of face. And the face has four basic centers of initial area of consciousness. Mouth, a primary gate of two important sensual centers, is the important source to the belly and the loins. Mouth is basically used for intake of food and water and it also gives us the sense of taste. Then we have lips. Lips are used for sensual connection by kissing. Another important part of the mouth are the teeth. Teeth are used not only for chewing or crushing the food staples but also for our sensual will. Two important sensual centres situated below the diaphragm are responsible for the growth of the teeth. Lawrence scientifically proved that “The growth and life of the teeth depends

almost entirely on the lumbar ganglion” (61). The sympathetic mode is stopped in the process of the growth of the teeth. As a result, we notice pain, diarrhea and misery in a baby undergoing the process of development of new teeth. Lawrence says:

“And we, in our age have no rest with our teeth. Our mouths are too small. For many ages we have been suppressing the avid, negroid, sensual will. We have been converting ourselves into ideal creatures, all spiritually conscious, and active dynamically only on one plane, the upper, spiritual plane. Our mouth has contracted, our teeth have become soft and unquickened. Where in us are the sharp and vivid teeth of the wolf, keen to defend and devour? If we had them more, we should be happier. Where are the white negroid teeth? Where? In our little pinched mouths they have no room. We are sympathy-rotten, and spirit – rotten, and idea – rotten. We have forfeited our flashing sensual power. And we have false teeth in our mouths” (61).

The above lines give us a clear concept of the philosophy Lawrence advocates of about the society and its various stake holders. He is highly opposed to the way human beings are behaving in the society. Sarcastically, he compares human teeth to that of the wolf. This way he establishes his belief that the wolf is more prone to defend and devour. Had we had teeth like the wolf, we would be happier. He criticizes the entire human psychology and says that we have killed sympathy, spirit and ideas which lead to human welfare. Same is the case with our lips. Lawrence vividly says that lips, meant for sensual desire, has become thinner and meaningless and he juxtaposed it “to our upper will and idea- driven impulse” (62). He urges the society “Let us break the conscious, self-conscious love-ideal” (62). Only then the society will be able to grow stronger and resistant teeth. This way, we can make the teething of our young in the desired direction and not according to the prevailing trend.

Lawrence, in his artistic, scientific and psychological way established that our sensual gate to lower part of the body is mouth. Then he talks of smell. He establishes a relation between “the wide atmosphere of the heaven to the lungs” (62) through the nostrils. Our subtle nose communicates with the inestimable air. He clearly explains that we experience refined sensual intake if a scent is sweet and the sensual rejection when it is unpleasant. He then defines the shapes of the nose:

“A perfect nose is perhaps the result of a balance in the four modes. But what is a perfect nose! – We only know that a short snub nose goes with an over-sympathetic nature, not proud enough; while a long nose derives from the center of the upper will, the thoracic ganglion, our great center of curiosity, and benevolent or objective control. A thick, squat nose is the sensual-sympathetic nose, and the high, arched nose the sensual voluntary nose, having the curve of repudiation, as when we turn of our nose from a bad smell, but also the proud curve of haughtiness and subjective authority” (63).

These are the very elaborate descriptions of different kinds of noses and their characteristics. Lawrence remarks that the nose indicates our characters. In other words, the shape of our nose

signifies the mode of predominant primary centers. This reveals his mastery on such intricate scientific, biological and psychological issues. He has proved himself a cognoscenti of psychology.

The third important gateway to the psyche is the vision- the eyes. Lawrence says that a conscious vision has its root in the breast. It is the breast which reflects inward self of an individual:

“When I go forth my own eyes, in delight to dwell upon the world which is beyond me, outside me, then I go forth from wide open windows, through which shows the full and living lambent darkness of my present inward self. I go forth, and I live the lovely open darkness of my sensient self recvealed; when I go forth in the wonder of vision to dwell upon the beloved, or upon the wonder of the world, I go from the center of the glad breast, through the eyes, and who will may look into the full soft darkness of me, rich with my undiscovered presence” (63).

Here it is important to note that Lawrence, based on his personal experience, says that our eyes only gaze outward and not inward. Eyes are also categorized into different types based on their shapes.

Lawrence comes to the last sense- the sense of ‘hearing’. It is supposed to be the deepest of the senses. Unlike other senses we don’t have any choice of rejection when comes to the matter of hearing. Hearing is spontaneous and it is unavoidable. We are bound to hear. We cannot stop ourselves from hearing. It is not our discretion. In other words, our will is eliminated. “Sound acts direct, almost automatically, upon the affective centers. And we have no power of going forth from the ear. We are always and only recipient” (66). As per the basic poles of consciousness, sound acts in various ways. We hear different types of sounds- from music to the roaring of a lion. We also hear “deeper resonance of the sensual mode of consciousness” (67).

The conclusion is that Lawrence has adopted practical approach to enlighten us about the five senses, their functions, impacts and the outcome on the psychology of human behaviour. Neither a psychologist nor a biologist could have dealt with such a complex topic in a practical way as Lawrence has succeeded in doing so.

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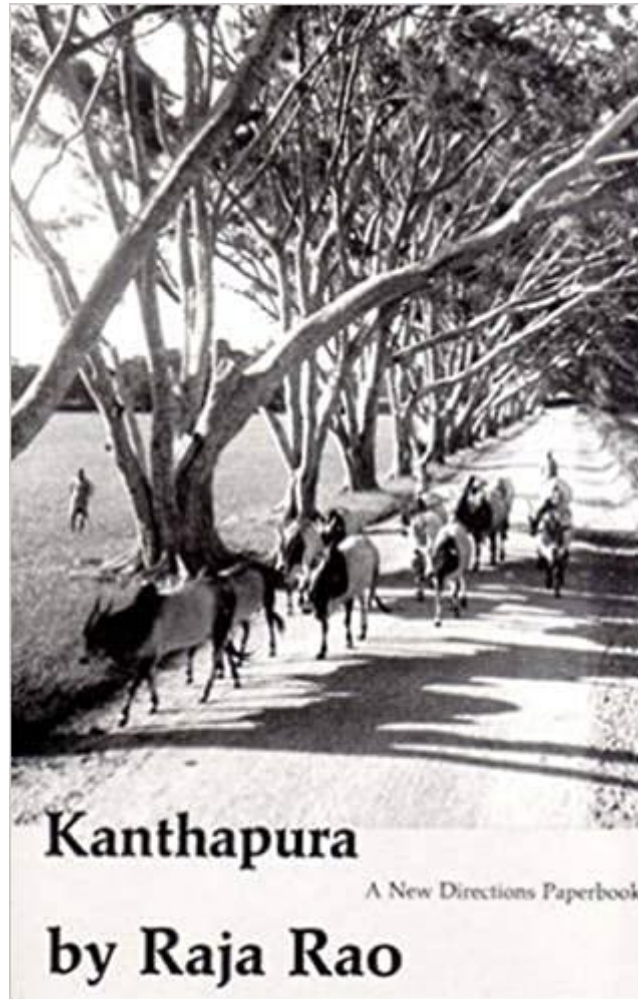


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## Raja Rao's Art of Using Indian Imagery and Indian Environment

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Courtesy: [https://www.amazon.com/Kanthapura-Indian-Novel-Directions-](https://www.amazon.com/Kanthapura-Indian-Novel-Directions-Paperbook/dp/0811201686/ref=sr_1_1?crd=1Y06IQY4E4Q2I&keywords=kanthapura&qid=1584349)

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### Abstract

This paper fully focused on Indian habits and manners of the people of Kanthapura village. The various ceremonies and rituals performed by the villagers are graphically described to show that all are purely Indian in theme and spirit. Raja Rao skilfully brings the



environment of Indian life. Raja Rao has used Indian imagery in this above passage and the language is exceptionally beautiful and meaningful.

**Keywords:** Raja Rao, *Kanthapura*, Caste-hatred, Purnanas, Folk-tales, Social Prejudices, Humanism, Poverty.

According to Dr. C. Paul, the Indians of the Regional Literature are taken for granted, and no one is having trouble exploring it. It is assumed that there is "no clash between the culture and the languages which Express it" (Varghese 3). But why bother with Indian writing in English is considered to be influenced by English to express Indian culture because you have tried it because it is a language on Indian soil. In the words of Professor B. Raja, "The inwardness of Indianness cannot be captured by a language essentially foreign; the subtlest and the most vital nuances are accessible only to a living speech with its roots in the soil and in the organic past" (Mukherjee 3).

Indian writing in English is part of the great Indian tradition of reconciling both pre-independence and post-independence streams. It is an important setting of New English, which has evolved in many parts of the world today, and has spawned a significant and valuable place on the map of the world of Indian English novel, *Untouchable* 1935 is probably the satisfying novel dealing with Mulk Raj Anand's Indian stage.

It exposes the class-based society in India, a social concept centred on traditional social evils over Hindu society in 1934. Mahatma Gandhi creates a crusade against social evil in the anus is the sum total of India's cultural traditions, reflecting the deep-seated ideas, political economy and cultural and rituals that make up India's mind.

To day laws of the English language constructive vehicle for the expression of a medium used by reading the number of Indians, Indo-Anglo novel literature referred to the literature of the subject part of the body is now writing the main theme of the struggle for freedom, but today things poverty hanker Disease various Hindi Ana tests and pass tests of existence of untouchability and social, political and cultural context and the religious approach to social evils such as the impact of industrialization. After Mulk Raj Anand led the Indian team in his fiction, search themes adapted themselves to the Indian context of Raja Roy, the Indian novel of Indo-English fiction. They are passionately involved in the Indian independence movement, and they believe that *Kanthapura* is a beautiful representation of Mahatma Gandhi's ship, the creative language that searches during filming and the elimination of thoughts and ideas that have roots in the Indian language.

The movement of the novel is a contemporary South Indian village on the slopes of the Western Gas. The novel describes the Gandhian Movement established by the British rule in India, how it reaches the South Indian village name Reagan Bra, Gandhi's portrayal of the Han incarnation and consciousness as transforming the life of an entire community in the

Indian village. They take the emphasis on Indianness and Indian attitude on all sides in spite of the importance of the fierce opposition from different corners.

Life Care for Missionary Raja Roy In general, the human elements in our novels dealing with Indian elements were rejected by us. The soul of the Indians *Kanthapura* is in, the battle against human values, the gas that feeds the cells of humanity. This arrangement of the Hindu widow is the current policy of atrocity the prospect of dowry drinking and social image. The human factor marking the founding of Indian society is wonderful.

Raja Rao, while writing Indian novels was made use of Indian local and narrative style asking for typically Indian sensibility as in *The Serpent and the rope* the Collection Makeup is not purely Indian, but the attitude towards life is Indian, and he tries to make sense of the Indian. The Western attitude towards life is now the best Indian parameter standard and his novels for this catalyst make it clear that he considers this quality a common Indian standard. *The Serpent and the Rope* has this to say:

“What is that separated us?” asked Madeleine India”

“India, but I am a Buddhist”

“That is why Buddhists left India: India is implacable”.

“But one can become a Buddhist”

“Yes, and a Christian and a Muslim as well”

“You mean one can only be born a Brahmin”.

“That is an Indian.”

The novelist cannot remember the fact that he is a Vedant, as the three office-centred characters with Moorthy Ramaswamy and the Ramakrishna boy Brahmins are symbols of Indian philosophy and culture. Ice remarkable novel Indo-Anglo literature, these products significantly deeper can reflect and others, team of Indian life's problems in India is at the centre, which is the real Indian language which is true for Indians, but the English rhyme is spoken in the English novel in Kannada from the need to decorate. The English novel depicts the Indian customs and the customs of the villagers of *Kanthapura* as they are simple living people, the various rituals and rituals performed by the villagers are graphically illustrated.

“Trees begin sudden to tremble and hiss... there is a gurgle and a ground from behind the bamboo cluster and the gurgle and grunt soar up and swallow in the sky. The darkness grows thick as sugar in a cauldron, while the bomboos creak and sway and whine, and the crows begin to wheel round and flutter.... and then, the wind comes so swift and dashing that it takes the autumn leaves with it, and they rise into the juggling air, while the tress beat and blubber. The drops fall, as big as a thump, and as the thunder goes clashing like a temple cymbal through the heavens, the earth itself seems to have up and cheep in the monsoon rains. It churns and splashes, beats against the tree-tops, reckless and wilful, and suddenly floating forwards it bucks back and spits forward...” (*Kanthapura*)

Indian legends, folktales and mythological stories are interspersed throughout his novels. Indian phrases are directly translated into English, some of which may be cited as examples of images and expressions from Indian life used in *Kanthapura*.

- i) God has not given me a tongue for nothing
- ii) Narasamma was growing like a bamboo and shrivelled like a banner bar.
- iii) The sky becomes blue as the marriage shawl.
- iv) Lean as an arecanut tree.

Like Mulk Raj Anand, Rao uses swear words with the purpose of creating the effect of local colour, like “ the son of my woman”, “ those sons of concubine” etc which have been used to impart Indian touch to the English expression, as the “ Gandhi-man”, “Red-man”, “milkless”, “Sali-givers”, “crow and sparrow story”, “leap cups”, and “sparrow voice”.

As one modern critic has said:

“*Kanthapura* portrays the whole drama of Gandhian revolution as enacted in a village in all frenzy and fury. The typical Indian features of real life- its mixture of politics and mythology, its seraphic freedom from the taint of science and technology, its ruggedness and even its vulgarity- all faithfully reproduced in terms of art. Even the language has been creatively moulded by the novelist to distil the raciness, and the poetic non-stop narration creates at once a sense of dramatic immediacy and personal intimacy. *Kanthapura* represents not an isolated village in Mysore but the whole country. The characters are convincingly drawn from all castes of an ordinary Indian village to reflect Indianness in all walks of life” (Kumar 148).

In the words of K.K. Sharma, “It is an artistic exposition of the highest school of Indian philosophy, the Advaita of Sri Sankara. The central theme of the novel is the Indian Idea of the Absolute, the truth, the ultimate reality or substance of the universe, which is distinguishable from the relatives, the illusion or the shadow. This is explained in detail, through the well-known analogy of the serpent and rope, thoroughly treated by Sri Sankaracharya in his enunciation of the Advaita Philosophy” (Sharma 49).

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## **The Conventional and Unconventional Roles of Women Characters in Indian English Fiction with Special Reference to the Select Novels of Shashi Deshpande**

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**Abstract**

Human experience for centuries has been synonymous with the masculine experience. Man's relationship with woman is most often the bond that exists between a master and a slave. With the result that the collective image of humanity has been defined as a subject in its own right, but merely as an entity that concerns man either in real life or in his fantasy life. There has existed all the same a distinctively female literacy tradition grown out of the anxieties of a woman's life. Women writers have been drawn more to fiction-writing than to the genres of poetry and drama. Generally, there are two types of roles played by women characters in Indian fiction: the conventional and unconventional. Both types suffer in one way or the other. Shashi Deshpande is a very recent author in Indian writing in English. Her novels deal with the problems of the adjustments and conflicts in the minds of female protagonists who ultimately submit to the traditional rules in the transitional society. This paper as an article seeks to explore the conventional and unconventional Roles of Women Characters in Indian Fiction with Special Reference to the Select Novels of Shashi Deshpande. It is also an attempt to introduce the most acclaimed female Indian writer of Indo- Anglican Literature. The aim of this paper is to introduce two of Deshpande's novels, *Roots and Shadows* and *The Dark Holds No Terror* which presents women who want to go in self-quest and are free from the restrictions imposed by society, culture, nature and are also free from their own fear and guilt. The methodology

followed in this article is as per the norms stipulated in M L A Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, Seventh Edition, Edited by Judy Goulding. (First East - West Press Edition 2009).

**Keywords:** Shashi Deshpande, 'New Woman', inimitable representation, individualistic women, masculine experience, vestiges of the past, intellect, unconscious dawn.

Indian English Literature in the recent past has attracted a widespread interest, both in India and abroad. It has come to be realized as of great significance in world literature. Indian Women writers like Kamala Markandaya, Anita Desai, Nayantara Sahgal and other writers have documented this female resistance against a patriarchal maintained Indian culture. This writing in English has now reached a new phase, the phase of an inimitable representation of the 'New Indian Woman' who is dissatisfied with the inhibiting cultural, natural or sexual roles assigned to her from the unconscious dawn of the patriarchal India.

The term 'New Woman' has come to signify the awakening of woman into a new realization of her place and position in family and society, conscious of her individuality. The New Woman has been trying to assert and ascertain her rights as a human being and is determined to fight for equal treatment with men. Ellen E. Jordan observes that "the English feminists endowed the 'New Woman' with her hostility to men, her questioning of marriage, her determination to escape from the restrictions of home life and her belief that education could make a woman capable of leading a financially self-sufficient single and yet fulfilling life. There are a number of Indian novels that deal with woman's problems. But the treatment is often peripheral, and the novels end up glorifying the stereotypical virtues of the Indian woman, like patience, devotion and abject acceptance of whatever is meted out to her.

Man's relationship with woman is most often the bond that exists between a master and a slave. Woman is an object and she is essential to man because it is seeking to be made whole through her that man hopes to attain self-realization. Women writers writing in English, present with insight and understanding the dilemma which modern women are facing in a traditional society where dual morality is the accepted norm. Self-willed and individualistic women have to face suffering caused by broken relationship. Women who are conscious of their emotional needs are striving for self-fulfillment, rejecting the existing traditions and social set-up and longing for a more liberal and unconventional ways of life.

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Fiction by women writers constitutes a major segment of the contemporary Indian Writing in English. One of the reasons for women writers in large numbers taking up their pen is that it has allowed them to create their own world. Simon de Beauvoir aptly remarks that

The situation of woman is that she is a free and autonomous being like all creatures – nevertheless finds herself living in a world where men compel her to assume the status of the other (*The Second Sex*, 178).

Human experience for centuries has been synonymous with the masculine experience. With the result that the collective image of humanity has been defined as a subject in its own right, but merely as an entity that concerns man either in real life or in his fantasy life. There has existed all the same a distinctively female literacy tradition grown out of the anxieties of a woman's life. Women writers have been drawn more to fiction-writing than to the genres of poetry and drama. The very reality of woman's life situation is "interrupted"; nature perhaps is the reason for a close affinity between woman and fiction-writing. Woman is a being; she is not an appendage of man. A woman is not an addition to man. She is an autonomous being capable of, through trial and error, finding her own way to salvation. Woman has established herself as an autonomous being, free from restrictions imposed by society, culture, nature and also free from her own fears and guilt.

Generally, there are two types of roles played by women characters in Indian fiction: the conventional and unconventional. Both types suffer in one way or the other. According to Bala Kothandaraman,

The unconventional are seen to suffer for their violation of accepted norms of society or for questioning them; death is the way out for them, unless their experiences teach them to subdue their individuality and rebelliousness and realize the wisdom of the traditional ways (*The Feminist Dilemma*, 106).

The conventional women also suffer, but their suffering is sanctified by the norms of Indian culture and particularly by that of a patriarchal culture. The conflict between tradition and modernity finds a prominent place in the portrayal of women by the women novelists. A tradition-bound woman may sacrifice her happiness for the sake of the well-being of the family

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as a unit, but at the same time retains her individuality. Indian woman usually does not bother about her personal happiness and comfort as much as she addresses herself to the task of making others happy and upholding traditions and conventions. A woman may be seen and understood by her father in one way, her husband in another way, her son and daughter in some other ways and by herself in yet another way. Keeping all these views in mind, the writers especially women writers has reflected the same in their fiction.

Sociologists find that woman suffer due to her emotional attachment with home. But since her sense of individuality has matured by the introduction of education, she does not want to lead a passive married life of a sacrificial and shadowy creature. She expects a measure of satisfaction. Promilla Kapoor remarks that

Women's personal status and social status has come as a change in her way of thinking and feeling and the past half century has witnessed great changes in attitudes towards love, sex and marriage (*The Changing Status*, 101).

Women have reached a stage of understanding themselves in a way they are trying to understand the fundamental truth. Centuries of Indian tradition and age-old cultural beliefs have made the Indian woman as the most patient, obedient and loving woman in the world. Her suffering, silent screams, disappointments and frustrations are not heard even in this modern world. Though the educated and employed Indian woman is economically independent, financial freedom is not enough.

Shashi Deshpande is a very recent author in Indian writing in English. Her contribution to the world of fiction dates back to 70s and 80s. In her novels she has tried to project a realistic picture of the middle-class educated women who are financially independent and who represent a larger part of the contemporary Indian society. Her novels deal with the problems of the adjustments and conflicts in the minds of female protagonists who ultimately submit to the traditional rules in the transitional society. In an interesting interview, she reveals that all her characters are concerned with their selves and they learn to be honest to themselves. The women in *Roots and Shadows* and *The Dark Holds No Terror* do present themselves as the women who want to go in self-quest and are free from the restrictions imposed by society, culture, nature and are also free from their own fear and guilt. Commenting on *Roots and Shadows*, O.P. Bhatnagar

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remarks:

... the novel deals with a woman's attempt to assert her individuality and realize her freedom. It depicts how it brings her into confrontation with family, with male dominated society (*Indian Womanhood*, 94).

Indu, a middle-class young girl brought up in an orthodox Brahmin family headed by Akka (the surrogate mother in the novel) learns the truth about herself and at the end she dismisses all the shadows that she had thought to be to her real self. "I would at last do the kind of writing I had always dreamt of doing" (205). This statement shows Indi's assertion of will and self. As Simon de Beauvoir observes thus:

the more women assert themselves as human beings, the more the marvelous quality of the other will die in them (*The Second Sex*, 74).

Saru in *The Dark Holds No Terrors* has childhood scars. She expresses hatred towards her mother: "if you're a woman I don't want to be one" (55) for Saru's mother has showed sexist gender in her treatment towards Saru and her brother Dhruva. She rebels against her mother and goes to Bombay to get medicine degree and later she weds Manohar (Manu) disregarding the authority of her mother. The departure of the heroine from the mother is the first step towards autonomy.

Shashi Deshpande's heroines reject rituals that are vestiges of the past. Indu wanted to explore the inner struggle of herself. She represents a set of the modern women who are educated and are very much in contact with the society, dealing with the critical problems like love, sex marriage, settlement and individuality. Indu reviews everything with reason. She analyzes the ideals of detachment and freedom and tries to achieve them. She tries to listen to the voice of her conscience and revolts. Indu is projected against the women belonging to the older generation. To the old generation, a woman's life is nothing "but to get married, to bear children, to have sons and then grand children" (128) and the ideal woman is the one who does not have her own independent identity: "A woman who sheds her 'I' and loses her identity in her husband's" (54). Indu wanted to protest against conventional laws which are molding the female character as only symbols of lust. Maria Miles, on remarking upon the situation says,

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The non-conforming conduct of the women is not the consequence of an eternal necessity out of changed consciousness. They are not satisfied with the rhetoric of equality between men and women but want to see that the right to an individual life and the right to development of their individual capabilities (*Women against feminism*, 547).

In *Roots and Shadows*, Indu too “searches for release from the constraints of the traditional and traditional-bound institution of marriage” (54) in search of an autonomous self, only to realize like them, again that “this refuge is hard to achieve”.

The realization of the need to conform for survival and the awareness that conformity is the great destroyer of selfhood and the only self that can be achieved is the self-born in interpersonal relationship, make Indu cry: “this is my real sorrow, that I can never be complete in myself, there was somewhere outside me a part of me without which I remained complete, then I met Jayant, and lost the ability to be alone” (34).

The woman in order to achieve her freedom seeks marriage as an alternative to the bondage created by the parental family. The simple need to be independent eventually becomes a demand of the inflated ego and takes shape as the love for power over others. She resents the role of a daughter and looks forward to the role of a wife with the hope that her new role will help her in winning her freedom.

The parental home symbol of tradition and the old world values have no room for Shashi Deshpande’s women, for they breathe the air of rituals that obstruct the growth of a woman as a being. The feeling of homelessness is indicative of inner disintegration. Tension between the different parts within one’s self takes away the harmony within and without. The novel gains its feminist stance in Indu’s exploration onto herself, but it also moves beyond the boundaries of feminism into a perception of the very predicament of the human existence. Indu moves on the road of self-realization and the destination seems to be the point of comprehension of the mystery of human life.

Shashi Deshpande suggests that Indu has learnt to see not only her life full of possibilities for growth and grace, but the very meaning of life itself. At the end of the novel Indu realizes that

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Akka is not a sadist as thought earlier, Indu has confronted her real self and she knows her roots.

In *The Dark*, Saru comes to the conclusion that neither her father nor her husband Manohar can be her own refuge. Killing all the ghosts that haunt her, Saru finds her own way to Salvation. The parental home initiates the protagonists into an understanding of the meaning of human life: “All right, so I’m alone, but so is everyone else. Human Beings ... they’re going to fail you. But because there’s just us, because there’s no one else. We have to go on trying. If we can’t believe in ourselves, we’re sunk” (200). Saru has gained the assertion of will and confidence in her. She learns to trust herself. Saru, who had instructed her father not to open the door for her husband Manu, now tells her father: “And oh yes, Baba if Manu comes, tell him to wait, I’ll be back as soon as I can” (202). Saru and Indu, through the education they received in school of experience of life, realize their inner potentials as said by Vivekananda:

Educate your women first and leave them to themselves for we want that education by which character is formed, strength of mind is increased, the intellect is expanded and by which one can stand on one’s own feet. With such education women will solve their own problem (*The Complete Works*, 55).

The struggle of these women to give shape and content to their individual existence in a sexist society culminates in a crisis and ends in compromise. “Defeat is relief and freedom only relative for women there is no escape from relationships”. New bonds replace the old, that’s all. In the end comes the realization that freedom lies in having the courage to do what one believes is the right thing to do and the determination and tenacity to adhere to it. That alone can bring harmony in life.

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## Negation Marking in Defaka

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**Abstract**

Defaka is a grossly endangered language spoken in the shared community of Nkoroo, situated in the Eastern fringe of the Niger Delta Region of Rivers State, Nigeria. It is an endangered language, with barely less than fifty fluent speakers. This paper discusses negation marking in Defaka. Negation in Defaka is basically morphological, with a clause level clitic =**re** attached to the verb. Other markers of negation are, the low toned sentence final particle **kòm** which is used to mark the unfulfilled negative, the existential negative **jàilè** and the negative imperatives **kírì** and **nìni**. Tone plays a secondary role. The characteristic tonal pattern of a negative sentence in Defaka is a falling tone; this pattern does not change even with questions, except instances where a verb with a final high tone spreads its high tone through the last syllables of an utterance, giving the utterance a final raised intonation pattern. This raised intonation pattern is also attested in the negation of some noun phrases. Double negatives occur only with the imperative.

**Keywords:** Defaka, negation marking, Nigeria languages.

**Introduction**

Language change due to migration or distance from the language's homeland, social, cultural and group loyalty may gradually lead to language shift or place the shifting language in an endangered state or outright extinction. (Hudson & Patrick 1984). This is the precarious situation in which a language like Defaka has found itself. Tsunoda, (2005.1), states that, 'In almost every part of the world, minority peoples' languages are disappearing, and this is taking place at an alarming speed. Also, a great many languages have already become extinct'. In recent times, especially in a multilingual nation like Nigeria, the imposition of the English language due to colonization has posed real threat to the survival of our indigenous languages; the worse hit, being the minority ones. Enclave languages, such as Defaka and Nkọrọọ fall within the class of endangered languages; Defaka being in a worse state than Nkọrọọ. The indigenes of Nkọrọọ are bilingual. Although the bilingual nature of the people is lope sided; only the Defaka are bilingual.

The functional domain of Defaka, has over the years reduced from being used in a healthy traditional society, to use within the Defaka ward in Nkọrọọ and its fishing settlements, to domestic and private use inside the family, to intimate use for solidarity, secrecy and religious purposes. (Jenewari 1983). Defaka is presently considered to be a minority language, labeled socially and economically useless. It suffers hostility and relegation both from the youths of Defaka origin and the Nkọrọọ as a whole. Young adults of Defaka origin whose parents did not transmit the language to, make jest of the language when it is spoken, while the Nkọrọọ consider the language as a lower class language. The stigmatization of Defaka by the Nkoroo has resulted in heavy language shift which has reduced the functional domain of Defaka to use within the Defaka ward in Nkọrọọ. Defaka and Kirika (Nkoro) are predominantly fishermen. Primarily, the Defaka engage in similar economic pursuits as the Kirika. They trade in such sea products as crayfish, periwinkles, crabs, oysters and several kinds of fishes. They engage in basket weaving, net making, thatch making, petty trading and subsistent farming. Trading activities are carried out with their surrounding neighbours-the Andoni, Ogoni and Opobo people.

## 1.0.Preamble

A negative clause is one which asserts that some event, situation, or state of affairs does not hold. (Payne 1997). We shall discuss negation in Defaka, under two broad strategies: clausal and constituent negation. Clausal negation is that employed in languages to negate an entire proposition, while constituent negation is associated with particular constituents of the clause. (Ikoro 1996). In Defaka, the subject, the verb or any other nominal element within the predicate phrase may be negated. If the subject is negated, it may or may not be in focus. However, negation of the predicate phrase or elements within the predicate phrase, always occur in cleft construction.

Clausal negation may entail negation of existence or negation of fact. In the former, a negative adverb **jáilè** ‘not there’ which also functions as a negative quantifier in some nominal constructions occurs, while in the latter, the basic marker of negation is the negative clitic **=re**. Other markers of negation which may occur in clausal or constituent negation are, lexical items expressing such notions as refusal, etc., modal auxiliary verbs with inherent negative connotations.

### 1.1 Clausal Negation

Clausal negation is marked with a clause-level clitic, **=re** attached to the verb, playing a major role. The clitic does not occur at all in negation of existence, only the negative adverb does. Compare (1a) and (b).

- 1a)        ì    jáilè        dzíkà=tè  
              1sg NEGA house =LOC

‘I am not at home’

- b)      í    à    ééńáà    éè=rè  
1sg DEF food eat =NEG  
‘I did not eat the food’

Two strategies are employed in clausal negation. Negation of existence hosts the negative adverbial **jáilè** ‘not there’. **jáile** appears to be a formative from a combination of **jáà** ‘thing’ and **ilè** ‘place’. This morpheme is usually the sole negator in a clause where it occurs.

- 2a)      ì    jáilè      dzíkà=tè  
1sg NEGA house =LOC  
‘I am not at home’
- b)      á    jáile      à    tèè    ?ùù=tè  
3sgf NEGA DEF playground =LOC  
‘She is not at the playground’
- c)      ní    jáilè      nùmà dòm=tè  
3pl NEGA that place =LOC  
‘They are not around or there’

In negation of fact, the clitic negative marker =re attaches directly to the verb, knocking off every other tense aspect marker. The tone of the last syllable of the verb to which the negative marker cliticizes is almost always low, especially when the clause has an object. Some verbs with inherent high tones, however, do not follow the rule

In declarative affirmative sentences, the last tone of the verb to which the factitive marker is attached is almost always high, as the examples in (3) show.

- 3a)      ì    à    ééńáà    éé-mà  
1sg DEF food eat-FACT  
‘I ate the food’
- b)      á    à    máńgòrò kání-mà  
3sg DEF mango pluck-FACT  
‘She plucked the mango’
- c)      wá    à    átáki    èwé-mà

1pl DEF money steal-FACT  
'We stole the money'

In the negative forms in (4) below, however, the last tone of the verb to which the negative marker cliticizes is almost always low, as against the final high tones of the verbs in the factitive affirmative in (3). This can be considered as an additional marker of negation, but this is not a consistent pattern, as we observe in (4d and e).

- 4a) ì à ééjàà èè=rè  
1sg DEF food eat =NEG  
'I did not eat the food'
- b) á à máṅgòrò kání=rè  
3sgf DEF mango pluck=NEG  
'She did not pluck the mango'
- c) wá à átákì éwè=rè  
1pl DEF money steal =NEG  
'We did not steal the money'
- d) á dzíkà òbìò=tè sékí=!ré  
3sgf house inside =LOC dance =NEG  
'she did not dance in the house'
- e) wá à ídò ijá=!ré  
1pl DEF farm go =NEG  
'We did not go to the farm'

Progression and futurity are expressed in the same way in negative constructions in Defaka. The marked feature here is the occurrence of the low toned future tense marker **kà** which occurs before the negative clitic. Verb stem tones take the form for the future tense, which characteristically has the last tone of the verb low, except a few exceptions with inherent final high tones, like the verb **ijá** 'go' as in (5a)

- 5a) ì à ídò ijá-kà=rè  
1sg DEF farm go-FUT=NEG  
'I am not going to the farm'
- b) í dzíkà kárámà-kà=rè



2sg house leave-FUT=NEG  
 ‘You are not leaving the house’

- c) wá ééǵáà éè-kà=rè  
 1pl food eat-FUT=NEG  
 ‘We will not eat food’

The negative habitual aspect distinguishes the forms with an object NP and those without an object NP, by means of high-low tones in the former and high tones in the later. In the affirmative however, as in (6), the reverse is the case. The forms with an object NP bear high tones while the forms without an object NP bear low tones.

### Affirmative

- |                            |                               |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 6) -obj NP                 | + obj NP                      |
| ò lèlèlèlè-mà              | ò jáà lélélélé-mà             |
| 3sgm sell sell-FACT        | 3sgm something sell sell-FACT |
| ‘He sells or used to sell’ | ‘He used to sell things’      |
| b) à tùàtùà-mà             | á jáà túátúá-mà               |
| 3sgf cook cook-FACT        | 3sgf something cook cook-FACT |
| ‘She often cooks’          | ‘She often cooks something’   |

### Negative

- |                            |                                 |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 7) –object NP              | + objectNP                      |
| wá báábáá=!ré              | wá sèisèǵáà báábàà=rè           |
| 1pl kill kill =NEG         | 1pl snake kill kill =NEG        |
| ‘We don’t normally kill’   | ‘We don’t normally kill snakes’ |
| ní ìsósó=!re               | ní dzíkà ìsòsò=rè               |
| 3pl come come =NEG         | 3pl house come come             |
| ‘They don’t normally come’ | ‘They don’t normally come home’ |

The tonal pattern of the –object NP negative form is emphatic, while the + object NP form is not emphatic. This raised intonation pattern is also observed in the negation of some noun phrases, especially with the 1<sup>st</sup> person singular pronoun. See Essien, (2013), for a detailed discussion on the tonal pattern of the habitual aspect.

### 1.1.2 The Unfulfilled Negative

The unfulfilled negative form expresses an action that has not yet been carried out. The clitic negative marker =**re** occurs alongside the low toned unfulfilled negative marker **kòm**, which usually occurs as a free morpheme clause finally. The modal auxiliary verb **m̀bè** ‘be able’ may optionally occur.

- 8a) á à ómgbìṅáà gbíì=rè kòm                      á m̀bè à ómgbìṅáà gbíì=rè kòm  
 3sgf DEF dress sow =NEG yet                      3sgf MOD DEF dress sow =NEG yet  
 ‘she has not yet sowed the dress’                      ‘She has not yet been able to sow the dress’
- b) ní ísò ílàà=rè kòm                                      ní m̀bè ísò ílàà=rè kòm  
 3pl come reach =NEG yet                                      3pl MOD come reach =NEG yet  
 ‘They have not arrived yet’                                      ‘They have not been able to come yet’

### 1.1.3 The Negative Unfulfilled Future

The negative unfulfilled future occurs only in conditional clauses. The subordinate clause hosts the verbs **múmá** ‘finish’ and **sò** the desiderative, and the modal auxiliary verb **m̀béké** as the case may be.

- 9a) í sò jáà súkù múmá-mà kéídèi í sò éé-mà m̀bè ílàà=rè kòm  
 2sg DES thing wash finish-FACT time 1sg DES eat-FACT MOD reach =NEG yet  
 ‘I would not have eaten, by the time you would have finished washing’
- b) í m̀béké ísò-kà í tùà múmá=!rè kòm mà kàà  
 2sg MOD come-FUT 1sg cook finish =NEG yet that manner  
 ‘I would not have finished cooking but you can come still’.

### 1.1.4 Negating Complex Sentences

There are no special strategies for negating serial verb constructions and consecutive constructions. The entire construction is negated only once.

- 10a) kírí à ògĩõ tà ísò nìni  
 NEG DEF Knife SER come NEG (imperative)  
 ‘Don’t bring the knife’ [lit, Don’t take knife and come]
- b) àmàṅà átákí tà wíé á ámà=rè  
 PN money SER keep 3sgf give =NEG  
 ‘Amanya did not keep money for her’ [lit Amanya did not take money and keep for her]
- c) tàbìòmbé kúmáṅáà sónó òrì tàá ámà=rè

PN wrapper buy his wife give =NEG  
'Tabiombe did not buy wrapper for his wife'

Negation is marked only once in consecutive constructions as well. The consecutive construction has a verbal particle **ke** which functions as a connective. **ke** is however, omitted if there is a different subject for the consecutive as in (11c)

- 11a) ò ì èvè kè òjíè=rè  
3sgm 1sg hit CONN run =NEG  
'He did not hit me and ran'
- b) á dzíkà ìjá kè jáà éè=rè  
3sgf house go CONN thing eat =NEG  
'She did not go home and ate'
- c) ì òkùnà ééjààn éè=rè bómà àkidi éé-mà  
1sg fowl food eat =NEG PN beans eat-FACT  
'I did not eat rice, while Boma ate beans.'

In coordinate sentences and embedded clauses as in (12d), negation may occur once or twice depending on the kind of construction.

- 12a) ì éé-kà=rè ì èdzè-kà=rè  
1sg eat-FUT=NEG 1sg die-FUT=NEG  
'I will not eat and I will not die'
- b) ì fàà-kà ì kùtálá kée -kà=rè mà kàà góò kè  
1sg say-FUT 1sg lie cut-FUT=NEG that manner reason COMP  
'I will say it because I will not tell a lie'
- c) ì jáà túà-kà=rè í ísò=rè nè  
1sg thing cook-FUT=NEG 1sg come =NEG COND  
'I will not cook until you come. [lit I will not cook if you don't come]
- d) bómà dzírí-mà ìbòbái á éè=rè  
PN know-FACT PN 3sgf se =NEG  
'Boma knows that Ibobai did not see her'

## 2. Constituent Negation

### 2.1 Negating Sentences with predicate nominals

No special strategies are employed in the negation of sentences with predicate nominals. Sentences with predicate nominals typically express a defining or identification relationship. The subject of the sentence is usually a noun or a pronoun or sometimes an infinitive phrase, while the complement could be a noun, an adjective, a post positional phrase or a focus construction. There are no morphologically overt copulative verbs in Defaka. What appears like copulative verbs are the toneless subject focus marker, **kə**, and the clitic auxiliary verb, **=ri**. The former is clearly not a verb, but a subject focus marker as shown in (13). **=ri** on the hand, is an auxiliary verb which performs aspectual functions in combination with the factitive and perfective suffixes, to mark present progressive and present perfect aspects respectively. **=ri**, by virtue of its syntactic and semantic features could be considered to be functioning as a copulative when it occurs in copular sentences with post positional phrase complements, as in (14). Other forms of copular constructions are expressed by juxtaposition as shown in (15).

13a) ̀̀k̀̀ t̀̀b̀̀ì̀m̀̀b̀̀e  
3sgm =FOC PN  
'He is Tabiombe'

b) ̀̀k̀̀ t̀̀b̀̀ì̀m̀̀b̀̀e=̀̀r̀̀e  
3sgm=FOC PN =NEG  
'He is not Tabiombe'

14a) ̀̀ ̀̀à̀ì̀=̀̀r̀̀ì̀ k̀̀à̀s̀̀ì̀ t̀̀ò̀=̀̀t̀̀è̀ d̀̀è̀ì̀-̀̀m̀̀à̀  
DEF man =PROG chair top =LOC stand-FACT  
'The man is standing on the chair'

b) ̀̀ ̀̀à̀ì̀=̀̀r̀̀ì̀ k̀̀à̀s̀̀ì̀ t̀̀ò̀=̀̀t̀̀è̀ d̀̀è̀ì̀=̀̀r̀̀è̀  
DEF man =PROG mat top =LOC sleep =NEG  
'The man is not sleeping on the mat'

15a) ̀̀ ̀̀m̀̀g̀̀b̀̀ì̀ǹ̀à̀ g̀̀b̀̀ì̀ ̀̀à̀ì̀=̀̀r̀̀è̀  
1sg dress sew man =NEG  
'I am not a tailor'

b) ̀̀ ̀̀b̀̀ò̀=̀̀r̀̀è̀ k̀̀ò̀m̀̀  
3sgm big =NEG yet  
'He is not big yet'

- c) ò mbè ìbò=rè kòm  
 3sg MOD big =NEG yet  
 ‘He has not become big yet’

## 2.2 Imperatives

The negative imperative hosts two morphemes **kírí** and **nìni**. **nìni** is obligatory while **kírí** is optional. **kírí** is basically a negative intensifier. The tones of the negative imperative morphemes are invariant. To give a counter command to an action that had begun or completed prior to the moment of speaking, a free morpheme **ḃà** immediately follows **kírí** as in (16c and d)

- 16a) kírí kètè nìni  
 IMPN laugh IMPN  
 ‘Don’t laugh’

- b) ì fàà á áamá-mà á ísò nìni  
 1sg say 3sgf give-FACT 3sgf come IMPN  
 ‘I told her that she should not come’

- c) í fàà á áamá-mà á kírí ḃá áruá tùà nìni  
 1sg say 3sgf give-FACT 3sgf IMPN again soup cook IMPN  
 ‘I told her not to cook soup again’

- d) kírí ḃá jàki ééḃáà éè nìni  
 IMPN again another food eat IMPN  
 ‘Don’t eat another food again’

## 2.3 Negative Questions

Two basic types of questions are commonly negated. Yes-no questions and echo questions. A third type could be termed emphatic.

A yes-no question refers to an interrogative clause for which the expected answer is either “yes” or “no”. (Kari,2004). The characteristic tonal pattern of a negative sentence in Defaka is a falling tone on the last syllable of the verb to which the negation marker is attached, except in a few cases where a verb has an inherent final high tone. This pattern does not change in yes-no questions as well. A verb with a final high tone spreads its high tone through the last syllables of the utterance, giving the utterance a final raised intonation pattern, as in (17a and b), while elsewhere, verb stems take on the characteristic falling tone of negative sentences, but not without global raising through the entire utterance.

- 17a) àmàjà òm òbìò èkèkè´=!ré  
 PN body inside equal NEG  
 ‘Is Amanyà not well?’
- b) àmàjà m̀bè à kía ijá=!ré kóm  
 PN not able DEF market go =NEG yet  
 ‘Has Amanyà not gone to the market yet?’
- c) í m̀bè à áruá túà=rè kòm☑  
 2sg not able DEF soup cook =NEG yet  
 ‘You have not yet cooked the soup?’
- d) òm̀òm̀ò=tè á m̀bè à òbóijà jáà=rè kòm☑  
 now =LOC 3sgf not able DEF thatch do =NEG yet  
 ‘So she still has not yet done the thatch?’

Echo questions are questions that are asked to seek clarification on a command or assertion made by a previous speaker. They are expressed with the negative imperative marker.

- 18a) ì kírí dzírí dzíkà ijá nini☑  
 1sg IMPN book house go IMPN  
 ‘Shouldn’t I go to school?’
- b) á kírí bá ì ómgbijà gbĩ̀-ka=rè☑  
 3sgf IMPN again 1sg dress sew-FUT=NEG  
 ‘Is she not going to sew my dress again?’
- c) á bá lúà óó nini☑  
 3sgf again cry cry IMPN  
 ‘Should she not cry again?’

The negative emphatic question is inherently a cleft construction. It expresses concern over an unpleasant situation which directly or indirectly affects the speaker. One significant feature of this question type is the fact that, the negative morpheme immediately follows the subject of the sentence and bears a high tone if the tone of the subject is low and a down-stepped high tone if the tone of the subject is high. It does not behave like typical clitics in the language. (note that clitics in Defaka bear low tones when they follow a host with a final low tone, and a

down-stepped high tone, when they follow a host with a final high tone). This raised intonation pattern expresses emphasis.

19a)      ì èsè    ísò-mà                    ì=ré      ísò    à    áruá    túà-mà kè  
 1sg see come-FACT REL 1sg NEG come DEF soup cook-FACT COMP  
 ‘I hope that, I am not the one to cook the soup?’

b)      ì èsè    ísò-mà                    bòmá=!ré      à      bòm    pìni kè  
 1sg see come-FACT REL PN NEG DEF child flog COMP  
 ‘I hope that, Boma is not the one that beat the child?’

## 2.4 Focus and Negation

### 2.4.1 Negative Argument Focus

There are no special strategies used for negative focus construction. The markers of negation are the same as in other negative constructions. Verb stem tones are not altered. The subject NP can be a noun or a pronoun.

20a)      ì=ré            jáà    kè  
 1sg NEG REL do COMP  
 ‘It is not I who did it’

b)      á=!kó                    m̀birà    jáà    l̀l̀è=rè –mà kè  
 3sgf =SFOC REL refused thing sell =NEG-FACT COMP  
 ‘SHE is the one who has refused to trade’

c)      bòmá=!kó                    m̀bè      fàà l̀l̀è-ma=rè    k̀m  
 PN =SFOC REL MOD say out-FACT =NEG yet  
 ‘It is BOMA who has not been able to speak out yet’

d)      í=!kó                    íj́á-kà=rè –mà kè  
 2sg =SFOC REL go-FUT =NEG-FACT COMP  
 ‘It is YOU who should not go’

Non- subject argument focus hosts the non-subject focus marker ñd̀. The focused nominal is preposed to sentence initial position immediately followed by the focus marker.

21a)      bòmá      b̀ùòéj́nàà    íj́á-kà=rè  
 PN          fishing    go-FUT=NEG  
 ‘Boma is not going fishing’

ɓùòééjàà    òndò        ɓòmá    ijá-kà=rè-ma        kè  
 fishing    NSFOC REL PN        go-FUT=NEG-FACT COMP  
 ‘It is FISHING that Boma is not going to’

b)        tàbiòmbé òóóìjà jàà-kà=rè  
 PN        thatch do-FUT=NEG  
 ‘Tabiombe is not making thatch’

òóóìjà òndò        tàbiòmbé jàà-kà=ré kè  
 thatch NSFOC REL PN        do =NEG COMP  
 ‘It is THATCH that Tabiombe is not making’

#### 2.4.2 Negative predicate focusing.

In negative predicate focusing, as in negative argument focusing, the verb is preposed to sentence initial position. The negative predicate focus sentence is inherently cleftivized.

22a)        jáà gbĩ̀=рэ        á    jáà jáà    kè  
 thing sew =NEG REL 3sgf do do COMP  
 ‘It is NOT SEWING that she does’

b)        sékí=!ré        á    jáà jáà    kè  
 dance =NEG REL 3sgf do do COMP  
 ‘It is NOT DANCING that she does’

#### Conclusion

The above data and discussion clearly reveal that negation in Defaka is basically morphological with tone playing a subordinate role. As noted by Payne (1997) and Shopen (1985), languages that exhibit morphological negation, associate the negative morpheme with the verb. This is the case with Defaka. The negative morpheme is considered a clitic due to its mobile nature and its tonal behavior, which is in consonance with the tonal behaviour of clitics in the language.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS and CONVENTIONS

!	= phonetic representation of downstep
-	= morpheme break
=	= clitic break
↗	= global raise
1sg	= first person singular pronoun
2sg	= second person singular pronoun
3sgf	= third person singular feminine pronoun
3sgm	= third person singular masculine pronoun
3nt	= third person neuter pronoun
1pl	= first person plural pronoun
2pl	= second person plural pronoun
3pl	= third person plural pronoun
FACT	= factitive
NEG	= negative
DEF	= definite
LOC	= locative
PN	=personal name

FUT	= future
PF	= perfective
DES	= desiderative
PROG	=progressive
PRE	= present
REL	= relative
SER	=serializer
MOD	= modal auxiliary verb
COMPL	= complimentizer
NEGA	= negative adverb
SFOC	= subject focus marker
NSFOC	= non-subject focus marker

## Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss*: A Thematic Study

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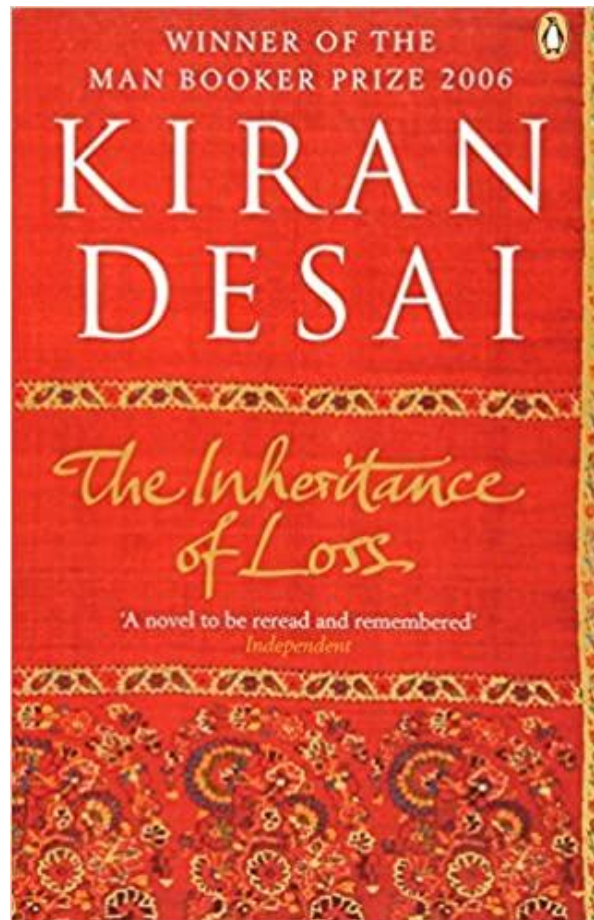
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4

### Abstract

The author Kiran Desai paints a world full of bleak, somber, uncertain, and insecure atmosphere for the immigrants like Biju who symbolically represent the whole brood of immigrants, especially, the illegal ones, always groping in dusk of despair for something they

need but eludes their grasp. One of the major themes that the author deals with in the novel, besides multiculturalism, is globalization and its attendant disadvantages. Kiran Desai, by turns, is comical and meditative in the novel and exposes the pain of exile and the sad ambiguities of the adverse effects of post-colonialism. The story goes forth and back between Kalimpong and New York City. The characters are extremely ordinary ones struggling to maintain their sense of dignity and self-respect, in the face of the morass of Western civilization. The main theme of the novel is the multiplicity of miseries that the immigrants in general and the illegal immigrants in particular face and the irretrievable loss they sustained, namely, loss of everything they value most. And the title *The Inheritance of Loss* is highly metaphorical and richly appropriate to the novel.

**Keywords:** Kiran Desai, *The Inheritance of Loss*, postcolonial hangover, multicultural conflict, globalization, immigrants, alienation.

Kiran Desai published her novel *The Inheritance of Loss* in 2006. The theme and content of Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss*, the Booker Prize winning novel is entirely different. Kiran Desai takes a wider canvas of her subject which touches upon various issues that have relevance to the present day life. She has created literary history by being the youngest woman ever to win the prestigious Man Booker Prize for fiction at the age of thirty five.

Kiran Desai in her novel *The Inheritance of Loss* very vividly delineates her characters that pass through vicissitudes of pain and suffering. And she clearly explains the reasons for their unhappy lives.

Multiple themes surface the novel and the main themes are multiculturalism, post-colonial hangover, flagrant racism, religious biases, disparity between one class and another class of people and globalization including insurgency by a majority of ethnic group of Gorkhas, for an independent state.

The author Kiran Desai paints a world full of bleak, somber, uncertain, and insecure atmosphere for the immigrants like Biju who symbolically represent the whole brood of immigrants, especially, the illegal ones, always groping in dusk of despair for something they need but eludes their grasp.

One of the major themes that the author deals with in the novel, besides multiculturalism, is globalization and its attendant disadvantages. Kiran Desai, by turns, is comical and meditative in the novel and exposes the pain of exile and the sad ambiguities of the adverse effects of post-colonialism. The story goes forth and back between Kalimpong and New York City. The

characters are extremely ordinary ones struggling to maintain their sense of dignity and self-respect, in the face of the morass of Western civilization.

The main theme of the novel is the multiplicity of miseries that the immigrants in general and the illegal immigrants in particular face and the irretrievable loss they sustained, namely, loss of everything they value most. And the title *The Inheritance of Loss* is highly metaphorical and richly appropriate to the novel.

The theme is reflected both in the title, *The Inheritance of Loss* and the Epigraph from Jorge Luis Borges' poem entitled Boast of Quietness: "My humanity is in feeling we are all voices of the same poverty... My name is someone and anyone. I walk slowly, like one who comes from so far away he doesn't expect to arrive." (Borges)

One understands from these lines of the great poet Borges that man's only inheritance in this life is one of 'poverty' of various kinds, material and spiritual, for instance; and in the end, one can only strive for, but never actually attain, fulfillment. The Epigraph encapsulates the idea of loss. All the characters in the novel appear to suffer some kind of loss which, ultimately, becomes his/her inheritance. It may be a material loss or a spiritual one, for loss is of various kinds; man's efforts in trying to realize his objective may end half-realized and half unfulfilled and to the extent that his efforts have failed to realize his objective in full, to that extent he sustains loss. Thus a man's life, on this side of the grave, is a tale of inheritance of loss.

The author states that all the characters in her novel are entirely fictional; but the continental journeys of her grandparents as well as her own, has given insight into the peculiar experience of travelling from one country to another between East and West. All these characters, both minor and major ones, are the very products of her creative imagination. But it is common knowledge that no writer can thoroughly escape or jump out of his or her own self; certain amount of autobiographical experience will be there; certain reminiscences, personal experiences and all these things go into the making of the substance of the novel; as the saying goes, all is grist that goes to the creative mill of the artist through the alchemy of the artist's imagination, the writer can create infinite variety of characters.

It is quite evident from her two successful novels that Kiran Desai is endowed with copious imagination of a highly creative nature. She is capable of satirical comedy as is evident from her debut novel *Hullabaloo in the Guava Orchard* (1998), and her celebrated second novel, *The Inheritance of Loss*, is an eloquent testimony to her talent that she is a past master at the creation of characters, from the grotesque to the sublime. Masterly creation of characters apart, (which calls for deep understanding of human nature), Kiran Desai's x-ray insight into the character of a person is most unerring. Kiran Desai says that she has a thorough grip over the

mind-set of the migrants; she herself has been a migrant. She says that this particular life is no accident. It is her inheritance.

Kiran Desai, as a modern writer, having personally experienced cultural clashes, displacement and dislocation in three countries—her native country of India, then England and lastly the United States - sustains a clear vision of the sad condition of the immigrants and what they inherit and what they lose in this process; and all this has been most realistically presented in her prize winning novel *The Inheritance of Loss*. Actually, the mixed experiences of the immigrants are explored against the backdrop of India.

The main characters of the novel, namely, the retired judge, Jemubhai Patel, the cook, Sai, Gyan and Biju belong to India. Kiran Desai explores the experiences of each of these five characters and in so doing she deals with various issues like the political agitation of GNLF during 1980's fighting for their own country or state and the cultural confrontation between Jemubhai Patel before he left for England and Jemubhai Patel during the stay in England and after coming back to India.

And most importantly, Kiran Desai deals with the theme of immigration and the unexpected and the undreamed of struggle for the survival in the United States. Incidentally, she describes the conflict between the group of people belonging to one class and others who belong to a different castes especially, as it is found in India, causing so much of disharmony among the different castes. The United States appears in the novel not as an active agent since it does not have any direct impact on India or its people; it is in the background as a place that exercises an irresistible fascination on the minds of the majority of Indians who see it as a kind of El Dorado or a land of riches.

Kiran Desai very vividly describes the diverse reactions of Indians to the influences of the West. She illustrates this through two major characters of the novel, namely, Jemubhai Patel in England and Biju in New York City. Jemubhai Patel leaves for England at the age of twenty for the study of I.C.S. and stays there for five years and returns to India as an I.C.S. and serves as a judge; and now, as a retired judge, chooses to live in a semi-dilapidated house in Kalimpong situated at the foothills of Kanchenjunga of the Himalayas in the north-eastern region and close to Darjeeling. During his stay in England for five study-years, he has unpleasant experiences of humiliating nature; he experiences the flagrant racism of the imperial British brand. He is treated almost like a pariah, his dark brown skin, his un-British accent and his want of good manners have kept him aloof and isolated from the English society; and this annoyed him at being rejected by the Whites in England. He withdrew himself into the shell of his solitude.

The novel very deftly unfolds this aspect of Jemubhai, in the form of hatred that he directs against himself.

With sympathy and compassion, Kiran Desai delineates all the characters that are quite true to life. She creates every character with a sympathetic touch; even when she depicts the character of Jemubhai Patel, the retired judge, who is presented as being grotesque, nowhere does she portray him as a buffoon, but it borders on caricature. Kiran Desai does it with the total detachment of an artist. He has certain expectations and if a man fails to rise to his expectations, he grows impatient to the point of being cruel to others. The Judge becomes a thorough going Anglophile and starts hating everything that is not English. The judge has drunk deep to the core of his being the spirit of colonialism that he has psychologically metamorphosed into an Englishman, though no one accepts him as one. But the racial and cultural forces vehemently negate his ditch efforts to look like an English gentleman. The judge can at best be an Anglicized Indian, but he can never be an English man. And this gross failure on his part makes him perverse and so he behaves as he does.

As an Indian born, with all the Indian traits ingrained in him, madly wishes both in thought and appearance to be an English gentleman. In other words, Jemubhai Patel wants to bring about a thorough psychological metamorphosis into an image of perfect English gentleman. His Quixotic struggle in this direction has left him a caricature of his original self.

The way that Kiran Desai describes Jemubhai Patel in his unceasing efforts to look like an English man, is very funny and not without a touch of sarcasm. In so describing him, the comic vein inherent in it borders on grotesquely farcical. The Judge, during his five years of stay in England, has developed certain complexes that left him an eccentric, possessing all the idiosyncrasies of one. 'Hate' has become one of the most prominent traits of his character. The Judge, once a man with a good standing in society, leads a secluded life away from city life, hoping for a peaceful life amidst the beauty of nature; but he finds it, to his dismay, that there are the tensions of a hidden hatred. Ironically enough Jemubhai, with his heart full of hatred, wishes to lead a peaceful existence and settles down in Kalimpong, a quiet and serene place at the foot of the Himalayas and very close to Darjeeling.

It is apt to quote Anila A. Pillai in this context:

The predominant traits of existentialism are alienation, quest and conflict. Aspects of alienation and conflict are epitomized in the lives of the protagonists. The retired judge, Sai, Gyan and Biju are a study in alienation and existential angst. (Pillai-172)

But here, suddenly and unexpectedly, the GNLF (Gorkha National Liberation Front) insurgents resort to violence of every description in order to create Gorkhasthan—with the slogan “Gorkhaland for Gorkhas”. Their insurgency creates great havoc in the region and leaves no one in peace.

Moreover, there is an accumulated amount of hatred deposited at the bottom of the Judge’s heart as a result of his hating everything that is not English. And the pity of it is, he has come to hate himself. Jemubhai Patel has that amount of intellect and intelligence to have passed the ICS and become a judge professionally. But the tragic flaw in his character is that he is absolutely devoid of matured discretion which comes to a man as he advances in age. But, Jemubhai Patel is not a proper Judge of men and matters in real life. The great irony in his life is that while being a judge professionally, misjudges everything and everyone including himself in real life. That is the very tragic flaw in his character. A modicum of common sense will tell anyone that ‘hate’ is a powerful negation of life and, as such, hate and peace can never co-exist.

Kiran Desai, in the final analysis, suggests that these negative complexes, which are responsible for the disintegration of his personality and consequently the loss of his identity, are at the root of the whole problem that the Judge is beset with. But, when he comes to England where he stays for a period of five years to prosecute his ICS studies, he comes in contact with the reality of things in England. He has become completely disillusioned.

Jemubhai Patel, for instance, is unbelievably surprised when an English porter carries his luggage when he gets down from the train in England (Lancashire). The England of his illusion evaporates giving way to the England of reality. For the first time, he experiences the cultural conflict or confrontation when his presence is avoided by the white people because of the colour of his brown skin and his un-English accent. Jemubhai Patel feels that he is wantonly estranged by the white society and this gradually drives him into a shell of his own solitude. A sense of self-loathing begins to take place in him and with this he starts hating everything.

Kiran Desai points out that colonialism is at the root of Jemubhai Patel’s problem and his thoughtless internalization of the white man’s values. If one critically analyses the character of Jemubhai Patel, one discovers that these are at the root of Jemubhai Patel’s eccentric behaviour towards himself and towards society. Throughout the novel the reader perceives that the multiple cultural conflict which is at the base of the lives of the major characters, as one of the major themes in the novel.

As Chandramani puts it,



Jemubhai Patel is the sad symbol of the debris of India's colonial history. The novel traces the process of the judge's displacement from centers of power to its ignominious periphery in a well-structured combination of stories from his past and the present experiences in India and England. (80)

This passive acceptance of Jemubhai Patel well contrasts with the active resistance offered by Biju in America, since he is sensitively conscious of his native culture which he holds in high esteem. Biju would never mortgage it or exchange it for the whole world. Biju, the cook's son, has inherited all the traditional virtues of a strong sense of rootedness, innocence and faithfulness. In a sense, he is a man of integrity and has a great respect for his native culture and, in no circumstances, he would deviate from it or exchange it for any alien culture in order to have temporary gains. Biju preserves his identity to the last in spite of many odds in an alien country.

The multi-cultural clash, which is one of the major themes of the novel, has been very vividly dealt with and well revealed through Biju's hard and miserable life in New York. That Indians going to the States is not an uncommon experience; but there are various reasons that compel Indians to immigrate to the United States. A good number of young men and young women go to the States with a view to prosecuting the higher studies and some go to the States for better job opportunities that command very high emoluments so that they can financially support their families in their native country. Biju leaves for the States with a view to leading a more comfortable life and earning more dollars. It is the colourful dream of every Indian that prompted to go to the States by hook or crook.

Kiran Desai presents a vivid picture of the difficulties and the miserable conditions which Biju is confronted with. His life there in the States is a ceaseless struggle for survival and the beautiful dreams of living a very comfortable life on this side of the Atlantic, vanish like mist before the heat of reality. Biju may be taken as the representative of those young men or women who entertain these tantalizing dreams. Kiran Desai very subtly presents the cultural clashes and the class conflicts between different races of people. Kiran Desai's intention is to show the worries of immigrants in an alien land where they lead lonely lives separated from their families and cannot visit them as often as they wish. These immigrants cannot live there with supreme self-confidence because they do not have a healthy sense of belonging in spite of their being very opulent. A feeling of homesickness nags them at the back of their minds. They always live in between thoughts of uneasy state of living in an alien country and the soothing thought that they are able to support their families in their native country financially. Thus these immigrants live on the horns of a dilemma.

For instance, Biju, finds it very difficult to cope with his life in New York since he refuses to conform to the norms of that society instead of compromising with the way of living there. And, therefore, Biju retreats to his native country without realizing the fulfillment of the objective for which he has left for New York. In New York, Biju's position as a worker has not been stabilized. He goes from pillar to post in search of a new job. And he finds no ease of mind and no comforts of body wherever he is and whatever be the job. As an illegal immigrant, Biju is always haunted by the fear that he might be detected by the American cops at any moment. Their life is a constant game of "Hide and Seek"! A sense of guilt pursues them, and it leaves them no room for peace of mind. It is, according to Kiran Desai, the kind of miserable life an immigrant leads in the U.S.A. At last Biju finds a job at Le Colonial which promises "The authentic colonial experience." Biju lives there along with workers like him belonging to different nationalities "In the basement kitchens of New York." Biju is hardly in a position to question his difficult situation, as he lives in America as an illegal immigrant. At first, he is loyal to the illegitimate system in which he is employed, and he is forced to accept his humiliating conditions in practical terms. However, as time goes by, he gets a better knowledge about his own condition. Thus, even though, it is challenging to get a job, Biju makes the decision to leave one of the restaurants in which he is working because they have 'meat' on the menu. From then on, he rejects any employment where 'meat' is served. Quite some time after he arrives in New York, he starts working for an Indian restaurant. Biju seems happier now, "No meat, No Pakistanis, no Bangladeshis." (TIOL-139)

This emphasizes the importance of being able to stay loyal to one's own culture, religion and customs. Consequently, Biju finds a way to cope with his cross cultural environment, without losing his pride for his Indian culture and religion. However, this example also shows that differences in religious and cultural beliefs are hard to deal with without prejudice and discrimination. In some cases, segregation seems to be the only alternative.

Biju, passing through difficult and unpleasant vicissitudes, feels that he is now in "good" working conditions. But it turns out to be not so good as he imagines it to be. One day Biju hurts his knee badly at work, and in great pain, he asks his owner to send for a doctor. Biju also tells him that he holds him responsible, as the injury is caused by his slipping on some rotten spinach in the kitchen. Biju's relevant questions make the owner furious; and Biju understands that his Indian boss, in spite of his friendliness to all outward appearances, is just like any owner he has met. He is only interested in keeping the costs down through hiring illegal immigrants. Without us living like pigs said Biju, What business would you have? This is how you make your money, paying us nothing because you know we can't do anything, making us work day and night because we are illegal. Why don't you sponsor us for our green cards? (TIOL-188)

As a response to this his owner replies, “Know how easily I can replace you? Know how lucky you are!” (TIOL, 188 PE) This incident makes Biju depressed; he feels trapped. He knows that a return to India is almost impossible, as his father has asked him not to come back, but to stay in order to earn money to secure them both. However, in spite of this, from now on, his thoughts keep circling around the question of returning. He, therefore, decides to return to his home country in the end. He finds the humiliation he is exposed to and the working conditions which are too much for him to cope with unbearable there; so he feels that he will rather try to survive in India as best as he can. It is apt to quote Pankaj Mishra’s argument that: “Desai takes a skeptical view of the West’s consumer-driven multiculturalism” and that the novel reveals an “invisible emotional reality” felt by “people fated to experience modern life as a continuous affront to their notions of order, dignity and justice.”

Biju, like most people in India, has had a beautiful dream of going to the States and leading a colourful comfortable life. That now, in retrospect, appears to be an illusion. The reality is at home and now Biju, after chasing a tantalizing illusion in an alien soil returns home, joins his father and kith and kin, although he meets with a very unpleasant and near tragic incident when he has been robbed off all the money he earned in New York besides other belongings by some Nepali rebels. This incident specifically throws light on the chaotic political condition created by the insurgents of pro-Gorkhaland. Kiran Desai vehemently condemns any kind of violence, whatever be the cause for the realization of which that men fight. Biju returns Biju’s miserable life after his return from the States is a representative example of clash of cultures. However, Biju’s life may be taken as an example/warning that the wealth of America lures the masses of the third World and, in reality, it turns out to be an illusion.

Sai, the orphan, the judge’s grand-daughter, was seventeen years old when she came from the St. Augustine’s convent her grandfather’s house, Cho Oyu in Kalimpong. Her grandfather leads a voluntary life of solitude with his cook, Pannalal and his pet dog Mutt. With the arrival of Sai, the inhabitants of the house become three besides Mutt. There is nothing common between the grandfather and the grand-daughter except that they are of Anglicized culture by force of circumstances. Sai closely associates herself with the cook although there is a wide gulf class-wise between them. Sai spends a good portion of her time with the cook while sharply conscious of the gap in their social status. They are always conscious of it which is the result of multicultural conflict between them. Since they speak to each other not in the same language, there is little emotional affinity between them, for language has the efficacy to create emotional identity between the speakers. And both of them are well aware of the cultural hiatus that exists between them. Kiran Desai brings this aspect of multi-cultural conflict out as often as the situation gives rise to it.

One perceives that there are two strands of the narrative. One strand deals elaborately with the life of Biju in New York and the other is the love episode between Sai, the Anglicized-seventeen years old girl, the granddaughter of the retired judge Jemubhai Popatlal Patel and Gyan, a young Nepali mathematics tutor. But unfortunately their love affair has been nipped in the bud stage partly because of the hiatus existing between their cultures and partly because of the insurgency for a separate Gorkhaland. Having listened to a speech delivered by one of the GNLFF leaders, Gyan is overwhelmed by patriotic passion for Gorkhaland, becomes inspired and joins the insurgents, totally identifying himself with their ideology; he goes to a place called Mahakaldara to take an oath that they must fight to the end until they realize their goal. And this sudden turn in Gyan's life is also the end of the brief love affair between them—Sai and Gyan; and this abrupt end is also due to multi-cultural conflict between them. B.K. Sharma explains that Sai and Gyan are different and “what binds, the seemingly disparate characters of the novel, is a shared historical legacy and a common experience of impotence and humiliation. Half-educated, uprooted men like Gyan gravitate to the first available political cause in their search for a better way. He joins what appears like an ethnic nationalist movement largely as an opportunity to vent his rage and frustration” (22-23). Underneath the fight for belonging is the historical consequence of migration and colonialism. Who belongs is ultimately an expression of identity. While both Sai and Gyan are navigating their identity, they are desperately asserting that they belong.

Gyan joins ‘Gorkha National Liberation Front’, he admits to “the compelling pull of history and found his pulse leaping to something that felt entirely authentic” (TIOL-160), and recovers a sense of recognition by mocking at the judge's mimicry of the western lifestyle but such attempts are nothing than illusions. As Ashcroft observes, “within the syncretic reality of a post-colonial society it is difficult to return to an idealized pure pre-colonial cultural condition” (Ashcroft-108). The fact that today the whole world is toward a ‘Global Village’ makes cross-cultural exchanges and influences inevitable. Grown up in a convent school, Sai is influenced by western culture and impressed by her grandfather's use of better English than other people but the idea that the Indian culture is inferior is intolerable to her.

Kiran Desai brings this aspect of multi-cultural conflict out as often as the situation gives rise to it. Jemubhai Patel's brief stay in England for studies is another illustration of the multi-cultural conflict that appears as an undercurrent throughout giving rise to Jemubhai's fumbling efforts to conform to the English manners which only results in the total loss of his cultural identity. Biju, in New York, as a worker in different restaurants, experiences the multi-cultural conflict. For instance, the culture in which Biju was brought up as a Hindu comes in conflict with the cosmopolitan practices especially in the matter of food in New York. The brief love affair between Sai and Gyan which comes to a sudden end is also due to multi-cultural conflict between them. Gyan is sharply conscious of the difference in respect of their class status as he

feels that Sai and her grandfather, the retired judge's behaviour in a condescending manner towards him.

The multi-cultural conflict describes the political situation in Desai's novel. If one delves a little deeper into this kind of political problem, one understands that basically the multiple cultural conflict is at the root of the whole problem. And once the community of people that totally identifies itself with its cultural roots, will form into a formidable force and tries to separate themselves from any other group with a different culture that dominates the community that has a specific and well defined culture; and it fights for its own cultural identity. Kiran Desai, with her keen perceptiveness, points out that a problem of this nature of cultural conflict needs to be resolved through amicable means before the problem, if unsolved, assumes the character of violence.

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*Thirukkural* -  
A Study of the Relevance and Application of Virtue to  
the Modern World

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**Abstract**

Thirukkural, one of the eighteen Didactic works of the Post-Sangam period, also known as the Tamil Veda and Tamil Marai, holds a very crucial place in history and it is an ancient treatise by Thiruvalluvar which transcends all barriers of Mankind. Comprising of two lines verses, this ethical work contains deep thoughts and deals with all kinds of virtues. The essence of the Thirukkural is to create a world devoid of evils, filled with good values and where it is worth living. The poet's profound thoughts and his venture into the elements related to the aspects of elementary values present a Code of Conduct that are crucial to bring about righteous way of living. The Code leads the followers to a life of perfection and widening of knowledge amidst the community. It is a book which is based on life experiences that transcends all barriers be it spiritual, cultural or social. This paper deals with virtue as depicted by Thiruvalluvar.

**Keywords:** *Thirukkural*, Thiruvalluvar, Didactic works, elementary values, profound thoughts, Code of conduct, life experiences.

**Introduction**

Written by Thiruvalluvar, also known as Deivappulavar, Nayanaar, Poyyappulavar, the *Thirukkural* is one of the oldest literary works in Tamil. The Thirukkural, as stated by Kulandaisamy, the former Vice Chancellor of Anna University of Tamil Nadu, is 'an extraordinary treatise on the Art of Living. It dwells deep into the unshifting foundations of human life, the society in general, and for the individuals of the society.' It has incorporated quite a huge amount of virtuous deeds called Aram. These virtuous qualities are intended to transform the world into an ideal one. *Thirukkural* not only deals with the home and the family but also covers every aspect of human life.

Thiruvalluvar's concept of virtue in some ways are in line with that of the great Philosophers like Confucius and Aristotle. His focus on Goodness of mankind, abstention from evils, warmth in the conjugal life reveal his high level of thoughts and his deep insights into human

nature. So, in this paper an attempt will be made to highlight virtues enunciated in Thirukkural and the focus will be mainly on the need for the application of the virtues in the modern world.

### **Aim of the Research**

The aim of this research is to analyze the different elements of Virtue in Thirukkural and its relevance and application to the modern world.

### **Hypothesis**

Living a life of virtue only can lead Man to a life of Excellence.

### **Methodology**

The study is a qualitative one. The main focus of the study is on virtue. Hence, the methodology used is grounded on the sources of information from real life experiences and from books and websites.

### **Significance of Virtue**

The meaning attributed to Virtue has known a change over the years. Virtue at the beginning meant manliness or valor. Now it is being defined as the moral excellence of a person. Indeed, virtue is a transliteration of the Latin word ‘virtus’ meaning manhood.

Morally excellent people have a character made-up of virtues valued as good. The people are generally kind, honest, respectful, grateful and possess a forgiving mind. They tread on the right path and are not inclined to do harm to others. Instead they act according to values and principles.

According to Philosophers, to live a life of excellence one needs to cultivate Virtues. If one possesses these virtues these will help them to redirect their life and ultimately lead them to a life of fulfillment.

### **Theorists’ Views about Virtue**

According to Manarishi Suddhananda Bharati, ‘The Thirukkural is the guiding light to humanity. It leads one to live in moral purity, in eternal wisdom, in spiritual knowledge, and in perfect prosperity, wealth and health. It is a faithful friend to the family man, to the mother, to children, to teachers, artists, rulers and politicians’ ([https://www.projectmadurai.org/pm\\_etexts/pdf/pm0017.pdf](https://www.projectmadurai.org/pm_etexts/pdf/pm0017.pdf)).

High influential thinkers like Confucius and Aristotle went deep into the ethical thought. In the book written by Jiyuan Yu entitled *The Ethics of Confucius and Aristotle: Mirrors of Virtue*,

the author discusses the way in which these thinkers ground their ethical values in a concept of Human Nature.

Confucius was a thinker who concentrated on ethics and moral philosophy. For him virtue is human excellence or goodness with regard to human function. He quoted:

“Virtue is more to a man than either water or fire. I have never seen men die from treading on water and fire, but I have seen a man die treading the course of virtue” (<https://www.quotes.net/quote/1290>).

Indeed, the Confucius’ concept about virtue is similar to that of Aristotle. The latter believes that ‘the virtue of a human being will likewise be the state that makes a human being good and makes him perform his function well’ (<http://buildthefire.com/btf-philosophy-aristotles-golden-mean/>).

Abraham Lincoln who is full of wisdom believes that folks who have no vices have very few virtues ([https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/abraham\\_lincoln\\_161243](https://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/abraham_lincoln_161243))

John Locke who was an English philosopher and physician, was one of the most influential of Enlightenment thinkers. For him, ‘virtue is harder to be got than knowledge of the world; if lost in a young man, is seldom recovered’ (<https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/7619102-virtue-is-harder-to-be-got-than-knowledge-of-the>)

Professor David Carr, research professor at the University of Birmingham in the UK, regarded virtue and vices as not innate but acquired. For him virtue and quality of character are closely related, and these cannot only improve man but can make him morally better.

According to Mahatma Gandhi, Thirukkural is a textbook of indispensable authority on moral life. Being himself a virtuous man, he says that ‘you must not lose faith in Humanity. Humanity is an ocean; if a few drops of the ocean are dirty, the ocean does not become dirty.’ He firmly believes that ‘That which is inherent in man is his Virtue.’ His concepts about Truth, Goodness and Beauty are being in line with those of Thiruvalluvar.

Indeed, these philosophers share the views that ‘an aesthetics of virtue that prizes inner moral which result in elegant behavior - it is precisely this behavior that will shape the society’ (<https://www.webpages.uidaho.edu/ngier/ConfGandhi.htm>). So, all philosophers will dream of an ideal world, free of sins, a world where it is good to live.

## **The Importance of Virtue**

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Virtues are basic qualities that are recognized throughout the world. Man is in constant search of power, freedom, bliss and peace. Hence by practicing virtue he will help not only build our character but will help the individual to fulfill his goals. Thiruvalluvar, through his maxims, reiterates the idea that once forgiven, all resentment and anger will be dissolved. However, by so doing he must not indulge in corrupt things.

The Indian Schools of Philosophy emphasize on ‘The Forget and Forgive Policy’, a theme which all the followers of God preach. Thiruvalluvar also in his couplets lays emphasis on it. He believes that the best punishment for those who do evil to you is to shame them by returning good for evil.

### **Attributes of Virtuous People**

It is not an easy task to lead a virtuous life. But, in order to live a life full of virtues, one should possess a character full of seriousness, dignity, satisfaction and kindness, trust, gratitude. Becoming virtuous is an attribute that a person himself may not be aware of. Not only his act but the way people will react to it as well will yield results that will reflect his virtuousness. Only virtuous people will be reliable and trustworthy.

Hence, to develop our potential and to live a more purposeful and better life, one should practice these virtues. These virtues will exhibit not only in the outcome of one’s act but in the response of people. Virtuous people will have a virtuous mind and people will not hesitate to seek help from him. By practicing these virtues man will develop his potentials and will live a far better life.

### **Human Values and Virtue**

The German Philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche (1844 –1900) was the first one to have used the word ‘Values’ in 1880. He used the word Values to denote moral attitudes and beliefs. Values indeed comes from the word ‘Value’ meaning worth of something.

(<https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/nietzsche-moral-political/>)

Human Values and Virtue cannot be dissociated from one another. Since time immemorial traditional values like reverence to elders, strong family ties among others have been emphasized upon by our elders. Respect for others is indeed one core value which aims at achieving peace, harmony and sustainable development. Virtues are indeed imbibed in these very values. In our life human Values and culture are subject to changes. However, Valluvar while referring to universal moral values, pointed out that the basic rules of morality are the same across cultures. For him, the universality of the moral values he preaches are meant to be applied to all Human Beings across all cultures.

## Thirukkural and Virtue

Composed by the great sage Thiruvalluvar during the post-Sangam period *Thirukkural* is a ‘Universal Tamil Scripture. As pointed by G. Rajagopal, this didactic work is a grand mosaic of cultural Creation, a repertory of universal thoughts and Truths.

Being a guide for all individuals, this work consists of 3 sections, namely, Aram (Virtue), Porul (Wealth) and Inbam (Love). The first section encompasses all the ideals of a virtuous life. Aram brings about all kinds of virtues which Thiruvalluvar summarizes into 38 chapters. His couplets are enshrined in the hearts of the whole population. Though a lot of drastic changes occur in today’s society, yet a lot of virtues as quoted by Thiruvalluvar are glorified in Tamil society.

According to Thiruvalluvar, virtue exhibits itself in different forms. In the chapter on virtue, he refers to the power of virtue which, according to him, is a drive that brings man to act with humanitarian mind, contribute to the betterment of the society while putting his own life at stake. As pointed out in kural 34, a pure mind will make the individual to abstain himself from all vices and evils. The one possessing a spotless and pure mind possesses all qualities of virtue.

**“A spotless mind is virtue’s sum  
All else is empty noise” (kural 34)**

It is very important for someone to have a spotless mind to practice virtue. The one living a virtuous life should not think about his own gains. Hence, he will be someone upon whom one can rely upon as compared to the one whose mind is filthy and corrupt and who will go about boasting about himself, without so much contributing to society. He will yield unfruitful acts and will utter baseless words, and this will lead him to his downfall.

By referring to the law of virtue Thiruvalluvar is advising man to be cautious in life. One should not think about his gains at the expense of society. He firmly reiterates the ideal of virtue by counseling man ‘to avoid even thoughtless ill’ for ruining others’ life out of forgetfulness may lead to his own downfall. (kural 204)

For Thiruvalluvar everyone cherishes a goal in life, but then the means to achieve it should be fair and just.

In several of his kural, Thiruvalluvar reiterates that an evil mind will lead to evil act. So, if one really loves himself, he should refrain from doing harm to others. (kural-206, 209, 210)

In the first 38 chapters on virtue, Thiruvalluvar emphasizes that a virtuous mind is crucial for the smooth running of the world and this will bring about positive vibes in society. A virtuous mind will refrain someone from indulging in crimes, evils and social sins. For him consuming meat, cheating and causing injury to others, resorting to all sorts of evil acts out of anger will destroy not only him but the society at large. Man, once rid of these acts, will be freed from vices, hence it will lead him to have a happy and harmonious life.

The remarkable work in the couplets on virtue, by their very feelings and content, bears a great similarity to Greece gnostic poetry. Indeed, Thiruvalluvar provided some of the most essential Code of Conduct to Human Beings. For instance, in kural 321, he refers to the act of non-killing which he conforms as being a virtuous act.

**“The sum of virtue is not to kill  
All sins come from killing” (kural 321)**

From this it is clear that Gandhian thought in line with the Valluvar’s thought. Gandhi had a strong belief in Ahimsa which he preached to mankind all during his lifetime.

Non-injury of any form is considered to be of highest virtue. Indeed, Swami Shivananda shared common views with Thiruvalluvar. Both of them firmly believed that causing injury to a living creature is a greatest sin. Hence, Swami Shivananda’s thought is in line with Thiruvalluvar’s couplet on non-killing: “Do not injure any being or creature in thought, word or deed.” Thiruvalluvar, by convincing man to refrain from killing in any form, seems to favour vegetarianism. However, it may also be noted that plants are also living beings. Hindu theology of *samsara* and *karma* announces that humans could have a rebirth in the form of plants, etc. based on their *karma*.

Alagappa Rammohan rightly pointed out in his version of ‘Thirukkural, The Handbook of Tamil Culture and Heritage’, unless man gets rid of violence from his mind and thought, he cannot show compassion to his fellow creatures. Violence is disruptive and will not lead to unity among people without which no peace will prevail on earth. For Rammohan, ‘if someone practices non-killing out of respect for all lives, he practices a supreme virtue. But if someone has resort to killing, he is showing irreverence to life.’

Sharing one’s food, refraining oneself from telling lies, stealing, cruelty and doing things out of anger, indulging in good deeds like charity even though being hurt by others are all those attributes to virtue. Thiruvalluvar believes that a good man’s mind is filled with virtue whereas a thief’s mind is filthy, hence it is filled with greed and deceit.

## **Virtue as the Essence of Domestic Life**

A great attribute has been assigned to the spouse who is considered to be the pillar who sustains the family united, brings about fame and not malign the family. As William Shakespeare rightly pointed out, ‘Behind every successful man there is a woman.’. Indeed, this has been proved since ancient times. Indeed, Thiruvalluvar has drawn the picture of the perfect householder in his verses.

Thiruvalluvar in the chapters on Domestic life and Wife, Life’s Noble Partner, glorifies the wife and household. He highlights the concept of virtue. For him the Domestic life when freed from blame (kural 49) is virtue in itself. The essence of domestic life is love and virtue. These qualities are very crucial without which domestic life would have been deprived of its essence.

*Kuruntokai*, a compilation of Sangam era classic poems dealing with love and family life, shows the lover/husband would part ways with the woman with whom he is in love, and would go to paramours and war. But the wife would wait patiently and faithfully for her husband or lover to return. Another vivid example is found in the great epic *Silappathikaram* in which Sage Ilango describes Kannagi as a very submissive faithful wife, fulfilling her duties towards her in-laws even after being separated from her husband Kovalan.

Thiruvalluvar also glorifies the wife by attributing several good qualities to her. A true wife is considered as the noble life’s partner of man and whose virtues match her home and who lives within her husband’s means. The wife is considered to be the pillar of society. She brings about her contribution in terms of support to her husband, family and works towards the progress of the family.

In some sense, patriarchy was the dominant form of family then and now. The role of the wife, in recent years due to social reformation movements, will be defined and described different from what ancient Tamil literature, including Thiruvalluvar’s *Thirukkural* describes.

## **Virtue of Charity**

Virtue is indeed one quality that makes man more cultured and it elevates him to a higher level. Thiruvalluvar’s concept of charity is not restricted to only bestowing of alms to others, but it englobes all the social services to all living creatures.

**“To give before hearing “I lack”  
Is the mark of the well-born.” (kural 223)**

## **Virtue as an Investment**

One of the qualities that raises man to a higher level in society is virtue. Virtue not only yields greatness and pride to people but bestows wealth as well. Thiruvalluvar, in the chapter on virtue, sees virtue as an investment in life that will bear fruits in future. What better investment than virtue which yields both wealth and release to the living? (kural 31) By that he means that virtue is a quality that can secure one's life. Man, once equipped with virtue, is ready to confront the world. One does not need to search for virtue as it is inborn in himself. So, once he is aware of it, he should be at the disposal of Man at the expense of his own happiness.

For Thiruvalluvar, only virtue will lead man to creativity. If there is no virtue no creativity of any type will result. A person if acquires the quality of virtue is considered to be the wealthiest of man.

There is no greater gain than virtue. Hence, virtue once forgotten will lead someone to ultimate loss.

### **The Righteousness of Virtue**

Leading a virtuous life will lead an individual to a proper life, to success and progress in life. One who possesses virtue is considered to be a wealthy man. However, when forfeiting it, evil may befall him. Man should keep on practicing virtue as this will help him to refrain from all sorts of vices.

Virtue alone leads to happiness and bliss in the family. All else is without praise. So avoid vices and indulge in virtuous deeds, says Thiruvalluvar. (kural 40)

### **Virtue / Non-Virtue**

Thiruvalluvar ponders upon the true meaning of virtue. He hesitates between virtue being an act or a word. He goes deeper and looks down upon it as being a thought. Someone should be filled of virtue to live a life of perfection. The mind is at the basis of all action and thought. So purity of the mind is first and foremost. So does virtue. One whose heart is devoid of evils and is full of virtue is known to be a virtuous person., hence will lead a harmonious life.

For Thiruvalluvar, envy, greed and harsh words are qualities that will have negative impact on man. Envyng the status and position of others, longing to have more and more wealth, possessing a mind filled with anger and constantly using harsh words that will hurt the feelings of others are the negative qualities that can bring about one's downfall. Once these negative qualities are rid of, virtue will prevail, says Thiruvalluvar. (kural 35).

**“Envy, greed, wrath and harsh words –  
These four avoided is virtue.” (kural 35)**

In kural 96 Thiruvalluvar makes an appraisal about the power of words. If a man uses useful and sweet words, his sins will diminish, and his virtue will increase. Well-chosen words are used by great leaders as they will yield good results and will have good impact on man. Harsh Words can either destroy someone's peace, ultimately bringing him to his downfall, contrary to sweet words that will have a positive impact and will yield good fruits.

## Conclusion

To conclude it is befitting to say that Thiruvalluvar is a great genius of his era. His focus was centered on life and he believed that for a man to lead a complete life he should be full of virtue. His principles about life, the moral values he preached, when adopted by man will help him lead a life of fulfillment. By sharing these high valued thoughts about virtue, Thiruvalluvar has helped humanity. Hence, it is befitting to say that the principles about virtues will definitely elevate Man and will bring him to achieve excellence in life.

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## Somerset Maugham: Mirroring Human Life and Human Weaknesses

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Courtesy: Maugham photographed by [Carl Van Vechten](#) in 1934

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/W.\\_Somerset\\_Maugham](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/W._Somerset_Maugham)

### Abstract

This paper tries to present Somerset Maugham neither as an idealist nor a moralist but a realist who mirrors ‘human life and human weaknesses’ to the core. This paper analyses how he excelled his contemporaries in his varied and picturesque narration of characters. Thus, this paper projects how Maugham by his elaborate narration, simple style, lucid and euphonic dialogues and ironic endings, displayed himself as a realist in mirroring life and human weakness.

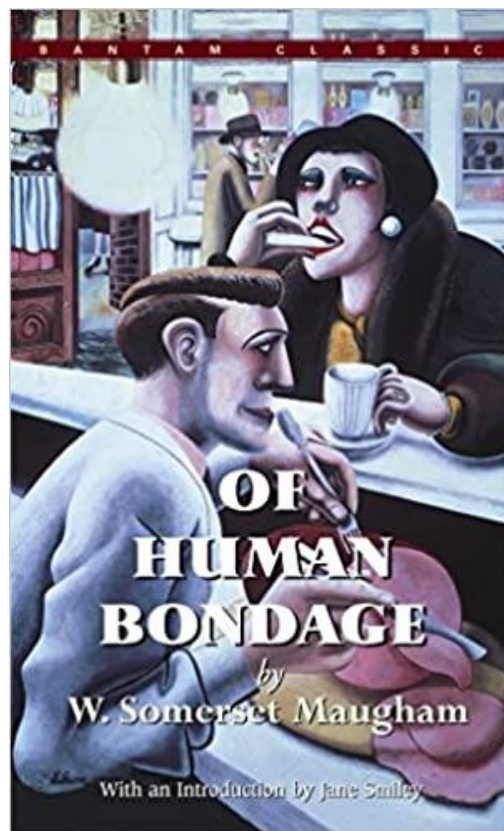
**Keywords:** Somerset Maugham, Realistic, human values, sufferings, humanistic, narration, characterization.

It is generally understood and accepted that William Somerset Maugham is a popular playwright, a well-known short story writer and an entertaining novelist of the twentieth century. Due to the death of his mother in 1882 and father in 1884, he lived like an orphan. During his school days, he read and observed his fellow human beings and he suffered from the whips and scorns of the teaching faculty. Whatever the problems at school might be,



Maugham developed his power of observation ever since he entered the school. Such was his power of observation that he related his experience admirably. As Curtis puts it, “He soon discovered where his real power lay, in the accuracy of his insights. If I suggested wounds, he was capable of inflicting them. His tongue was sharp if not, sharper than anyone’s” (P 35).

Maugham learnt German, attended Kuno Fisher’s lectures at the University of Heidelberg, saw performances of Ibsen and listened to Wagner. As he was a voracious reader, his reading broadened and expanded as little drops of water that make a mighty ocean. He read Fielding, Meredith, Swinburne, Verlaine, Pater, Matthew Arnold, Dante and Fitzgerald’s *Omar Khayyam*. Maugham did suffer, despite of all his reading, loneliness to a great extent. This affected his personality considerably. Though he received his MD degree, he had no intention to practise. He wanted to be a writer and so he chose his career himself. He started to consider about man at the age of twenty-five and he wanted to find out solutions for his troubled personality which was affected with the problems of good and evil and the immortality of the soul. He was continuously babbled and bewildered with problems till the end of his life. His first successful novel is *Cakes and Ale*. His craftsmanship as a narrator began to improve then. *Of Human Bondage* seems to be his master-piece. His philosophical novel *The Razor’s Edge* attracted the attention of his readers by his skilful narrative technique. It was considered as a prelude to the narrator’s conversational style.



Courtesy: [https://www.amazon.com/Human-Bondage-Bantam-Classics/dp/055321392X/ref=sr\\_1\\_2?keywords=Of+Human+Bondage&qid=1584531510&s=books&r=1-2](https://www.amazon.com/Human-Bondage-Bantam-Classics/dp/055321392X/ref=sr_1_2?keywords=Of+Human+Bondage&qid=1584531510&s=books&r=1-2)

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*Of Human Bondage* is an autobiographical novel. In this novel, facts, emotions and feelings were Maugham's own. The characters have been analysed psychologically. The design of the novel is simple without any flash-backs. The orphan, Philip Cary, suffers from clubfoot as Maugham suffered from Stammer. Thus, the novel *Of Human Bondage* represents a tableau of human life which is a product of Maugham's personal experience. Maugham's knowledge of human psychology was found to be profound. Here in this novel, one can find an excellent example of his understanding of human life. Suffering from some personal problems Philip has shown how bitterness, humiliation, ridicule, loneliness, disillusionment and disappointment are necessary experiences for the maturity of man. Here is found his psychological problems Maugham's narrative technique highlights the merits and demerits of his principal characters. With the power of uniting his major characters and the minor characters by means of flashbacks, he made his narration quite interesting. The curiosity of the reader is aroused to read his novels, especially *Cakes and Ale* and *The Razor's Edge*.

*Cakes and Ale* is a comic novel based on the life of a famous novelist, Mr. Edward Driffield and his first wife Rosie, an ex-barmaid. The novel raised unholy storm on its publication. Many felt that Maugham had hinted Thomas Hardy, the Grand Old Master of Literature, through Edward Driffield and Alroy Kears was a derogatory picture of Hugh Walpole. Mr. Cardel considers *Cakes and Ale* as an autobiographical novel. The peculiar characteristic of the novel is comical. Almost all the characters of the novel are taken from the narrator's life. The novel is a symbol of mockery at the Georgian Literary Society. It begins in a sarcastic and informal manner. Curtis says that Maugham presents human relationship in the urban literary society. Maugham is of the opinion that *Cakes and Ale* is the range of sittings and periods it encompasses. It incorporates Victorian provincial life, Edwardian social and literary manners and the Georgian scene two decades later. Maugham's participation in World War II deserves mention here. He travelled throughout America. The war being over, Maugham returned to his Villa. He never wanted to retire from writing until unlike many other aging writers like E.M. Forster. *The Razor's Edge*, his last great novel, was widely read and appreciated by servicemen of war. The title of the novel *The Razor's Edge* was borrowed from *Katha Upanishad*. It says the sharp edge of a razor is difficult to pass; thus the wise say the path of salvation is hard. It is a philosophic novel based on Indian mysticism. It represents Maugham's attitude towards life and his faith in renunciation. Larry is the hero of this novel. He comes to India and gets in touch with Indian Sadhus and philosophers and from whom he assimilates the lesson of renunciation.

As one of the prominent literary figures of the twentieth century, Maugham's contribution in the field of English literature has left behind him a rich legacy for the reading public. In 1950, he became a celebrity. "He was perhaps, as Martin Day observed in 1965, the most widely read English novelist of the twentieth century" (Burt 25). Being the favourites of the Edwardian conscience, Shaw and Wells had proclaimed the sins and follies of the Victorian England. While Galsworthy aimed at practical humanitarian aspect of life,

Bennett's concentration was on the working of times on society and human nature, Maugham showed his real interest towards the follies and pretensions of human life. While Shaw was a prophet, Maugham was a humanist. Maugham was not an innovator, moral or technical. However, "Where Shaw, Galsworthy and Wells concerned themselves with society, and directed attention to faults in its structure, Maugham's exceptionally keen eye was upon the follies of individuals" (Jonas 13).

As a prolific writer of fiction, Maugham has given a graphic picture and impressive portrayal of characters, Ashenden and Rosie in *Cakes and Ale* and Elliott, Larry and Isabel in *The Razor's Edge*. He has excelled his contemporaries in his wonderful, varied and picturesque narration on his various characters, minor or major. He has charmingly analysed the family attachment in the case of Isabel and Gray and detachment in the case of Drifffield and Rosie Drifffield. But Rosie is so much attached with George Kemp, her second husband (her ex-lover) and intimate companion throughout her life. *The Razor's Edge* is Maugham's last major work written in the first person singular and it is more personal than anything he had written since *The Narrow Corner*. He writes: "Maugham, of course, used the first person singular in *The Moon and Six Pence* and *Cakes and Ale* ..." (Calder 297).

One of the masters of English style, Maugham is critical, satirical and humorous by turns. But his style is uniformly excellent. The secret of his success lies in his narrative skill. He not only practices but also analyses the excellences of style. He has mirrored his attitudes such as tastes, and temperaments, passions and emotions, likes and dislikes, pathos and pleasures in his novels. Maugham sarcastically narrates the personal life of Elliott. His behavior is comic. Mrs. Bradley is convinced by his false statements about Larry's private life. But Isabel proves that Elliott is a fate and Larry is free from flaws. He is a link between Maugham and the other American characters. As a man of fifty, tall with good features, a colossal snob, he has a passion for social relationship. He is a hypocrite, a fake and a liar. He has got some virtues and many vices. He has settled down in France because to him, it is the only civilized country in the world. He is more interesting than other Characters. He is proud and very much impressed with Paris for its civilization and grandeur. He is arrogant to some people but hospitable on some occasions. Though he is unpopular, he is tolerated by everybody who attends his lunch on meetings.

Larry is a symbol of self-sacrifice unlike Isabel, his lady love. His is an embodiment of goodness unlike the other characters in *The Razor's Edge*. Human nature differs from individual to individual, place to place and time to time, it appears to be very complex and hazardous. It can be observed in the name of Isabel, Gray, Elliott, Sophie and Suzanne. There was much criticism about the plot construction of *The Razor's Edge*. But all the allegations are not true. Each character is narrated in an informal manner. Larry speaks about his fear and doubts and narrates his mystical experiences in India and Germany to Maugham. He expresses his contact with holy men and its impact in his life. He also states his mental tortures through his restlessness and confessions. Shri Ganesha and father Ensheim interpret

them. One can analyse and understand Larry by his sensitive interpretation of life and its misfortunes. However, he reaches ecstasy. It is understood that this personal experience differs from individual to individual. Maugham uses the technique of first person narrative. The narrator does not act as an omniscient person. He collects information from the other characters of the novel, especially from Larry's friends and others. He also elicits from his personal contact with the characters. In the beginning of the novel, *The Razor's Edge* the narrator appears as a middle aged English observed with rich experience about the west and the east.

Maugham introduces the principal characters through luncheons, dinners, social movements and travel experiences. Through the use of 'I' first person, the narrator exposes his view on his characters and their importance. To understand his technique, one has to analyse his various characters. Since the characters are drawn from his personal experiences, they are realistic, thereby revealing the concept of life. Maugham is not an original thinker. He is satisfied with the secondhand information. Human nature is portrayed in both the novels, *Cakes and Ale* and *The Razor's Edge*. If Joyce, Hemingway and Virginia Woolf were changing the face of literature, Maugham was creating an epoch in twentieth century literature. He followed the old narrative technique till the end of his writing career. The story of his novels is striking. Its dramatic and compact structure, subtle dialogues tense situations and portrayal of lively characters like Larry and Isabel in *The Razor's Edge* and Rosie in *Cakes and Ale* make it readable. These lively characters give charm and add beauty and sweetness. Both of these novels begin and end in a dramatic way. However, the end is ironical. The narrator has left the reader in an air of suspense in order to dream and make his own conclusion. Curtis remarks:

“Cakes and Ale annoyed the readers, especially two great novelists, one dead and other was still alive. Maugham was severely condemned. Besides, Rosie is identified as the second daughter of Henry Arthur, Jones, with whom Maugham had his great premarital affair” (P 141).

The theme of the novel *Cakes and Ale* is the life of Edward Drifffield, who dies in his old age. His widow, the hospital nurse, knows something about Rosie, the first wife of Drifffield. She entrusts to Alroy Kear, the popular novelist of the time, to write the biography of Drifffield. Kear meets Ashendan who knows the Drifffields (Drifffield and his first wife) as a boy in Blacks table and a London Medical student. Three novelists are seen in the plot and there are two stories knitted through one plot. The theme of the novel *The Razor's Edge* is search for peace. Path of life is full of trials and tribulations. He wanders to get peace of mind. The title of the novel is derived from Kathopanishad. Kathopanishad compares the path of soul (spiritual life) to a razor's edge. Maugham's narrative technique is commendable. The plot helps the writer narrate the story aptly. He adopts two methods in his narration. He has chosen to write in the first person in both the novels *The Razor's Edge* and *Cakes and Ale*.

In a word, it may be said that Maugham's works reflect his personality at different angles of his personal life and narrative skill.

Maugham is a humorous writer whose wit and humour sparkle, startle and delight the readers. Wit of Maugham does subordinate his comic intentions. It is the instrument by which the narrator exposes the realistic nature of his characters. Maugham ridicules Isabel so as to mend or reform her attitude towards Larry and Sophie. As a good satirist, the narrator's aim is to focus his attention on the weaknesses, vices and follies of Isabel. His conversation with her is often wrapped in ridiculous words. His narration is satirical, and his satire aims at the amendment of Isabel's vices. His satire in *Cakes and Ale* and ironical end in both the novels, *Cakes and Ale* and *The Razor's Edge* attract readers all over the literary world. Maugham is a cynic. A cynic has the natural attitude to know about the price and value of his characters. Maugham is aware of the human nature and its relative activity in life.

Maugham could communicate his readers very easily. It is one of his greatest achievements. His technique of narration, characterization and style influenced writers. The reader recognizes his creations because his artistic imagination and humanitarian vision. Being mainly concerned with the reality of life, he is a keen observer of characters. In his novels, Maugham, the narrator is found presenting a pattern of life. No doubt, the characters remain artistically along with the novelist who goes on narrating different aspects of life. whatever the case may be, his novels are realistic and entertaining. According to Burt, "Maugham wrote of life as he observed and experienced it" (P 134).

To conclude, it may be stated that Maugham is a popular novelist representing the twentieth century British novelist. His narration is elaborate, style simple, lucid and euphonic, dialogues, numerous life egoistic and endings ironic. He was neither, an idealist nor a moralist, but a realist. Rosie's non-possessiveness, Ashenden's intimacy with Rosie, Driffield's non-interference policy in family life, Elliott's generosity and hospitality, Larry's superficiality and non-attachment, and Sophie's sexuality in helplessness are obviously expressed by Maugham in his novels. As a well-known novelist and a distinguished narrator, Maugham has mirrored life and human weakness.

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## **Grammatical Constraints in Tamil-English Code Mixing among the Urban Jaffna Tamils**

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### **Abstract**

This paper analyses the grammatical constraints of Tamil-English code-mixing (CM) among the urban Jaffna Tamils. Sri Lanka is a multilingual country where there is a tendency of mixing two languages as a communicative strategy used by the speakers. It has been observed that mixing of indigenous languages - Sinhala and Tamil and English is a common speech behaviour which occurs in the discourse of educated bilinguals in Sri Lanka. In recent years, researchers have increasingly focused on the linguistic constraints on code-mixing. From a syntactic point of view, it is proposed that code-mixing is governed by a host code/guest code principle. This principle says that in a code-mixed discourse involving languages L1 and L2, where L1 is the host code and L2 is the guest code, the morphosyntactic rules of L2 must conform to the morphosyntactic rules of L1, the language of the discourse. In order to determine the rules that govern Tamil-English CM and possible grammatical constraints, the researcher involved the mixed method of analysis. The present study drew upon data collected from a recorded spontaneous conversation between bilinguals in a language contact situation in which the two languages are syntactically not similar from each other, namely, Tamil and English. The study addresses the question whether there are grammatical constraints on Tamil-English CM. The researcher has examined the grammatical aspects of code-mixing and found that code-mixing is a rule governed phenomenon, that is, there are constraints that govern where in a sentence a code-mixing can occur and where it cannot occur.

**Keywords:** Tamil-English Code Mixing, Urban Jaffna Tamils, educated bilinguals, grammatical constraints, rule governed, morphosyntactic rules

### **Introduction**

Code mixing has been one of the popular studies in sociolinguistics since the mid-1970s, with numerous studies on bilingual Spanish-English communities in the United States and a few

studies on other bilingual and multilingual communities around the world. In a bilingual speech community, there is a natural tendency among speakers to mix lexical items, phrases, clauses, and sentences during verbal interaction. This is an essential part of their communicative competence, the "ability to switch linguistically and appropriately according to the situational changes" (Verma 1975:35). The elements mixed belong to the "host" (L1) language which, for historical and socioeconomic reasons, has acquired more prestige than the "guest" language which receives them. "Code-mixing", "code-switching", and "borrowing" are some of the labels used in linguistic literature (e.g., Bloomfield 1933, Haugen 1956, Kachru 1978, Sridhar 1978, Poplack 1980, among others) to describe various kinds of mixtures resulting from language contact.

The present study is concerned with linguistic study of Tamil-English code-mixing among the Jaffna urban bilinguals. In order to analyze the grammatical constraints of Tamil-English code-mixing, social factors contributing to code-mixing must be considered because structural similarity does not alone result in code-mixing. Social factors are equally responsible for its occurrence. Sociolinguistically speaking, it is the language which is considered more basic i.e. more important in a given discourse situation in a given social setting. In a given social setting one language is considered to be more important than the other depending on the sociological patterns of the society. It has been argued that fluency in two languages for a person is never equal; one language always dominates another. Similarly, in a society, one language is considered more important in determining discourse situation and that language is considered as the base language for that society.

### **Tamil in the Sri Lankan Setting**

The word "Tamil" refers both to the language and its speakers, and when it refers to the speakers, it does not denote them as speakers of a language, but refers to them as also an "ethnic" group, with an identifiable culture, and a consciousness among them that they belong to one group. In Sri Lanka, Sinhala, Tamil and English are the major languages. Of these, Sinhala is the language of the majority, Tamil the language of the largest minority, while English is the language used by the English educated among all Communities in Sri Lanka, in addition to its being the mother tongue of the Burger community. The Tamil speaking population in Sri Lanka consists of the Sri Lanka moors and the Indian moors. They thus constitute more than a quarter of the total population of the Republic of Sri Lanka. The Sri Lanka Tamils though found all over the island in scattered settlements; predominate in the Northern and Eastern Provinces that have been considered their traditional homelands from olden times. There is also a bulk of the Tamil population in the greater Colombo areas. Jaffna, Vavuniya and Mannar are the major towns in the Northern Province and Batticaloa and Trincomalee in the Eastern Province. The Indian Tamils are mostly employed in the plantations in and around the hilly districts in the central part of the island.

## **English in Sri Lanka**

Colonialism played a pivotal role in the development and promotion of English in South Asia, and Sri Lanka is no exception in this regard. The British Empire ruled the Indian Subcontinent for almost 200 years from 1757 to 1947. The origin of the impact of English on Sri Lankan languages can be traced back to the advent of British colonialism in the Indian subcontinent that brought English with it. With the passage of time, and as a result of their prolonged stay in the subcontinent, gradually the use of English extended in public domains and in a short time influenced the other languages in use in those domains.

The impact of English on Sinhala and Tamil started during the colonial period and this hegemony of English over these languages became evident in all the spheres of social life. The other impact of English was the result of its contact with these languages. As a result, the use of two languages almost inevitably affects the forms of the languages so used. The use of English by Sinhala/Tamil speakers has led to the functional elaboration of both English and Sinhala/Tamil. In turn; bilinguals show varying degrees of proficiency in the languages they use. Such disparities in performance have led to differing patterns of bilingualism manifested in different phonological, grammatical and lexical features.

## **Development of Bilingualism in Jaffna**

The Jaffna Tamil society in Sri Lanka comprises both bilinguals in Tamil and English and Tamil monolinguals. It is a common feature that these bilinguals and monolinguals in Jaffna use a number of English words in their day-to-day speech and writing in Tamil at home, in social interaction, in education, for administrative purpose etc. In case of the bilinguals, the use of English words may be through language contact situations like code switching, code mixing, borrowing etc.

The initial development of bilingualism in Tamil and English in Jaffna is the outcome of English education and civil administrative activities through the English medium during the British colonial rule in Sri Lanka. English is still taught as a second language in educational institutions and considerable part of the administration is carried out in English in Sri Lanka. As a result English still continues to be in contact with Tamil and this language contact situation has an impact in learning English as a second language.

## **Literature Review**

Canagarajah (1995) comments on code alternation activity among the Jaffna Tamils. He says that there are almost no L2-dominant or balanced bilinguals in the postcolonial context; grammatical competence per se in English is also declining. Tamil has taken over domains previously belonging to English; extensive use of unmixed English in conversations is reduced to a few formal contexts. However code alternation activity enables English to continue in a more



widely distributed and pervasive form than ever before, with both monolinguals and bilinguals using English in conventional and unconventional contexts with complex communicative competence. So code alternation behaviour will exist in Jaffna, gradually making Englishized Tamil a separate, independent code in its own right. This will exist parallel to unmixed Tamil and English, with sociolinguistic rules and communicative functions of its own. Although unmixed Tamil and English are becoming highly restricted in use, Englishized Tamil is widely used in the day to day communication. It is the unmarked everyday code in the Jaffna Tamil society.

Gunsekara (2005) provides an overview of the phonological, morphosyntactic and semantic characteristics of SLE. She focuses on the structural properties of the varieties of English spoken in the post-colonial Sri Lankan setting and reports CM as a discourse strategy among Sinhala-English bilinguals.

Kanthimathi (2007) states that code mixing is a kind of natural behavior of bilinguals and used as a linguistic strategy in informal styles of communication. Most of the time, the bilingual is not aware of the way he/she mixes the two languages. The mixed code is a natural consequence of languages in contact. In her study of the Tamil English mixed language used by people in Tamilnadu, people who live in a bilingual or multilingual communication environment usually have the tendency to use two or more codes as a strategy to facilitate communication while communicating with each other. The alternate use of Tamil and English within the same discourse has a pattern.

Wettewe (2009) focuses on the sociolinguistic features of code-mixing in the postcolonial Sri Lankan setting and presents a comprehensive analysis of the structural properties of the mixed language that has become a linguistic reality. She confirms that a mixed variety has evolved as a result of the language contact between Sinhala and English and this variety is mostly influenced by the host language (L1). She also discloses the structural properties of CM from the study of Sinhala-English code-mixing. She says that the analyses propose not only account for the structural properties of Sinhala-English code-mixing, but also explain the functions of language mixing in Sri Lanka. The structural analysis provides insight into the co-existence of English with Sinhala in Sri Lanka. The analysis shows the dominant influence of Sinhala on Sinhala-English code-mixing. She points out that most of the Sinhala elements such as nouns, complementizers, verbs, numerals, particles and plural markers facilitate the inclusion of English elements in the discourse of the Sinhala speaker.

Espinosa (1917), Mkilifi (1972), Labov (1972), Lance (1975) explain that the linguists who examined the aspect of CM as a language contact phenomena agree that CM is indeed a rule-governed phenomenon, that is, there are constraints that govern where in a sentence a code-

mix can occur and where it cannot. It was assumed in earlier studies of CM that CM was a random mixture of languages. However recent studies have shown that CM is rule-governed by certain restrictions. Before discussing some of these restrictions, it would be better to look at the historical background in which one can identify the different stages in the development and formulation of syntactic restrictions in CM.

Pfaff (1976), (1979), Poplack (1978), (1981), Sridhar and Sridhar (1980) state that studies of the syntax of CM suggest there are two categories of constraints which can be identified as language-specific constraints and the postulated language-universal constraints. Language-specific constraints are those which apply to CM in a specific bilingual community. Language-universal constraints are assumed to be those which can apply to CM across cultures and languages. Some universal constraints on code-mixing have been proposed in the literature.

Annamalai (1989) states that though there are many counter examples cited in the literature as to the proposed constraints and the underlying conceptual problems, universal constraints are likely to exist if code-mixing is considered as a universal phenomenon in the sense that any bilingual can mix his/her languages and any two languages can be mixed. The existence of universal constraints follows also from the assumption that the mixed code has the properties of host language (L1). The assumed linguistic properties in the mixed code are organizational, configurational and classificatory properties.

Marasigan (1983), Chishimba (1983), Pandit (1985), Myers-Scotton (1989) comments that there are over fifty language-specific constraints which have been proposed to account for the syntax of CM. Some of the proposed constraints are determiner constraints, the pronominal subject constraint, the number-of-switches constraint and the conjunction constraint. Code-mixes of this kind are common and can be found in many languages around the world.

Several constraints have been proposed on CM which are claimed to be universal. The constraints which are claimed to be general to account for CM patterns are given in this section. In recent years, research has increasingly pointed toward the universality of three linguistic constraints on code-switching: (1) an equivalence of structure constraint, (2) a size-of-constituent constraint, and (3) a free morpheme constraint.

### **Background of the Study**

The systematic use of code-mixing by bilinguals as an important strategy for communication has prompted scholars to study the phenomenon in all its details. Gumperz (1964, 1970, 1982), Verma (1975), Woolford (1983), and Dua (1984), among others, have dealt with its linguistic, sociolinguistic, and psycholinguistic aspects in order to solve some of the

theoretical issues relevant for a theory of bilingualism in general, and of code-mixing in particular.

In the light of the said views, the researcher has observed that code-mixing is a common phenomenon among the urban Jaffna bilinguals as it is found in the communities of the world. There have been number of studies which have been made on sociolinguistic aspects in Sri Lanka. The social aspects of code mixing i.e. the setting, addressee, and addressor as well as other social factors such as prestige attached to a particular language, social historical background of a language etc. determine the linguistic choices and preferences in the process of code mixing on the other hand the linguistic choices of items to be code mixed reflect the socio cultural context. So code mixing is a socio-linguistic phenomenon and social and linguistic characteristics of code mixing are interknitted.

Although there have been studies done on sociolinguistic and structural linguistic aspects of code-mixing in Sri Lanka, no studies have been made on grammatical constraints of code-mixing in Sri Lanka. The observation and experience of the researcher from the everyday discourse of the urban bilinguals in Jaffna gave strong base to the researcher to undertake a study on the grammatical aspects of Tamil-English CM especially in grammatical constraints of code-mixing among the urban bilinguals in Jaffna. The mixed discourse variety shares related as well as unrelated characteristics with Tamil and English.

Code mixing is very common among educated bilinguals in Jaffna Tamil society. The following is one example which is typical among them.

naan bank-ilay otu loan-ukku last month apply-paNNinaan.

I bank-loc. a loan-dat. last month apply-do, past.sg.

I applied for a loan in the bank last month.

In the above example, the Tamil case inflection – ilay has been added to an English noun “bank” and –ikku is another case inflection added to the English noun ‘loan’ and the word order in the sentence is Tamil syntactic SOV pattern. The English verb ‘apply’ is freely mixed and it is often used with the Tamil dummy verb ‘paNNu’ along with the Tamil tense markers as a compromise strategy to facilitate the insertion of English elements in Tamil dominant sentences.

A Jaffna Tamil bilingual often starts with a Tamil sentence and finishes with an English sentence.

nii ready-enTaal, give me a call. I’ll come.

you ready-nom. conj. give me a call.

When you are ready, give me a call. I’ll come.

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Grammatical Constraints in Tamil-English Code Mixing among Urban Jaffna Tamils

In the above example, the code switching takes place within one complex sentence, which has a main clause and a command followed by another statement.

Apparently, the examples discussed above show how a bilingual speaker alternates between English and Tamil constituents and how code-mixing is facilitated by structural features of both Tamil and English. Thus, a bilingual speaker can involve in code-mixing using different strategies to facilitate communication. This alternate use of Tamil-English within the same discourse has a pattern. So the grammatical features Tamil-English CM will be further discussed and analyzed throughout the study to find out whether there are grammatical constraints and a rule governed phenomenon.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Code-mixing is considered as one of the most debatable linguistic phenomena among the bilinguals and it is the subject of controversial debate among scholars who study the language contact phenomena. However, because of its popularity and phenomenal usage among speakers, there is a tendency which people look at mixing two languages where speakers are not using both languages properly. It is noticed that there are many English words and the grammatical features used in the day to day speech patterns of the Jaffna Tamils. The mixing of languages is found so common and the concept of 'pure' language is slowly becoming obsolete. English is increasingly used in spoken Tamil discourse nowadays. Though this study is intended to analyze that if code mixing is practiced as a strategy for effective discourse, CM is a better term to describe Tamil-English mixed data in relation to the different language variables such as linguistic and sociolinguistic variables play a role in determining the constraints in mixing to facilitate communication among the bilinguals of Jaffna Tamils.

### **Objective of the Study**

This present study tries to elucidate the code mixed speech produced by the Jaffna Tamil bilinguals and the study also addresses whether there are grammatical constraints on code mixing based on ruled governed phenomenon in determining the types of grammatical units such as words, phrases, clauses and sentences for effective communication.

A number of questions have been raised by the researcher: How two distinct languages, such as Tamil and English, can narrow their differences in such a way as to result in discourse involving language mixes within a single sentence. In other words, how the units of another code integrate into the systems of the absorbing code and how the units from two codes can be organized into a cohesive relationship, where these units of another code fit in the absorbing code, If not, what the appropriate places for these units are, How we can construct a formal account of the grammatical mechanism which underlies discourse containing code-mixing. It is with these questions in mind that the present study is conducted. For the purpose of the study, the research questions were formed by the researcher to take forward the study.

## **Research Question**

In order to take forward the present study on Tamil-English CM, the following hypotheses were formed based on the background, observation and experience of the researcher. Code mixing is an inevitable strategy for an effective discourse and manipulation of linguistic components in compliance with socio cultural situations.

The following question gets importance in the present study.

1. What are the grammatical constraints of communication facilitations and how does one go about in establishing such constraints?

## **Methodology**

Research methodology is an important part of any research work carried out in any field of study. Therefore the type of research method, the techniques and the instruments used in the research differ depending on the disciplines in which the research is to be done. As the present research on the field of contact phenomena such as CM/CS, the researcher has made efforts to look for the views of the different scholars in relation to the research methodology and the methods of collecting data for the analysis to derive findings of the study and to find the effectiveness of the research method and techniques in relation to the validity and reliability which can provide consistent results when it is repeated by researchers in any number of times. From the discussion of the methods used in the previous studies, the researcher has chosen the mix method and the types of method associated with the qualitative study of the research topic.

## **Instruments for Linguistic Data**

As the study mainly focuses on the grammatical constraints of the Tamil-English mixed discourse, collecting linguistic data is very important for the analysis. The actual occurrences of mixed speech and constraints surrounding these mixings were found in the natural setting where speaker's inhibitions in language mixing were less prevalent. In order to collect data, the researcher designed bilingual elicitation tasks and spontaneous conversations and used tape recorder to record the speech of the respondents. The data collections for the linguistic analysis were based on the recorded speech in storytelling, picture description, and informal discourse with the respondents in natural setting. Oral narration was preferred as it is natural, spontaneous, innovative and unconscious process compared to writing, which is a highly conscious act.

## **Picture Description**

In the picture description, respondents were given different pictures and they were asked to describe the pictures. First of all, they were given time to go through the pictures and figure out the facts for description. After that, they were asked to describe each picture given to them and their language output was recorded.

## **Storytelling**

In the storytelling, respondents were selected and asked to narrate a story which they have read in their lifetime. They were given time to recall the story for the spontaneous narration.

## **Informal Discourse**

In the informal discourse, the researcher involved in eliciting natural conversation with respondents. In order to elicit natural conversation, the researcher had an informal discourse on their life experience, work, and entertainment.

## **Respondents for the Linguistic Data**

The respondents of the study were locally-born Tamil speakers who were brought up and educated in Sri Lanka. Their age ranges from 20 to 50 years. For the purpose of this study, 25 respondents were selected from the urban areas where the researcher identified the Tamil English bilinguals rather than the rural areas where most of the people were monolinguals. In relation to the types of education, all the respondents had completed their primary and secondary education in their local settings, and few had their tertiary education at different universities in Sri Lanka. Most of them were familiar to the researcher. It should be noted that as the proposed study involves with analysis of grammatical constraints of code mixing among the urban educated bilinguals, the caste, religion and region of the respondents do not cause any impact in this study. At the same time, the respondents from the religious places such as temples/kovils and church were not considered for data collection because the respondents from the religious places deliberately avoid code mixing in their day to day ritual communication.

The respondents were employed in different working places and occupying different positions. The researcher's familiarity with the respondents eased the task of collecting data freely. The respondents' consent to record their speech was obtained from them and they were told that the data would be used for research purpose.

## **Procedure for Data Collection**

The respondents were shown a picture-story consisting of eight pictures arranged sequentially on a sheet of paper. They were given time to look at the pictures and figure out the story. They were then asked to narrate it in the form of a meaningful story. Oral narration was preferred as it is a natural, spontaneous, innovative and unconscious process, compared to writing, which is a highly conscious act. The language output produced by the respondents based on the picture story shown to them was recorded. Respondents were heard discussing among themselves that the aim of the study was to find out who narrated the story accurately. The respondents were unaware that it was the language that was being taken into consideration and not the accuracy of the facts. Hence, this method was very close to recording natural conversation which is done in most of the researches of this kind.

## Transcription of Data

The recorded speech obtained through various techniques was analyzed. After collecting the language data, the recorded speech was transcribed. In the transcription of the recorded speech, each orthographic unit was coded as Tamil, mixed or English. The total number of words in each recorded speech was counted. The word count was established on the basis of transcription. The percentage of English words in each sample was calculated. For the purpose of analysis, each orthographic unit in Tamil was considered as one word. The English words occurring in the code-mixed corpus were separated. A percentage count of the type of mixing was also performed to check which English unit was more preferred in mixing with Tamil.

## Calculation of Percentage of Code-Mixing

The recorded text was analyzed to check the percentage of code-mixing in the actual context. A simple percentage method was adopted in the analysis to determine the frequency of code-mixing among Tamil English bilinguals. The total number of words in the recorded speech was calculated and the total number of English words and mixed words were also calculated. The percentage of code-mixing was calculated as follows,

$$\text{CM \%} = \frac{\text{Total number of English words} + \text{total number of mixed}^1 \text{ words}}{\text{Total number of words}} \times 100$$

The analysis shows that there are 629 mixes out of 1694 words. This proves that the corpus consisted of 37.13 % of code-mixing.

## Data Coding Procedures

Recorded speech of the 25 respondents was available for the syntactic analysis. Data collected from all techniques were used in the analysis with the exception of repetitions and mixes with similar patterns. Speech data was transcribed to find out the mixed elements at various points. The syntactic elements which preceded and followed the mix were coded according to the syntactic categories. The transcribed data for the syntactic analysis to find out the constraints in Tamil-English mixed discourse were analyzed.

## Significance of Study

The theoretical value of this research rests in its attempt to describe a major linguistic phenomenon that reflects language change due to the contact between English and Tamil especially in the post war conditions in Jaffna. The theoretical analysis provides insight into how

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<sup>1</sup> For example, where the morphemes were from two languages (as in loanukku- loan-Accu.case) the word was counted as a mixed word.

the structures of the participating languages have evolved to create a mixed discourse variety, claiming that this is a result of language change in progress.

Furthermore, the theoretical analysis provides evidence that the mixed language is rule-governed, maintaining that it has inherited structural elements from both English and Tamil and that there are various factors that influence the use of English in a mother tongue discourse and reasons for code mixing. Thus, this research makes a significant contribution to the advancement of sociolinguistics, and in general is important to the Sri Lankan bilingual.

### **CM Grammar and Tamil-English CM**

The code mixed structures in Tamil-English CM are not unique or special but they are uniform. A code mixed structure has a form which is repeated again and again and this recurrence of uniform structure is what made this study to systemize such recurring forms in a rule. When an English content morpheme is mixed in Tamil ML it is always in a particular systematic way and never randomly. This is the systematicity which has been considered here in the form of CM rules of Tamil-English CM.

### **Hierarchy of Mixed Constituents**

Code-mixing in the form of lexical insertions is frequently found in the discourse of Tamil English bilinguals. It has been observed that full sentence switches are very rare and are done only by fluent bilinguals. Less fluent bilinguals resort to mixing of English words alone or English words with Tamil inflections. The details of the distribution of English and mixed types in different grammatical classes based on the recorded speech are given hierarchically.

Mixed Type	No. of Occurrences	Percentage (%)
Noun phrase <sup>2</sup>	388	61.71
Verb phrase <sup>3</sup>	102	16.21
Adjectival phrase <sup>4</sup>	43	6.83
Conjoined clause <sup>5</sup>	41	6.52

<sup>2</sup> It includes Det+NP and N possessive N.

<sup>3</sup> It includes single verb, N+Verbalizer and Adj + Verbalizer.

<sup>4</sup> It includes both attributive and predicative/com. Adj.

<sup>5</sup> It includes co-ordinate and subordinate clauses.



Noun + Postposition <sup>6</sup>	36	5.72
Adverb	11	1.74
Sentence	04	0.63
Pronoun	00	0
Preposition +NP <sup>7</sup>	04	0.63
Total	629	99.99

Table 1. Hierarchy of mixed constituents

According to the table 1, the most frequently mixed type is the noun phrase which accounts for 61.71% of the total mixes as they are relatively free of syntactic restrictions. There is also relatively large proportion of classes like verb phrase, adjectival phrase, conjoined clause, noun + postposition and adverb respectively.

### Findings of the Study

This study is based on two typologically different languages. The speakers under study revealed a code-mixed variety containing linguistic features of both Tamil and English. The language used by the respondents is the normal day to day standard spoken Tamil which was interspersed with English words, phrases and sentences. The English words used by the respondents were single lexical items, phrases, or mixed words with English roots and Tamil inflections. In the contact of two languages, Tamil and English, the following were observed.

1. The use of English words is very common when speaking Tamil.
2. Tamil is the dominant language in case of code-mixed structures.
3. Most of the data reveal that the English elements are assimilated into the Tamil grammar. The lowest degree involves the use of English lexical items singly in the Tamil context in harmony. But there are cases where more than two English words are used, they usually occur as phrases, often grammatically English internally but bearing remarkable resemblance to the Tamil syntax.

<sup>6</sup> It is equivalent to prepositional phrase.

<sup>7</sup> It is the whole phrase switched from English.

4. Though both Tamil and English are basically SOV and SVO languages respectively and share different morphological and syntactic constructions, they involve in code-mixing easily.
5. Tamil has the SOV word order whereas English follows the SVO pattern. The word order differences do not prevent language mixing.
6. The application of the word order in Tamil in which English words and phrases are inserted without affecting the rules of both linguistic systems.
7. The combination of Tamil and English morphemes, within the word boundary.
8. Above all, there are constraints which indicate the impossible occurrences of code-mixing.
9. Code-mixing is a ruled governed behavior and not random.
10. Tamil-English CM has been observed to follow different approaches to constraints proposed by different scholars as discussed below.

It has been revealed that English switched word classes are patterned like the structure of their Tamil counterparts and occur according to the word order of the Tamil language. Though the two languages have different grammatical patterns, code-mixing takes place very smoothly between these languages as would be the case in languages with a similar typology. Single words are inserted more often than entire clauses.

According to the theoretical aspects of code-mixing, any linguistic units in a sentence can be switched depending on the bilingual ability of the speaker and provided that it obeys the two constraints-Free morpheme and equivalence constraints, which were proposed by Poplack (1978). The two constraints in relation to Tami-English code-mixing are discussed and the following are major mix types found in the data.

1. In case of NP as a subject and object of a sentence, the following pattern of code-mixing is possible- Det. + N. The patterns of Det. + N and Det. + N are not possible.
  - a. inta picture mikavum alaka-aka irukkiratu  
this picture very beautiful be.pre.sg  
This picture is very beautiful.
  - a. \* this paTam mikavum alaka-ka irukkiratu  
this picture very beautiful be.pre.sg  
This picture is very beautiful (**never heard**)
2. Mixing of nouns denoting plurality by the addition of plural markers is possible due the compatibility between Tamil and English. The English nouns with the Tamil plural marker ‘-kal as in puttakamkal (books)’ were not found in the data collected.

- a. teachers matum parents-ikitay-il otu discussion organize paNNa venTum  
 teachers and parents-prep det. discussion organize – do-modal Aux.  
 A discussion must be organized between parents and teachers.
3. Though pronouns are free morphemes, mixing pronouns from English to Tamil is not possible.
- a. avan studies-ily atika time spend-paNNu-kiraan  
 he studies-loc. more time spend-pre.sg  
 He spends more time on studies.
- \* b. he studies-ily atika time spend-paNNu-kiraan  
 he studies-loc. more time spend-pre.sg  
 He spends more time on studies. (**never heard**)
4. In case of possessive NP, only the noun is found to be mixed and mixing of possessive pronoun and possessive case marker (-inray) is not possible.
- a. avarkaluTaiya wedding nikalavillai  
 Their wedding happen-past. neg  
 Their wedding did not happen
- \*a. Their tirumanam nikalavillai  
 their wedding happen-past. neg  
 Their wedding did not happen (**never heard**)
5. Attributive and predicative adjectives are freely mixed with noun. While switching, the nominalizers –ana and –aaka are added with English adjectives in order to facilitate mixing process.
- a. otu alakaana picture / otu beautiful picture  
 a beautiful picture  
 It is a beautiful picture
- b. avan inta matter-ily satisfied-aka illai  
 he this matter-loc. satisfied-nom. be-pre. sg-neg  
 He is not satisfied in this matter.
6. Single verbs are freely mixed. Mixing of verb base is possible and the mood, tense, gender, number, person and case are marked by the dummy verb ‘do’ in Tamil.
- a. accident-ay avoid paNNa-laam  
 accident-acc. avoid-do-modal aux  
 One may avoid accident
- b. avarkal subject-ay comprehend paNNura-tillai  
 they subject-acc. comprehend do-pre. neg.

They do not comprehend the subject.

7. Adverbs are freely mixed as they are free morphemes. In some cases, adjectives with Tamil suffix ‘-aa’ are mixed.

a. students careful-aa listen-paNNi-kont-irrukkinam  
students careful- aa listen-do-pre. prog.  
Students are listening very carefully.

8. As far as mixing of prepositional phrases is concerned, prepositions are not mixed with N or NP. As there are differences between Tamil and English in the use of prepositions, the whole phrase is mixed in order to avoid discrepancy at surface level. Prepositions alone are not mixed.

avar office-ilay illai.  
he office-prep. be- pre. neg.  
He is not in the office.

9. In case of co-ordinate and subordinate clauses are concerned, the mixing patterns of Conj. cl conj. conj. cl and Conj. cl conj. conj. cl are possible.

a. If they do so, avarkal in̄ta disease-ay destroy-paNNalaam.

If they do so, they this disease-Acc. destroy-do-modal aux.

If they do so, they can destroy this disease.

b. teachers tamatu arivay petukkavenTum but they don't read books.

Teachers their knowledge-Acc. enhance-modal aux but they don't read books.

Teachers must enhance their knowledge but they don't read books.

10. A small percentage of full sentence type mixing is found in the data.

On the whole, major constituent boundaries within the sentence such as those between NPs as subject and object, verb phrases are favourable switch points. The other constituents are found as Smaller-sized elements within the sentence. A few constraints are operating through the behaviour of mixing resulted in grammatical code-mixed sentences.

## Conclusion

On the whole, the analyses of Tamil-English CM revealed that linguistically, the analyses confirm that Tamil-English Code-mixing is rule governed behaviour. There are constraints which prohibit the possible mixing of linguistic units of both languages under study. To date there have been very few studies done on this issue. It is said that these constraints might be language specific constraints or universal constraints because societies differ from each other but there are

certain things in all societies which are general if not universal. Thus this study supports the generality of certain constraints although it does not reinforce the notion of the universal constraints. As the present study of Tamil-English CM is a maiden effort of the researcher, further research is expected on this topic in order to validate these constraints and whether they are language specific or universal.

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## Nietzsche's Poems and *Zarathustra*: Theme of Animal Philosophy

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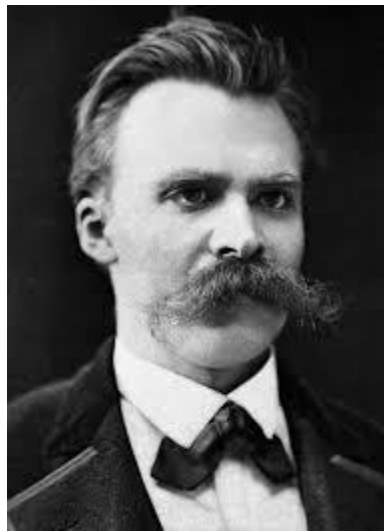
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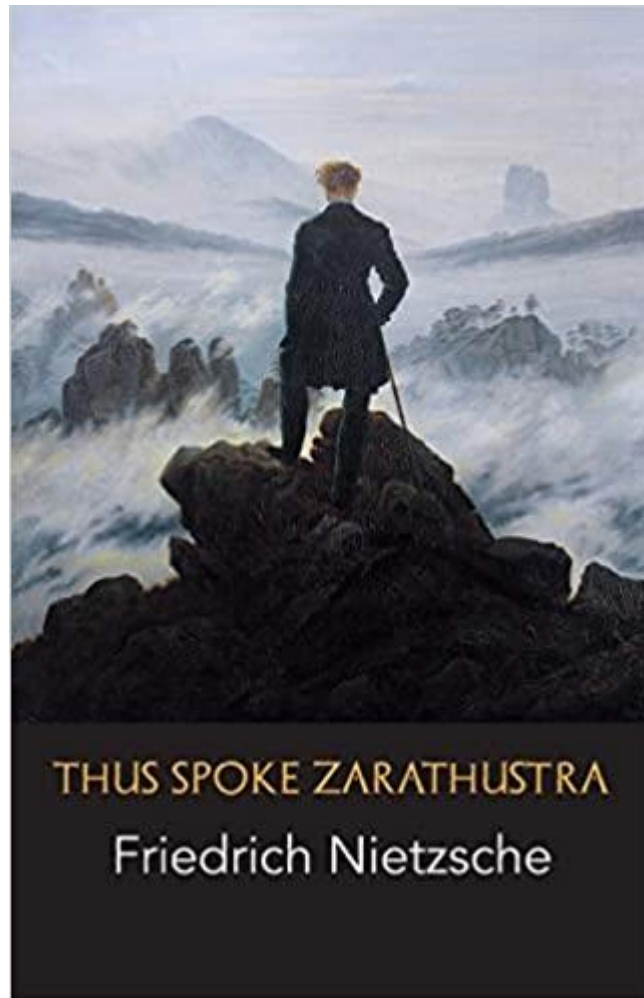
**Friedrich Nietzsche**

Courtesy: [en.wikipedia.org](http://en.wikipedia.org)

### **Abstract**

Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900) was a German philosopher and cultural critic who put forth criticisms of traditional European morality and religion, as well as of conventional philosophical ideas and social and political pieties associated with modernity. He exposed false consciousness of people's received ideas. He along with Marx and Freud are grouped as propagating "hermeneutics of suspicion" against traditional values. Nietzsche was born in Röcken, where his father was a Lutheran minister. Nietzsche had a brilliant school and university career, culminating in May 1869 when he was called to a chair in classical philology at Basel at a young age of 24. He was writing poetry from his school days and this paper aims at studying the themes of Friedrich Nietzsche's poems and his *Zarathustra*.

**Keywords:** Friedrich Nietzsche, *Zarathustra*, will, animal imagery.



Courtesy: [https://www.amazon.com/Thus-Spoke-Zarathustra-Friedrich-Nietzsche/dp/1989201687/ref=sr\\_1\\_3?crd=PGGKIYLK0ZWL&keywords=zarathustra+nietzsche&qid=1584091739&s=books&sprefix=Zarathustra%2Caps%2C1198&sr=1-3](https://www.amazon.com/Thus-Spoke-Zarathustra-Friedrich-Nietzsche/dp/1989201687/ref=sr_1_3?crd=PGGKIYLK0ZWL&keywords=zarathustra+nietzsche&qid=1584091739&s=books&sprefix=Zarathustra%2Caps%2C1198&sr=1-3)

Friedrich Nietzsche was born in 1844 in Germany and died in 1900. He was a classical scholar, philosopher, critic of culture, and became one of the most influential of all modern thinkers from Europe. He examined humanity's religious belief, ethics, and philosophy which influenced theologians, philosophers, psychologists, poets, novelists, and playwrights. He saw through concepts of nationalism and anti-Semitism. Nietzsche's *Also Sprach Zarathustra* (*Thus Spoke Zarathustra*) was published between 1883 and 1885 in four parts, the last of which was a private printing at his own expense. In 1886 he wrote *Jenseits von Gut und Böse* (*Beyond Good and Evil*) and in 1887 *Zur Genealogie der Moral* (*On the Genealogy of Morals*) was written. *Twilight of the Idols* appeared in 1889; *The Antichrist* and *Nietzsche contra Wagner* were published in 1895. His writings did not get much attention when he was alive (Magnus).

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Nietzsche keeps drawing inferences from the world of animals and their world of primitivism to symbolize energy and power. He investigates culture not as a rational element, but as something born out of man's irrational energy. Margot Norris calls this approach as "bio-centric." Nietzsche's concept of life is generally related to will to power and this in turn is related to memory and rationality. Lemm argues "that the notion of the will to power reflects an antagonism between memory and forgetfulness and can be reformulated through this antagonism." This can build a "relationship between animality and culture." In the writings of Nietzsche "the animal, the human, and the overhuman are tied to each other and cannot be separated into distinct stages of evolution" (Lemm 1-2).

This approach to the world of nature is found in his poems of the formative years to the rest of the poetic philosophical works of his later years.

The poem "Sweet Dreams Have Fled" was written by Nietzsche in 1862 when he was 18 years old. There is a hope in his mind about his future and he writes: "Sweet dreams have fled, / The past has fled, / The present is gloomy, / The far-off future bleak." He says that he has "never experienced / The joy and happiness of life," and therefore he looks "sadly / Upon long-vanished times." He has "neither peace nor rest" and does not know what he believes and asks: "Why I still live — for what?" At this point the poem breaks into a fantasy and Nietzsche writes:

I would like to die, die  
Dozing upon a green meadow  
Clouds drifting by above me,  
Forest-solitude around me.

The universe's eternal wheels  
Roll in a circular path —  
The rusty spring of the globe  
Constantly winds itself up.

How nice to fly about  
Like air around the revolving ball  
Creeping into every corner,  
Subsiding in soaring space!

How nice to engulf the world  
In universal intensity.  
And then write a journal  
About the world's circumference.

The young poet-philosopher wants to “constrain infinity, / Proving, then, with a thousand reasons, / That world and time are finite.” The argument is that this world and time are finite – entities that might have an end. A note written by Nietzsche and placed by an editor before the poem reads: “I’m more fond of the past than the present; but I believe in a better future.” (Nietzsche channel)

The poem “Without a Home” was written in 1859, when he was fifteen years old. The poem is a kind of reply to people who enquire about the poet’s home. He argues that “No one would dare” ask him about where his home is as he has “never been bound / To space and fleeting time, / Am as free as an eagle!” These formative years of his poetic self reflect a desire to free himself from the bondage of space and time.

“After a Nocturnal Thunderstorm” was written in 1871, when Nietzsche was twenty seven years old. The thunder hangs as “misty cover” around his window like a “goddess of dark cloud, / Ashen flakes eerily hover / To a roaring brook’s angry sound.” There are “sudden lightning flashes” and the “untamed thunder” booms in “valleys poisoned and noxious” and the poet tells the thunderstorm: “Your death-drink, sorceress, was brewed!” the storm howls and awakes him with a jolt and the poet wakes up to see it “with blazing eyes, / For a piercing thunderbolt.” It speaks:

"Now hear what I am!

I’m the Amazon, eternal and great,  
Never dovelike, weak or womanly —  
Warrioress full of scorn and manly hate,  
The victress and the tigress, equally!

Where I tread, I trample corpses,  
In my brain, poison thoughts do flow,  
With fierce grim eyes, I hurl torches,  
Now kneel, worm—pray! Or melt in my mad glow!"

The power of nature and its will and energy are portrayed vividly, and the poet celebrates this superhuman power of the elements.

“This is the autumn” was written in 1877, when the poet was thirty three years old. The description is picturesque and visual imagery is dominant: “The sun crawls along the mountain / And climbs up / And rests with every step. / Upon worn, strained threads / The wind plays its song.” And after this brief description, he breaks into worrying as “hope flees” and he begins

thinking about the fruit of the tree that falls on the ground when it is shaken. He is asking the fruit: “O fruit of the tree, / Shaken, you fall! / What lone secret did the night / Reveal to you, / That icy horror veiling your cheeks, / Your crimson cheeks?” The ice on the fruit is a horror, Nietzsche imagines visualizing the impact it must have had on the fruit. His gaze travels further on the ground and he notices starflowers and they speak to him: “I’m not beautiful /... But I love people, / And I comfort people, /They should see flowers now, / Bend down to me, /Alas! and break me —/ In their eyes then shines / Memory of more beautiful things / And happiness.” The positive note of the starflower redirects the poet to the aspect of living. People can get happiness not only by looking at the fruit on top of a tree which falls down and we interpret that as failure, whereas the star flower is always on the ground and that can bring happy memories to human minds. Even the star flower has to leave this world and hence it says: “I see it and then die, / And die gladly. After seeing people’s happiness the flowers happily leave this earth, after fulfilling their mission. Fruits and flowers have a purpose and after they fulfill it, they quietly leave and that is autumn.

“What lone secret did the night / Reveal to you, / That icy horror veiling your cheeks,” – the description refers to the knowledge pain and horror teach us or reveal to us – the lessons of strength that we absorb from life. This drawing of strength slowly develops into a system of will power.

The will to power is an essential conception in the thinking of Nietzsche. He views it as an irrational force. It guides the mind, body and spirit of the people. *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* was regarded by Nietzsche as among his most significant of works, and it dealt with “the power of cats and wolves” – the power of wild animals. Nietzsche writes in *Zarathustra*:

Uncommon is the highest virtue, and unprofiting; beaming is it, and soft of luster: a bestowing virtue is the highest virtue.  
Verily, I divine you well, my disciples; ye strive like me for the bestowing virtue.  
What should ye have in common with cats and wolves? (67)

Thirty years after its initial publication, 150,000 copies of the *Zarathustra* were printed by the German government and issued as inspirational reading, along with the Bible, to the young soldiers during the First World War. The book is a call to humanity to take charge of it, to command and live with zest and energy. *Zarathustra* is lyrical and uses a prophetic style of writing. It relies upon many Old and New Testament allusions. Nietzsche fills the work with nature metaphors. He invokes animals, earth, air, fire, water, celestial bodies and plants. He describes the spiritual development of *Zarathustra* who is portrayed as a solitary, reflective, exceedingly strong-willed, sage-like, laughing and dancing voice of heroic self-mastery.

Zarathustra is accompanied by a proud, sharp-eyed eagle and a wise snake. Nietzsche refers to this higher mode of being as “superhuman” (*übermenschlich*) (Wicks).

Who created for themselves such caves and penitence-stairs? Was it not those to conceal themselves, and were ashamed under the clear sky?  
And only when the clear sky looketh again through ruined roofs, and down upon grass and red poppies on ruined walls – will I again turn my heart to the seats of this God. (*Thus Spake Zarathustra* 85)

The sheer poetry, tinged with philosophical questions, is the stamp of Nietzsche’s poetic style of writing giving scope to thought, analysis and interpretation. His method of writing philosophy in a literary style is problematic for interpretation. He uses the language of poetry that is loaded with metaphors and allusions to write philosophical truths, and that leads to complex interpretations.

We realize the development of the concept of power begins from his early poetry. We have to go back to his earlier poem written in 1871:

I’m the Amazon, eternal and great,  
Never dovelike, weak or womanly —  
Warrioress full of scorn and manly hate,  
The victress and the tigress, equally!  
- (“After a Nocturnal Thunderstorm”)

*Zarathustra* was written in 1883-85 and we can notice the development of the philosophy of power. The power of nature is invoked in the poem:

Where I tread, I trample corpses,  
In my brain, poison thoughts do flow,  
With fierce grim eyes, I hurl torches,  
Now kneel, worm—pray! Or melt in my mad glow!"  
- (“After a Nocturnal Thunderstorm”)

Nature imagery becomes a symbol of its power. “Out of your wild cats must tigers have evolved, and out of your prison-toads, crocodiles; for the good hunter shall have a good hunt,” (139) he says in *Zarathustra*. Human will is born out of its own nature, and the animal imagery invokes (later extensively employed by Ted Hughes as well) symbolizes the power of human or natural will.

Further, Nietzsche blurs truth with imagination and weaves out ideas which can create new patterns of approaching life.

When Zarathustra so spake, his disciple resented it, but was silent. And Zarathustra also was silent; and his eye directed itself inwardly, as if it gazed into the far distance. At last he sighed and drew breath –

I am of today and heretofore, said he thereupon; but something is in me that is of the morrow, and the day following, and the hereafter.

I became weary of the poets, of the old and of the new, superficial are they all unto me, and shallow seas.

They did not think sufficiently into the depth, therefore their feeling did not reach to the bottom....

Ah, I cast indeed my net into their sea, and meant to catch good fish; but always did I draw up the head of some ancient God. (*Zarathustra* 122-123)

With one stroke Zarathustra dismisses all the texts of the past, “old and the new” and condemns them as “superficial” – “shallow seas.” The metaphor of the sea implies that a poet has to write with deeper meanings that have to keep surfacing endlessly. Their works do not have enough inspiration to lead the readers. They end up explaining some religious text or the other, borrowing their ideologies from religious prophets. There is no independent will in them, no originality to explain the aspects of life. Nietzsche’s poems and his *Zarathustra* call for strengthening of human will, invoking the power of the animal in human beings – the power and zest to live.

Nietzsche influenced the thinking traditions of the 20th century. His poetic and metaphorical style influenced “Albert Camus, André Gide, D.H. Lawrence, Jack London, Thomas Mann, Yukio Mishima, Eugene O’Neill, William Butler Yeats, Wyndham Lewis and George Bernard Shaw” and his philosophy influenced “Martin Heidegger, Jean-Paul Sartre, Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault.” Scholars agree unanimously that he is the “forefather of existentialism, critical theory, post-structuralism, deconstruction and postmodernism.” Nevertheless, his theory of will and self-fashioning was appropriated by the 20<sup>th</sup> century European nationalists to help them ascend political power, as Nietzsche’s writings contained inspirational elements commanding human to will to grow and establish its power on earth. (Drochon)

The fascists of the mid-20th century interpreted Nietzsche as celebrating their ideologies of power. They identified themselves with Nietzsche’s ideologies that “Hitler gifted Mussolini the complete works of Nietzsche for his birthday. The Nietzschean ideals of anti-egalitarianism,

the Superman, and the will to power inspired them to act” and the ideology of building human will became a tool for exciting the emotions of the masses. (Hendricks).

Nietzsche’s lines “something is in me that is of the morrow, and the day following, and the hereafter” (*Zarathustra* 122) that is immensely positive and reassuring, as Nietzsche points out, as the human will can come through the difficulties of everyday, was interpreted as the power of a particular race. It was captured in the frame of a linguistic and national ideology of purity. The ideology of will power in Nietzsche comes through his poems and *Zarathustra* as a search for the original power of man, unadulterated by any ideologies of culture and civilization.

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## **Tagore's Concept of Mystic Vision and Realization**

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**Abstract**

This paper is an attempt to highlight Tagore's concept of Mystic vision as projected in his plays. This paper gives a clear view of the term 'Mysticism'. The concept of mysticism is something simple and clear which provides a tiny beam of light in readers minds and illuminates the soul. Thus, through this paper it is made clear that the concept of deathless soul and endless possibilities in life.

**Keywords:** Rabindranath Tagore, Tagore's plays, mysticism, realization, fulfilment, spirituality, consciousness.

'Mysticism' is a term which is something related to religious ideas and sometimes used to replace the words such as 'allegory' and 'symbolism'. Many people think that mysticism is something that is related to love but the universally acknowledged mystics have put their efforts fully to make sure that it is the idea of uniting the ordinary soul (Jivatma) with the heavenly or the superior soul (Paramatma). Mysticism is closely related to the term 'Savikalpa Samadhi' which means realising one's own self as a part of the supreme soul or the discovery of one's inner self. No other word in English could well mean this idea other than 'mysticism'. Going further into this idea, mysticism could be a part of theological study or an occult science or a collective term used as a fanatic opinion about God and world. No matter what the religion is, mysticism joins hands with all religions. It goes parallel with all philosophies and arts because the home place of mystic study is religion and only religion. Religious mysticism is defined as "the attempt to realise the presence of living God in the soul and in nature, or more generally, as the attempt to realise in thought and feelings, the immanence of the temporal in the eternal and of the eternal in the temporal". (Inge 5)

There is another form of mysticism which says about the merging of the individual identity with the Brahman, otherwise the supreme soul. To be true, this kind of mysticism speaks about the Jivatma fighting to get freedom from life and death and join hands with the Paramatma. This form of mysticism is called the 'Vedantic Mysticism'. The intuitive experience that arises in the individual's mind makes this mysticism happen so easily. As said by the present-day mystics, the main focus of all mysticism focuses on love. Love is

nothing but the sense of superficial emotions and an incomparable ultimate expression of one's innermost feelings. Love is "a total dedication to heart and will. It is described as a deep-seated desire and tendency of the soul". (Seshadri 10). Every soul needs love because it is the only way to attain the supreme soul. The supreme soul that an ordinary self loves, may be for no reason or might have fixed through thoughts. Whatever the reason may be, the supreme soul could be attained only by love and not by any understanding. This is the basis of a mystical love and it considers devotion as one of the substances of mystic. The ordinary self in the process of attaining the supreme soul dedicates or sacrifices all the worldly possessions and falls deeply in love with the unidentified supreme soul. This process does not give the devotee a personal gain or precious worldly possessions, it gives him a way to attain God and strengthen God-man relationship. To understand this view in a better way, it is necessary to read Professor Seth Pringle's lines about mystic, it is:

"The thought most intensely present to the mystic is that of the supreme, all pervading an indwelling power, in whom, all things are one- the possibility of direct intercourse with this being of beings, God ceases to be an object, but becomes an experience". (Fleming 3)

Mysticism does not come into a theory nor rely upon any dogmas and have no desire, it is purely an attempt to see and communicate with God and merging the ordinary Jivatma with the supreme soul. The mystics are one to whom God dedicates himself on seeing their unconditional love towards them. Mystics consider themselves as empty vessels that must be filled only by the God. Mystics also knew that even if they are so great in their attempts to communicate with God, the instance happens only as a gift or a chance and not because of the efforts that the mystic made. Only if the mystic sacrifices all the worldly pleasures he could purify his soul. Purifying one's soul is the main attempt to attain God. Even if one purifies their soul fully, they will not meet the supreme soul immediately, the chance comes as a gift of time. Mystic character is inside every soul, but its discovery makes the soul think that it came from God. The following line is the best example to rather this idea better:

"Though Christ a thousand times in Bethlehem be born,  
If he be not born in thee, thy soul is still forlorn". (Kingsland 45)

The main aim of mystics is to sacrifice everything including worldly joys, families and even themselves and purify their soul and attain a sense of unconsciousness and submit themselves totally to the powers above them. They will actually be in an ideal state of mind where they go for the search of reality and nothing else. Mystic experiences may be gained through other heavenly things like music, painting, poetry or nature. The poetry of a great Indian poet Rabindranath Tagore induces such a kind of mystic experience through his poetry as for him the religion is the soul of life. He does not speak about a particular religion, for him any power that creates or illuminates the heart and mind is superior and he considers that as the supreme soul. Tagore's search for the purity of his heart in religion made him to make



him up mentally and attain the knowledge of worldly life. Tagore believed more in feelings and emotions than his knowledge. He confesses that point in his *Religion of Man* as follows:

“The solitary enjoyment of the infinite in meditation no longer satisfied me, and the text which I used for my silent worship lost their inspiration without my knowing it. I am sure I vaguely felt that my need was self-realization”. (P94)

Tagore expressed his views on his own mystical experiences which he himself experienced when he went deeply through his own religion. He expressed his ideas about his experiences in his poetry, essays and even speeches. This exposure is the evidence that he dedicated himself fully to the form of union with the heavenly soul. Tagore strongly believes that the mankind is the quest from the finite to the infinite. Understanding his poetry will give the readers a better understanding of his spiritual and devotional mind. Tagore says that a poet’s religious belief stands in between the mind of an orthodox man and a theologian. Tagore says that his first love is nature and that proves that his search for mystic ideas and religious beliefs started with nature. Even at his early childhood days, he started developing his love towards nature. After gaining more experience on nature, Tagore became aware of the unseen greatness of nature. It took so long for him to understand the mystery of nature, but when he started loving it, he understood the different aspects of nature in a better way. Vedic ancestors believe that behind every movement of nature, there is a single particular theme. Tagore in his poetry projects different aspects of nature and comes with a single inner being. His words are as follows:

“The wonder of gathering clouds hanging heavy with the unshed rain, the sudden sweep of storm arousing vehement gestures along the line of coconuts trees, fierce loneliness of the blazing summer noon, the silent sunrise behind the dewy veil of autumn morning kept my mind with the intimacy of a pervasive companionship”. (Kingsland 45)

These lines are with the idea that the God is seriously working with mankind to attain the infinite stage. He believes that there is a single force that binds the nature and human beings and helps mankind to attain the state of infinity. He feels that the unity and harmony among nature and mankind is achieved only by that binding force. To him, the enormous astonishing beauty of nature mesmerizes mankind and makes him long for delight and that desire takes delight into the mind and heart of the human beings. To Tagore, the grandeur of nature seems to be like a love – letter to God. The smiling fresh flowers, the uncountable awesomeness in the clear night sky, the multi-coloured ceiling of evening earth, the cold breeze are used to touch the human soul. The nature is the thing that is used by the God to draw human beings towards eternity and completeness. He says that it is also a kind of experiencing the mysticism as nature bears peace that helps in the proper working of the supreme principle of God. Tagore spoke about this idea on many occasions in his poetry.

Once when he leisurely stood near the window of his room gazing the beauty of nature, he experienced the call of the vision. He responded as:

“Suddenly, I became conscious of a stirring of a soul within me. My world of experience in a moment seemed to become lighted and facts that were detached and dim found a greater unity of meaning”. (Mysticism 56)

Tagore’s view is that, the inner force controls a person’s thoughts and directs his life towards unity and spirituality. It is by some means that God takes human form and lives among mankind and teaches them moral values that takes them to the God. This process is called “Jivan Devata”. Tagore spoke much about this idea in his works **The Gitanjali**, **The Gitimalya** and **The Gitali**. These three poems were mainly created by him to express his fullest ideas in this particular theme of ‘Jivan Devata’. People usually worship God and praise him but through this idea, God is made to live among mankind to make man experience the real moral values. People believe in the intellect, emotions and will as the three main faculties that is in correspondence with the Indian ideologies of Jnana, Bhakthi and Karma.

Tagore attempted to discover God in everything through the mystic vision he acquired. He is of the opinion that only man can realize the completeness of God by searching him all the times. By being kind to others and doing one’s duty perfectly could make oneself identify the existence of God within themselves. Thus, by realizing his existence one could attain knowledge (Jnana), love (Bhakti) and service (Karma). Thus, according to this view of Tagore, it has become clear that the man is the centre of interest in binding the human-God relationship in a better way.

Tagore being the mystic, does not expose mysticism in an obscure way but his mysticism is simple, kind and elegant. He watches beauty in everything about nature and enjoys its elegance. The beauty in nature fills his mind and heart with spirituality and encourages him to worship and aspire the goodness. Writers of mysticism are seen with the strange eyes by the readers because mysticism was itself considered as a strange course of study. Tagore’s spiritual development due to his interest in mysticism was explained by him in the following lines:

“when I was eighteen, a sudden spring breeze of  
religious experience for the first time came to  
my life and passed away leaving in my life and  
passed away leaving in my memory a direct message  
of spiritual reality, one day while I stood watching  
at an early dawn the sun sending out its rays  
from behind the trees, I suddenly felt as if  
some ancient mist had in a moment lifted

from my sight and the moving light on the face of  
the world revealed an inner radiance of joy. The  
invisible screen of common place was removed from  
all things and all men, and their ultimate significance  
was intensified in my mind; and this is the  
definition of beauty.” (OH 84)

It is really a tough task for the readers to understand what made Tagore write such a beautiful and harmonious work of art that attracts and makes mankind go further in search of that supreme celestial power. The resultant of his poetry makes all readers understand the real sense of mysticism. There are some lines through which his techniques of making the mankind understand the nature clearly:

“Thou art the sky and  
thou art the nest as well”. (Gitanjali 67)

“The same stream of life that runs  
through my veins night and day runs  
through the world and dances in rhythmic measures

In this playhouse of Infinite forms I  
have had my play and here have I  
caught sight of him that is formless”. (P. 96)

The idea of Mysticism is not new to Indian society. there was always a clash between Nayanmars and Alvars in the south and Vaishnavites and Singers in the north. These clashes made each of those groups sing in praise of their lord to prove the power and greatness of their own God. They split out their words in proving their beliefs and thus finally intoxicated poetry. But Tagore in some lines of his books, written about the higher visions which he experienced himself when he started writing. Tagore wrote his unforgettable experience he had at the age of seventeen, when he stood at the Veranda and looked at the sky. He shares his experience in the following lines:

“While the self was rampant during the  
glare of day everything I perceived was  
mingled with and hidden by it. I could see  
the world in its own true aspect ..... All of a  
sudden, a covering seemed to fall away  
from my eyes and I found the world bathed  
in waves of beauty and joy swelling  
on every side” (Reminiscences 110)

He once again experienced this kind of experience many times in his life. He recorded some of those experiences in his poems. One such experience is brought here for enjoying the mind of Tagore better:

“They knew the way and went to seek you  
along the narrow lane but I wandered  
abroad into the night for I was ignorant ...  
I turned away in doubt, but you held me  
fast, and their scolding became louder everyday” (Fruit –gathering XVI)

All these lines deserve to be read so closely to and understand its deep meaning. Tagore’s mystical experiences came to him even without his knowledge. He says that the spiritual idea comes to a poet’s mind at a point of time, the only thing that the poet has to do is to identify the real essence and start experiencing it. He spoke about this in his poem ‘Reminiscences’. He found that this new experience under a broad category called ‘Mysticism’. Tagore narrates all his experiences in an excellent way. He wonders how this world is soaked in radiance with a wave of beauty and joy in the lines following:

“The radiance pierced in a moment through  
the folds of sadness and despondency which  
had accumulated in my heart and flooded  
it with this unusual sight” (My Reminiscences 115)

Through these lines, Tagore says that he acquired the spiritual insight which he enjoyed all through his life. This spiritual insight will be with every human being was explained in the lines:

And it came to me that no person or thing  
in the world seemed to me trivial or  
unpleasing. Everything seemed to me  
extra ordinarily wonderful (P 115)

Tagore had a strong belief and faith in God because he thought that there is nothing beyond the power of that supreme soul. He had a belief that he has seen the god’s face. He says that in a line “I felt I saw your face...” (Crossing 76)

Tagore poured out his experiences in his poems he had nothing to explain than that. He enjoyed the beauty of nature truly but when he started explaining it through words, he could not control his emotions because his soul was filled with the thoughts of God. Many of his readers may not experience that kind of vision. Those who had experienced what the poet said could understand his emotions too and for those who did not experience it will get a deep

knowledge about that vision even before seeing that. Tagore gained faith and courage only through this encouragement.

Mystics usually enjoys every little thing in life because they were in a constant search of kindness and love everywhere. For them, even the dry leaf that fell on earth is beautiful and mysterious. The sudden emotion that comes in a person's mind when he comes across the particles of nature is like a spark that initiates the vision of soul. If this happens in a person's life, the nature opens its doors and allows them to experience the fullest of its beauty. He says that his first book of life ended with union, separation and reunion of god with mankind.

Thus, Tagore's concept of vision is filled with his own confessions of his experiences. He considers that acquiring that vision is like gaining a deathless spiritually conscious soul.

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## Art of Effective Communication for Professional Growth and Achievement

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### **Abstract**

This paper focuses on the art of effective communication as an essential factor to promote for promoting integration and professing professional growth and achievement in a business organization and beautifully analyses the methods through which the effective communication promotes integration and facilitates professional achievement of an organization or business enterprise. This paper proves communication as the backbone of any organization by stepping on various modes and methods. Thus, commenting on the merits and demerits of written communication this paper affirms that success of any business organization is unimaginable without communication.

**Keywords:** communication, business, competence, profession, integration, facilitation.

Communication arises when someone or a group of people needs to emote, to interact and to express one's ideas and thoughts and the need to relate and connect. The need or desire to communicate, however, varies from person to person, depending on time and context. In our syllabus, use of communication is usually limited only to learning and teaching and it has confined to only to aural and oral exercises which include presentations, group discussions, writing of letters, reports, etc. Its use has been extended to the students who have opted for professional courses. It moved one step further to document writing or project writing. Experiments on experiences show that "a good communicator has more than just these skill sets. It is primarily an attitude, a willingness to communicate, share one's ideas and information that makes one a good communicator. Language and the knowledge of the various formalities associated with speaking and writing do matter. However, given the right attitudinal input, communication becomes much easier and one emerges as an effective communicator" (Mishra 7).

Communication is not only related to speaking, it also comprises several other ways such as listening, reading and writing. However, in earlier days communication was the term used only for spoken medium. The revolutionary invention of printing press paved the way to the process of communication through reading and writing. Actually, the influence of new media introduced new dimensions to the arena of written communication. "Effective communication is the cornerstone of success in the ever-quickening pace of business life" (Ramesh 11).

The attributes of a successful businessperson are that he can think well, express his ideas clearly, speak them out directly and expressively to his audience. Because of this ability, these individuals are often called upon to write, to report or to speak either in company or at a meeting and on all such occasions. The success of a businessperson is determined on how effectively, persuasively and convincingly they write, report or speak to their audience.

On many instances, communication could be a complicated process of give-and-take with a number of difficult intricacies and multi-dimensions. Though it is a complicated process, it takes place all around us every time. It is shocking that we all spend around 70% of our entire time for receiving or sending messages or for precisely communicating.

Communication essentially involves the sender of messages or the communicator and the receiver of messages. Most often it is sent in a certain medium, particularly through encoded messages. After receiving the encoded messages, the receiver decodes the message and sends back the reactions to the sender as a feedback.

The ultimate beauty of the whole process lies in the nature of communication in itself. Every language, in any form, has the potential to mean many things at the same time, and so modulation matters a lot. Dr. C. Muralikrishna writes aptly thus:

“Language embodies and conveys thought.  
It is an important means that we rely  
on to convey our thoughts and feelings.  
In its spoken and written forms, language  
is the commonest and most important means  
of communication in all social activities among  
human beings” (P. 3).

To be precise, human communication is nothing else but “a dynamic and active process” (Mishra 3). The communication process is complicated to a great extent that it involves various processes comprising many essential elements such as initiation, feedback, medium, instance, intension, body-language, expression of ideas, language delivering ability and intellectualism, observation, facial expression, attitude, emotional aptitudes and mental states, personal experience, fluency and clarity in conveying ideas and intelligibility of expression.

Undoubtedly to achieve effective communication, it is important to acquire a good knowledge of interpersonal relations and the ability to achieve the delicate balance that communication always requires.

Communication is generally based on the five categories, namely, the nature, scope and depth of interaction as passing communication, factual communication, interpersonal communication, feeling level of communication and peak communication. D.E. McFarland says it rightly thus, “Communication may be broadly defined as the process of meaningful interaction among human beings. More specifically it is the process by which meanings are perceived and understanding is reached among human beings” (Kumar 2).

Louis A. Allen emphatically says thus:

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“Communication is the sum total of all the things that a person does, when he wants to create an understanding in the mind of another. It involves a systematic and continuous process of telling, listening and understanding”.

Communication skill is enhanced through effective practice and strong discipline. Communication in short, is “both science and art” says Varinder Kumar. It is science in a way that it delivers a body of useful and universal principles, which manages to bridge the understanding among different minds with enlarged use of advanced information technology. In other way round, communication is an art as it involves individualistic approach and skill in handling situations. Every new situation and every new system always crave for new approaches to deal with the problems. Communication should be an objective art so as to make it more effective. Each individual has a unique impulse that makes an effective and desirable effect.

All these make it clear that communication is inevitable to business as blood is to the human body. Thus, communication is an irreplaceable tool for the success of any enterprise. Communication is very much needed for the process of leading, directing and motivating. Peter Senge rightly says thus: “The essence of leadership – what we do with, 98 percent of our time, is communication” (P 7).

Another important aspect of communication is Writing, and this is probably the most important language skill required for any professional purpose. The ideas, facts, thoughts and decisions of the author are grouped and put together on a paper in a sequential order in an easy and understandable way. The effectiveness of a person’s word usage is enhanced through writing.

A survey conducted among 64 companies in America made it clear that half of the workers pay their attention to writing rather than speaking. Writing generally is used in making reports, giving feedbacks officially, giving project reviews and so on. However, it also creates some chaos, especially in business enterprise: bad writing skills create misunderstanding, disturb company reputation and goals. Language ability is so much important to attain competence in written communication. It is to be noted that writing is concrete than verbal communication, as there is less chance for errors. The written communication creates problems due to spelling, grammar, punctuation, style and actual wording. This in a way reveals the fact that the simplicity, clarity and lucidity develop effectiveness to business correspondence and written communication. Thus, writing is considered as the effective means of communication within or outside a company or organization.

Man being a social animal, he starts communicating with people as soon as he gets a chance. For this, he takes in hand the spoken and written languages. Language plays a predominant role in human development. Communication skills is the only thing that separates human being from other beings of the animal kingdom. Human beings make use of language to transfer their ideas and thoughts; use it emotionally to grow friendship and to develop cultural, economic and social relationships. Words are subjected to some significant impact on the way someone respects it. So, language is obviously considered as a great tool



in the hands of human beings. Language is a potential weapon and is a way to progress and ultimately a platform to success.

Ashraff Rizvi in his *Effective Communication Skills* says thus:

“Communication is a word originated from Latin word “communico” which means “to share”. Communicate is the transfer of information from one person to another person in order to exchange ideas, express feelings and understand each other” (P 69).

Communication actually gives meaning to human life. Communication is the only means which helps in building up relationships and give ears to different views and perspectives, thereby helps to enrich our knowledge of the universe and make life comfortable. Globalization made English language more prominent. Making the students good in communication skills allows them to get placed in multi-national companies. The world has become so much competitive and thus those people who have effective communication skills survive. C. Griffiths and Judy rightly claims that:

“Communication is possible when we get hold of language learning. All appropriate language learning strategies are oriented towards the broad goal of communicative competence” (P 19).

Wise men, especially in business, concentrate only on significant information and avoids arguments. The experts in every field filter the information so that they could remove unimportant and unwanted matter. Shiv Khera says that, “The Professional as an expert provides the answers to problems, not an exposition of past and present knowledge; we use our knowledge to focus upon the important points” (46).

The only bond that keeps people united both functionally and geographically is the effective communication. Among all other forms of communication, Writing is considered as the major means of communication particularly within an organization and the professionals gain much respect in their usage of paper. According to S.R. Inthira and V. Saraswathi:

“Large business organizations have different business units, departments and territorial divisions. Each of them pursues different goals, sub-goals and target sections. Communication provides the means for an integrated approach in pursuing organizational goals”.

Writings are actually evolved from stones and palm leaves. Only after the invention of printing press, the human civilization has seen a greater revolution. Worldwide business communication started only after the invention of various technologies and those inventions made it easier to communicate with each other. The communication became further easier after the invention of a new mass media called television and that added new dimensions to

the business world. The retrieval of oral and written records in an effective mode is made possible only through the advancement of technology.

There is a beautiful saying, 'Language is an important tool for business.' From this saying it is made clear how language was given importance in business. It is really incredible that the language continues to gain more respect and continues to remain the most powerful tool even in this technological era. Communication plays a great role in influencing the creation of wealth and shaping professional careers. In short, communication is "the life blood of business" (Pal 4). An effective internal and external communication could be built only through proper communication in any business. Effective communication helps the employers in their placement as well as promotions. A well-knitted spirit of understanding and co-operation is promoted through effective communication. Communication is both internal and external. Internal communication is communication within a particular organization, whereas External communication is also an imperative form and it is used for the communication with external agencies, both government and private sectors.

Thus, it is made clear that communication serves as the backbone of any organization and success is obviously unimaginable without effective communication. In short, communication helps to promote organizational integration and facilitates the achievement of any organization or business enterprise.

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## **Risk Factors for Autism: A Comprehensive Summary**

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### **Abstract**

**Objective:** To review the evidence for the presence of etiological factors that affect the risk of autism and autism spectrum disorders.

Autism is a chronic neurodevelopmental disorder characterized by social and language impairments and stereotyped, repetitive patterns of behavior. Symptoms manifest by the age of 3 years, and affected individuals often require constant care from family members and professionals. Other disorders that are included in the autism spectrum include atypical autism, Asperger disorder, Rett disorder, childhood disintegrative disorder, and pervasive developmental disorder not otherwise specified. The etiology of autism is unknown, although the risk factors based on pre-, peri-, neonatal and environmental exposures have been the focus of epidemiologic research for over 40 years. Current evidence suggests that several environmental factors are unrelated to risk of ASD. Birth complications that associated with trauma or ischemia and hypoxia have shown strong links to ASD, whereas other pregnancy-related factors such as maternal obesity, maternal diabetes, and C/S have shown a weak association with risk of ASD (Modabbernia & Velthorst et al, 2017).

In this study, systematic reviews and meta-analyses of risk factors for ASD were reviewed to provide an overview of the evidence of the presence of the risk factors of autism and autism spectrum disorder. Relevant articles were identified by searching the internet and 15 case histories eligible were reviewed for the study. The summary of the study reveals the presence of etiological factors of autism as reported by the articles, were present in the case histories studied.

**Keywords:** Autism, meta-analysis, etiological factors, autism spectrum disorders.

### **Introduction**

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a group of developmental disabilities characterized by impairments in social interaction and communication and restricted and repetitive interests/behaviors.

Autism was first reported by Kanner (1943) with a clinical description of 11 children showing “extreme aloneness from the very beginning of life, not responding to anything that comes to them from the outside world.” He proposed the behavioral combination of Autism, Obsessiveness, stereotypy, and Echolalia as Childhood Schizophrenia.

It is a chronic neurodevelopmental disorder, Social and language impairments and stereotyped, repetitive patterns of behaviour and symptoms manifest by the age of 3 years. According to DSM V, Autism spectrum disorder include Atypical autism, Asperger Disorder, Rett Disorder, Childhood Disintegrative disorder, and Pervasive Developmental Disorder Not Otherwise Specified.

Prevalence rates of both Autism and Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASDs) have greatly increased in the past decade.

In some children, signs of Autism can be seen early as 12 months. Babies that do not babble or point by age one could be showing early signs of Autism. Other children may develop normal language and social skills for a time, but then begin to regress as Autism presents. This is called Regressive Autism. Some people believe childhood vaccines cause older children to develop Autism, but this is not proven, and vaccinations should not be avoided.

Children with Autism may be sensitive to touch, certain smells, loud noises, temperature extremes, and even certain colors.

Overstimulation cause a child with Autism to become upset and have a meltdown. The child may be difficult to soothe and calm down. The reasons autism occurs are not understood, and researchers are looking for answers, as well as ways to prevent the disorder. Boys are more likely than girls to have autism.

## **Etiology**

While in most cases of the exact etiology of ASD remains unknown, novel technologies and large population-based studies have provided new insight into the risk architecture of ASD and the possible role of environmental factors in etiology. Various factors have been examined to understand the etiology and the risk factors of Autism.

Prenatal factors have been examined in various studies. The factors associated with Autism risk were advanced parental age at birth, maternal prenatal medication use, bleeding, gestational diabetes, being first born v. third or later, and having a mother born abroad.

The factors with the strongest evidence against a role in Autism risk included previous fetal loss and maternal hypertension, proteinuria, pre-eclampsia and swelling.

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Birth complications that are associated with trauma or ischemia and hypoxia have also shown strong links to ASD, whereas other pregnancy-related factors such as maternal obesity, maternal diabetes, and caesarian section have shown a less strong (but significant) association with risk of ASD.

Evidence shows that perinatal hypoxia and hypercarbia are associated with various neurodevelopmental outcomes including seizure, cerebral palsy, and intellectual disability. A meta-analysis of ten studies by Chen et al. [2] found that maternal autoimmune disease is associated with a small but significant, precise, and consistent increase in risk of ASD in the offspring.

Many genetic conditions that are associated with ASD might also be associated with birth complications. Genetic mechanisms also serve to make the individuals susceptible to the effect of certain environmental risk factors. For example, many genetic conditions that are associated with ASD might also be associated with birth complications.

Jiang et al. systematically reviewed maternal infection during pregnancy and risk of ASD. Their most important findings include a small but significant increase in risk of ASD after maternal bacterial (18%) and genitourinary infection (9%). The risk was precise but inconsistent. They also found a small increase in ASD after maternal flu that was precise, inconsistent, and marginally significant.

The studies on toxic elements have been largely limited by their design, but there is enough evidence for the association between some heavy metals (most important inorganic mercury and lead) and ASD that warrants further investigation. Mechanisms of the association between environmental factors and ASD are debated but might include non-causative association, gene-related effect, oxidative stress, inflammation, hypoxia/ischemia, endocrine disruption, neurotransmitter alterations, and interference with signaling pathways. Over 60 perinatal and neonatal factors were examined in various studies. Over 50 prenatal factors have been examined in various studies. According to recent evidence, up to 40–50% of variance in Autism Spectrum Disorder liability might be determined by environmental factors.

The risk factors might be directly affecting or might be a significant factor that contribute to the presence of Autism and ASDs. We sought to systematically review the evidence for the presence of prenatal, perinatal, postnatal and environmental factors that affect the risk of Autism and ASDs.

## Review of Literature

- Birth complications that are associated with trauma or ischemia and hypoxia have shown strong links to ASD.<sup>[1]</sup>

- Pregnancy-related factors such as maternal obesity, maternal diabetes, and Caesarean have shown a weak association with risk of ASD. <sup>[1]</sup>
- Factors associated were umbilical-cord complications, foetal distress, birth injury or trauma, multiple birth, maternal haemorrhage, summer birth, low birth weight, small for gestational age, congenital malformation, low 5-minute APGAR score, feeding difficulties, neonatal anaemia, Rh incompatibility, and hyperbilirubinemia. <sup>[6]</sup>
- The factors associated with Autism risk were advanced parental age at birth, maternal prenatal medication use, bleeding, gestational diabetes, being first born v. third or later, and having a mother born abroad. <sup>[3]</sup> Factors found by at least 2 studies and associated with at least a 50% increase in the risk of autism. <sup>[3]</sup>
- Increased risk factors included advanced maternal age, advanced paternal age, and place of birth. <sup>[10]</sup>
- Significant associations with pregnancy-induced hypertension, bleeding, caesarean delivery, congenital malformations, and daily smoking during pregnancy. <sup>[10]</sup>
- Evidence to suggest that parental age and obstetric conditions are associated with an increased risk of Autism and Autism Spectrum Disorders is accumulating. <sup>[10]</sup>
- Paternal age beyond 35 years was found to be significantly related to first trimester spontaneous miscarriages possibly causing autism and autism spectrum disorders. <sup>[12]</sup>
- Maternal diabetes was significantly associated with a greater risk of ASD in the offspring. <sup>[13]</sup>
- Type 2 diabetes, antidiabetic medication use was associated with higher ASD risk. <sup>[14]</sup>
- Children born to mothers who had metabolic conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, and obesity during pregnancy were more likely to have autism spectrum disorders. <sup>[15]</sup>
- Perinatal exposure to radiation is significantly associated with an increased risk of developmental disorders such as autism spectrum disorders (ASD) and attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). <sup>[16]</sup>
- Positive family history was found to be statistically significantly associated with the risk of autism. <sup>[17]</sup>
- High maternal age (mother, P35 years) at birth was found in 23% of autistic children. <sup>[17]</sup>
- Maternal PTSD symptoms were associated with 2–3 times greater risk of child's ASD. <sup>[18]</sup>
- Maternal-fetal incompatibility at the Rh or ABO loci may contribute to the risk of autism. <sup>[19]</sup>
- A connection was found between infection during pregnancy and the increased risk of autism in the offspring. <sup>[20]</sup>
- Maternal viral infection in the first trimester and maternal bacterial infection in the second trimester were found to be associated with diagnosis of ASDs in the offspring. <sup>[21]</sup>
- The prevalence of ASD, ADHD, and ID was higher among children born to mothers diagnosed with anemia within the first 30 weeks of pregnancy. <sup>[22]</sup>

- Mild to moderate hearing loss was diagnosed in 7.9% and unilateral hearing loss in 1.6% of those who could be tested appropriately. Hyperacusis was common, affecting 18.0% of the autism group and 0% in an age-matched nonautism comparison group. [23]
- Mild, fluctuating conductive hearing loss due to middle-ear anomalies may account for the language and attention problems of learning-disabled children . [24]

### **Need for Study**

A fundamental question about the association between environmental risk factors, pre-natal, peri- natal and post- natal factors and ASD is whether the association represents an underlying causality or not and is associated with the possibility of the individual with ASD. A plausible explanation for many of the observed factors of ASD are reviewed in various research articles from various parts of the world under various categories and underlying actors. Furthermore, each factor might involve multiple mechanisms and at different levels of etiological pathways to ASD.

In the present paper, we conducted a review of systematic reviews and meta-analyses of the various risk factors for ASD. 15 case histories were reviewed in a single clinic setup to understand the presence of various risk factors present in the individuals diagnosed with ASD and the frequency of occurrence. For systematic reviews, we narratively summarized the authors' conclusion.

The aim of the study is to focus on the items listed below:

1. To understand the factors related to risk of ASD based on current evidences.
2. To understand the aetiology of autism better in Indian set-up.
3. To identify the risk factors that show strong link to ASD.

### **Aim**

#### **1) To review the evidences**

An extensive study on the causes had been made to rule out the presence of etiological factors which showed strong links with ASD. 15 studies were reviewed where functional assessment served as the primary method of identifying the causes. Autism was previously reported to affect approximately 5 of every 10,000 children. 15 cases from our clinic have been taken to examine the risk of Autism and Autism Spectrum Disorders to check for the presence of etiological factors.

#### **2) Check for the presence of etiological factors**

We sought to systematically review the evidence for the presence of prenatal and perinatal factors that affect the risk of autism and ASDs. We have chosen to focus this review on studies that used large, population-based epidemiological samples to

explore associations between prenatal and perinatal variables and the risk of Autism and ASDs. 15 case histories were studied in detail to examine the factors such as pre-natal, peri-natal and post-natal conditions which had strong links to Autism and Autism spectrum disorders.

### 3) To check for the risk of Autism and Autism Spectrum Disorders.

We discuss the potential risk factors identified in this review and attempt to understand their etiological relevance and risk associated with Autism. Although not proven as independent risk factors for Autism, these variables should be examined in relation to the risk of Autism and Autism Spectrum Disorders.

## METHOD

### 1) To review the risk factors of ASD

15 case histories from our clinic were included in our study to examine the potential risk associated with Autism and Autism Spectrum Disorders. From these case histories the pre-natal, peri-natal, post-natal and the environmental factors were reviewed. In pre-natal history factors, which were taken into consideration were miscarriage, use of medicines, infections, anemia, rh-incompatibility, diabetes, radiation and trauma. In peri-natal history factors which were taken into consideration were normal delivery, caesarean delivery, breach delivery, forceps delivery, precipitate delivery and prolonged delivery.

Under post-natal history factors which were taken into consideration were birth cry, hypoxia, cyanosis, jaundice, infection and convulsion. In environmental history factors which have been taken into consideration are family history, maternal smoking, vaccination and exposure to toxins.

### 2) Calculating mean

After reviewing the factors which showed strong links to ASD the mean was calculated by dividing the factors with the factors which were present.

Mean = no of factors affected - total number of factors present.

### 3) Systematic reviews

- Exposure to jaundice in neonates was associated with increased risk of disorders of psychological development for children born at term. [8]
- Strong association was found between Autism and the child suffering from jaundice. [8]
- Increased risk of Autism has been shown in neonates delivered by C-section. Risk of Autism associated with general anesthesia during cesarean delivery: a population-based birth-cohort analysis. [9]



- Two studies found a significant association between child delivered through c-section and Autism. <sup>[9]</sup>
- Low birth weight is considered a marker for newborns at high risk for Autism. <sup>[10]</sup>
- A causal association between CS and ASDs increase has been suggested. <sup>[11]</sup>

### Procedure

15 case histories of participants diagnosed with Autism and Autism Spectrum Disorders. Routine diagnostic evaluations were carried out. The etiological factors are mentioned below.

NAM E	PRE-NATAL		PERI-NATAL		POST-NATAL		ENVIRONMENTAL		TOTAL
1	Miscarriage	0	Normal	0	Birth weight	0	Family history	0	2
	Use of medicines	0	Caesarean	1	Birth cry	0	Maternal smoking	0	
	Infections	0	Breech	0	Hypoxia	0	Vaccination	0	
	Anemia	0	Forceps	0	Cyanosis	0	Exposure to toxins	0	
	RH incompatibility	0	Precipitate	0	Jaundice	1	Consanguinity	0	
	Diabetes	0	Prolonged	0	Infection	0			
	Radiation	0	Premature	0	Convulsion	0			
	Trauma	0							

NAM E	PRE-NATAL		PERI-NATAL		POST-NATAL		ENVIRONMENTAL		TOTAL
2	Miscarriage	0	Normal	0	Birth weight	0	Family history	0	1
	Use of medicines	0	Caesarean	0	Birth cry	0	Maternal smoking	0	
	Infections	0	Breech	0	Hypoxia	0	Vaccination	0	
	Anemia	0	Forceps	0	Cyanosis	0	Exposure to toxins	0	
	RH incompatibility	0	Precipitate	0	Jaundice	0	Consanguinity	0	
	Diabetes	0	Prolonged	0	Infection	0			
	Radiation	0	Premature	0	Convulsion	1			

	Trauma	0						
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NAM E	PRE-NATAL		PERI-NATAL		POST-NATAL		ENVIRONMENTAL		TOTAL
3	Miscarriage	1	Normal	0	Birth weight	0	Family history	0	3
	Use of medicines	0	Caesarean	1	Birth cry	0	Maternal smoking	0	
	Infections	0	Breech	0	Hypoxia	0	Vaccination	0	
	Anemia	0	Forceps	0	Cyanosis	0	Exposure to toxins	0	
	RH incompatibility	0	Precipitate	0	Jaundice	1	Consanguinity	0	
	Diabetes	0	Prolonged	0	Infection	0			
	Radiation	0	Premature	0	Convulsion				
	Trauma	0							

NAM E	PRE-NATAL		PERI-NATAL		POST-NATAL		ENVIRONMENTAL		TOTAL
4	Miscarriage	0	Normal	0	Birth weight	0	Family history	0	3
	Use of medicines	0	Caesarean	0	Birth cry	0	Maternal smoking	0	
	Infections	0	Breech	0	Hypoxia	0	Vaccination	0	
	Anemia	0	Forceps	0	Cyanosis	0	Exposure to toxins	0	
	RH incompatibility	0	Precipitate	0	Jaundice	1	Consanguinity	0	
	Diabetes	0	Prolonged	0	Infection	1			
	Radiation	0	Premature	0	Convulsion	1			
	Trauma	0							

NAM E	PRE-NATAL		PERI-NATAL		POST-NATAL		ENVIRONMENTAL		TOTAL
5	Miscarriage	0	Normal	0	Birth weight	0	Family history	0	2
	Use of medicines	0	Caesarean	0	Birth cry	0	Maternal smoking	0	
	Infections	0	Breech	0	Hypoxia	1	Vaccination	0	

	Anemia	0	Forceps	0	Cyanosis	0	Exposure to toxins	0
	RH incompatibility	0	Precipitate	0	Jaundice	0	Consanguinity	0
	Diabetes	0	Prolonged	0	Infection	0		
	Radiation	0	Premature	0	Convulsion	1		
	Trauma	0						

NAM E	PRE-NATAL		PERI-NATAL		POST-NATAL		ENVIRONMENTAL		TOTAL
<b>6</b>	Miscarriage	0	Normal	0	Birth weight	0	Family history	0	2
	Use of medicines	1	Caesarean	0	Birth cry	0	Maternal smoking	0	
	Infections	0	Breech	0	Hypoxia	0	Vaccination	0	
	Anemia	0	Forceps	0	Cyanosis	0	Exposure to toxins	0	
	RH incompatibility	0	Precipitate	0	Jaundice	1	Consanguinity	0	
	Diabetes	0	Prolonged	0	Infection	0			
	Radiation	0	Premature	0	Convulsion	0			
	Trauma	0							

NAM E	PRE-NATAL		PERI-NATAL		POST-NATAL		ENVIRONMENTAL		TOTAL
<b>7</b>	Miscarriage	1	Normal	0	Birth weight	0	Family history	0	4
	Use of medicines	0	Caesarean	0	Birth cry	1	Maternal smoking	0	
	Infections	0	Breech	0	Hypoxia	0	Vaccination	0	
	Anemia	0	Forceps	0	Cyanosis	0	Exposure to toxins	0	
	RH incompatibility	0	Precipitate	0	Jaundice	0	Consanguinity	1	
	Diabetes	0	Prolonged	0	Infection	0			
	Radiation	0	Premature	1	Convulsion	0			
	Trauma	0							

<b>NAM E</b>	<b>PRE-NATAL</b>		<b>PERI-NATAL</b>		<b>POST-NATAL</b>		<b>ENVIRONMENTA L</b>		<b>TOTA L</b>
<b>8</b>	Miscarriage	0	Normal	0	Birth weight	0	Family history	1	3
	Use of medicines	0	Caesarean	0	Birth cry	0	Maternal smoking	0	
	Infections	0	Breech	0	Hypoxia	0	Vaccination	0	
	Anemia	0	Forceps	0	Cyanosis	0	Exposure to toxins	0	
	RH incompatibility	0	Precipitate	0	Jaundice	1	Consanguinity	1	
	Diabetes	0	Prolonged	0	Infection	0			
	Radiation	0	Premature	0	Convulsion	0			
	Trauma	0							

<b>NAM E</b>	<b>PRE-NATAL</b>		<b>PERI-NATAL</b>		<b>POST-NATAL</b>		<b>ENVIRONMENTA L</b>		<b>TOTA L</b>
<b>9</b>	Miscarriage	0	Normal	0	Birth weight	0	Family history	0	4
	Use of medicines	0	Caesarean	1	Birth cry	0	Maternal smoking	0	
	Infections	0	Breech	0	Hypoxia	0	Vaccination	0	
	Anemia	0	Forceps	0	Cyanosis	0	Exposure to toxins	0	
	RH incompatibility	1	Precipitate	0	Jaundice	1	Consanguinity	0	
	Diabetes	0	Prolonged	0	Infection	0			
	Radiation	0	Premature	1	Convulsion				
	Trauma	0							

<b>NAM E</b>	<b>PRE-NATAL</b>		<b>PERI-NATAL</b>		<b>POST-NATAL</b>		<b>ENVIRONMENTA L</b>		<b>TOTA L</b>
<b>10</b>	Miscarriage	0	Normal	0	Birth weight	0	Family history	1	6
	Use of medicines	1	Caesarean	1	Birth cry	0	Maternal smoking	0	
	Infections	0	Breech	0	Hypoxia	0	Vaccination	0	
	Anemia	0	Forceps	0	Cyanosis	0	Exposure to toxins	0	

	RH incompatibility	0	Precipitate	0	Jaundice	1	Consanguinity	0
	Diabetes	1	Prolonged	0	Infection	0		
	Radiation	0	Premature	0	Convulsion	1		
	Trauma	0						

NAM E	PRE-NATAL		PERI-NATAL		POST-NATAL		ENVIRONMENTAL		TOTAL
<b>11</b>	Miscarriage	0	Normal	0	Birth weight	0	Family history	0	1
	Use of medicines	0	Caesarean	0	Birth cry	0	Maternal smoking	0	
	Infections	0	Breech	0	Hypoxia	0	Vaccination	0	
	Anemia	0	Forceps	0	Cyanosis	0	Exposure to toxins	0	
	RH incompatibility	0	Precipitate	0	Jaundice	1	Consanguinity	0	
	Diabetes	0	Prolonged	0	Infection	0			
	Radiation	0	Premature	0	Convulsion	0			
	Trauma	0							

NAM E	PRE-NATAL		PERI-NATAL		POST-NATAL		ENVIRONMENTAL		TOTAL
<b>12</b>	Miscarriage	0	Normal	0	Birth weight	0	Family history	1	2
	Use of medicines	0	Caesarean	0	Birth cry	0	Maternal smoking	0	
	Infections	0	Breech	0	Hypoxia	0	Vaccination	0	
	Anemia	0	Forceps	0	Cyanosis	0	Exposure to toxins	0	
	RH incompatibility	0	Precipitate	0	Jaundice	0	Consanguinity	1	
	Diabetes	0	Prolonged	0	Infection	0			
	Radiation	0	Premature	0	Convulsion	0			
	Trauma	0							

NAM E	PRE-NATAL		PERI-NATAL		POST-NATAL		ENVIRONMENTAL		TOTAL
13	Miscarriage	0	Normal	0	Birth weight	0	Family history	0	1
	Use of medicines	0	Caesarean	0	Birth cry	0	Maternal smoking	0	
	Infections	0	Breech	0	Hypoxia	0	Vaccination	0	
	Anemia	0	Forceps	0	Cyanosis	0	Exposure to toxins	0	
	RH incompatibility	0	Precipitate	0	Jaundice	1	Consanguinity	0	
	Diabetes	0	Prolonged	0	Infection	0			
	Radiation	0	Premature	0	Convulsion	0			
	Trauma	0							

NAM E	PRE-NATAL		PERI-NATAL		POST-NATAL		ENVIRONMENTAL		TOTAL
14	Miscarriage	0	Normal	0	Birth weight	0	Family history	1	2
	Use of medicines	0	Caesarean	0	Birth cry	0	Maternal smoking	0	
	Infections	0	Breech	0	Hypoxia	0	Vaccination	0	
	Anemia	0	Forceps	0	Cyanosis	0	Exposure to toxins	0	
	RH incompatibility	0	Precipitate	0	Jaundice	0	Consanguinity	1	
	Diabetes	0	Prolonged	0	Infection	0			
	Radiation	0	Premature	0	Convulsion	0			
	Trauma	0							

NAM E	PRE-NATAL		PERI-NATAL		POST-NATAL		ENVIRONMENTAL		TOTAL
15	Miscarriage	0	Normal	0	Birth weight	0	Family history	1	6
	Use of medicines	0	Caesarean	0	Birth cry	0	Maternal smoking	0	
	Infections	1	Breech	0	Hypoxia	0	Vaccination	0	
	Anemia	1	Forceps	0	Cyanosis	0	Exposure to toxins	0	

	RH incompatibility	0	Precipitate	0	Jaundice	1	Consanguinity	0	
	Diabetes	1	Prolonged	0	Infection	1			
	Radiation	0	Premature	0	Convulsion	0			
	Trauma	0							

The number of factors present in the individuals are  $42/405$ .

Where the total number of factors present is 42

The total number of factors considered for the study is 405.

The MEAN of the factors present in the 15 individuals is 0.103 (the sum divided by the count).

- ✓ 6 out of 15 children had prenatal history.
- ✓ 5 out of 15 children had peri natal history.
- ✓ 13 out of 15 children had postnatal history.
- ✓ 6 out of 15 children had environmental history.

Number of prenatal factors present are

$9/120$

Number of perinatal factors present are

$6/105$

Number of postnatal factors present are

$18/105$

Number of environmental factors present are

$9/75$

### Summary and Conclusion

- The summary of the study reveals the presence of aetiological factors of Autism as reported by the articles, were present in the case histories studied.
- There is insufficient evidence to implicate any factor in Autism aetiology, although there are some evidences to suggest that exposure to these risk factors based on pre-, peri-, neonatal and environmental exposures may increase the chances to lead to the complications of Autism and Autism spectrum disorders.

### Limitations

- Not limited to one category of factors.  
The factors analysed in this study do not belong to only one category of factors. The articles chosen for the meta-analysis comprise of various factors explained across various locations with different no. of cases chosen for study.  
Not many articles were reviewed due to heterogeneity. The risk factors characterized in this review were evident across studies and present in the cases reviewed in the clinical study.
- Single clinic-based study.

To obtain basic understanding on the etiological factors and the association of the etiological factors with Autism and Autism Spectrum Disorders only a single clinical population of individuals diagnosed with Autism and Autism Spectrum Disorders according to DSM IV and DSM V were taken into consideration. The individuals belonged to a geographical location.

– Limited cases studied.

Since the study was based on single clinic inconsistency of elaborate information and reliability were present in some results. This shows that it is especially important for future studies to use large, population-based data and accurate information to allow for precise and detailed assessments of the disorders and potential risk factors.

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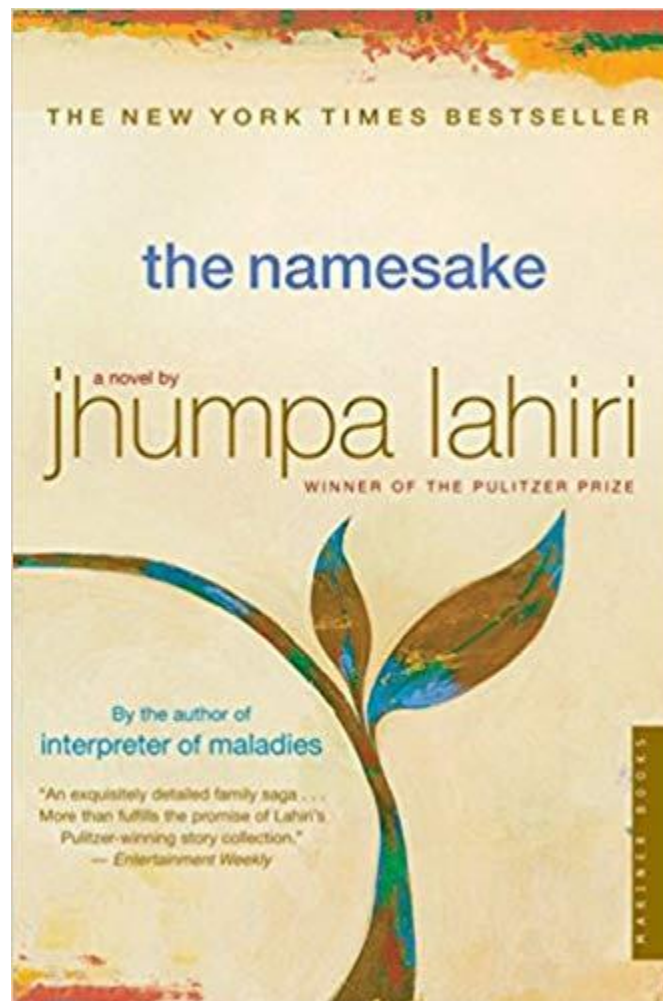
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## Cultural Identity of Individuals in Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Namesake*

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Courtesy: [https://www.amazon.com/Namesake-Novel-Jhumpa-Lahiri/dp/0618485228/ref=sr\\_1\\_2?crd=3DT1POV48N2JX&keywords=the+namesake+by+jhumpa+lahiri&qid=1584359712&s=books&sprefix=The+Namesake%2Caps%2C1179&sr=1-2](https://www.amazon.com/Namesake-Novel-Jhumpa-Lahiri/dp/0618485228/ref=sr_1_2?crd=3DT1POV48N2JX&keywords=the+namesake+by+jhumpa+lahiri&qid=1584359712&s=books&sprefix=The+Namesake%2Caps%2C1179&sr=1-2)

### Abstract

This paper focuses upon the cultural dislocation of Indian immigrants in USA. Jhumpa Lahiri presents the wisdom of creating identity as transnational. This paper shows the

identity of diasporic nature, conflict of dual identity and cultural dislocation and multiculturalism.

**Keywords:** Jhumpa Lahiri, *The Namesake*, Identity, religion, cultural, immigration, human relationship.

The identity of the individual is shaped by religion, ethnicity and economic and social status and so on. Jhumpa Lahiri explores the concepts of cultural and personal relationships and identity through a variety of characters and explores the same in her first novel, *The Namesake*. The themes of first and second generations of Indian Diaspora aliens who feel the pain of experiences in daily life and in cultural areas are presented in this novel. The novel shows isolation as one of the burning problems of foreigners in the United States of America.

The novel explores the landscape of human relations by successfully analyzing the cross-cultural conflict between Indian and Western cultures, rather than the simplistic method of dealing with the complexities of immigrant experiences and background of geographical and emotional displacement. Characters' Cultural Isolation isolation with radical personal solutions suggests that individual multiculturalism can solve a number of peaceful differences between cultural communities, including minorities. The novel *The Namsake* is a deeply moving family drama that features signature themes such as the diaspora experience.

This first novel describes Ganguli family's life for over thirty years, their Calcutta Bonds, parents Gogol and Sonia and their generation as well as Jack's cultural experience with their parents in the United States.

The story of two generations of an Indian family and their struggle to thrive themselves in the West is a true story experienced by many. Story reveals how the original national identity is eroded and replaced with the hybrid.

They argue riotously over the films of Ritwik Ghatak versus those of Satyajit Ray. The CPI (M) versus the Congress party. North Calcutta versus South Calcutta. For hours they argue about the politics of America, a country in which none of them is eligible to vote. (*The Name Sake*, 38).

*The Namesake* celebrates cultural hybridity as a result of globalization and the retreat of the typical diaspora experience, in which the nationalism and cultural identity of India are reduced to slide. V. Ganesan suggests that individuals cannot find themselves within the narrow notion of national and cultural boundaries. V. Ganesan presents global migration issues and cultural elements into a popular area, reflecting the fact that it is a 'home of the heart'.

Edward Said's scepticism with the concept of culture is very relevant (Said 1993).

Constructing new identity in the foreign country is very difficult and holding the cultural values by sticking to the conventional ways was very difficult for them. The frantic search for the cultural identity, personal identity and psychological identity has been portrayed by Jewellery in Small Boy. Gogol is not in a right way until he realises that she is symbolised by new culture.

*The Namesake* is a novel that ends with Gogol's nickname, but he legally turned it into a name and realized how difficult it was to become a different person in the Gogol drive suite, with different identities at different levels closely linked to Gogol's sanity. Gogol presents the current deadly train crash in 1961. Gogol still doesn't understand that part of his identity is the day his father destroys it.

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**Norman Mailer as a Social Critic:**  
*The Naked and the Dead*

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Norman Mailer ((January 31, 1923 – November 10, 2007)

Courtesy: [https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Norman\\_Mailer](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Norman_Mailer)

**Abstract**

This article lays focus on a social critic named Norman Mailer who criticizing the cultural deviations in the contemporary American society in his work. *The Naked and the Dead*, which represents the conflict between mechanistic forces of system and individual integrity and explore the condition of man struggling against the depersonalization forces of modern society Mailer is deeply concerned with the relationship between American institutions and inner lives of the people and his works depicts the loss of human values in the content of a war experience and in extension the American society.

**Key words:** Norman Mailer, *The Naked and the Dead*, Social Critic, Cultural deviations, depersonalization, subjugation, virtual explosion, materialism.

Norman Mailer, who is considered as one of the distinguished postwar American writers, stands unique as a social critic endowed with the literary skill and critical acumen to point out and criticise the deteriorating standards of present day American life. Robert Ehrlich rightly observes:

“Perhaps no other American writer since World War II has been as concerned with the quality of American life as Norman Mailer ..... Mailer has detailed his attitudes towards his country in an ever developing syncretic vision which has required continual aesthetic experimentation ...” (P1)

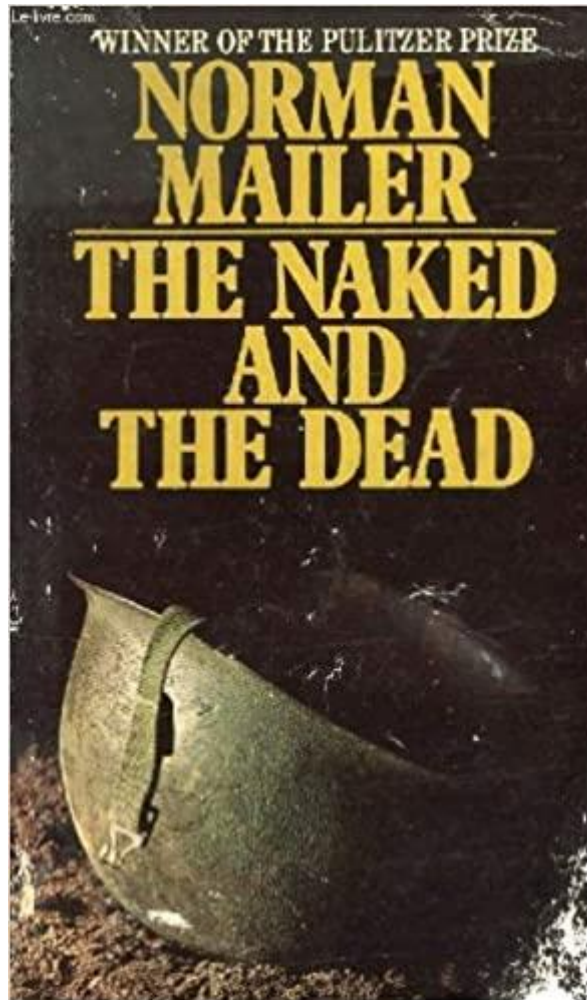
Norman Mailer belonged to the group of post second world war novelists. First World War and Second World War novelists were found to be writing about war but there was an essential difference in handling of the war theme. The first world war novelists “never saw war as the inevitable extension of society” (Kazin 75) but treated it totally as an experience outside civilized life. Mailer is indebted to the first world war writers like Dos Possos and Hemingway in matters of narrative technique and handling of the war theme. Mailer himself admits thus:

“.... in those sixty days I read and reread *Studs Longinan, U.S.A.* and *The Grapes of Wrath*. Later I would add wolfe and Hemingway And Faulkner and to a small measure, Fitzgerald, but Farrell, Dos Possos and Steinbeck were the novel for me....” (P 25).

In the post-Second World War period, with the growth of mass society, a conflict in varying degrees, between the requirements of self and the demands of the society assumed alarming proportions. Mailer was much pained to see that the modern society does not offer a congenial atmosphere for the growth of individual liberty. On the other hand, he witnessed the diminishing emphasis on individual choice. He was afraid that modern democratic man is about to yield his dignity, his freedom and his manhood before the onslaught of political reactions.

As a leading social critic of the Post-war American culture, Mailer has, many times in the past, reacted vehemently against attempts at cultural deviations in the contemporary American society. In short, his heart has invariably been linked through a connecting chord with every tone and vibration of the modern American psyche. As Mailer has always considered writing as performance, he has fearlessly exposed all that is rotten in America. Though Mailer himself admitted that he is highly indebted to the First World War writers like Dos Possos and Hemingway in matters of narrative technique and handling of the war theme, it should not be wrongly understood that Mailer did not have anything original to offer and that his novel was merely a derivative of an earlier work. Of course, Mailer borrowed from

the writers of the twenties, yet he had always made a conscious effort to make the work his own.



Courtesy: [https://www.amazon.com/naked-Dead-Norman-Mailer/dp/B000Q9ND00/ref=sr\\_1\\_3?keywords=The+Naked+and+the+Dead&qid=1584617953&s=b&sr=1-3](https://www.amazon.com/naked-Dead-Norman-Mailer/dp/B000Q9ND00/ref=sr_1_3?keywords=The+Naked+and+the+Dead&qid=1584617953&s=b&sr=1-3)

Mailer shot into prominence even with his first novel *The Naked and the Dead*. The success was so sudden and immense that Mailer found it difficult to cope with the newly gained popularity. Hence, the period that followed his first novel was one of experimentation. His next two novels proved to be dismal failures. Yet, Mailer put up a heroic battle against the critical quarters and could successfully carve a niche for him in American literature. His merit was subsequently recognised and he was awarded the prestigious Pulitzer Prize. The post-war American society witnessed the virtual explosion of industries. The industrial society brought all physical comforts and proved to be 'Utopian'. Yet this Utopian society became demonic as it demanded the subjugation of the individual will to that the centre. As a result, the material concerns enjoyed a predominance over the spiritual needs. Though the American youth initially became a co-operative victim of the mass society, he got frustrated and eventually longed for individual freedom.

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Norman Mailer as a Social Critic: *The Naked and the Dead*



Modern man has become a co-operative victim of a mass society. America as a nation has started to view production as an end in itself. This is a moralistic stance of the nation has helped the victory of material dreams over non-material. Modern man has lost the discriminating power to identify what is good for the spiritual welfare of his self. Ultimately he has let himself be mass-produced just like any other consumer commodity. Irving Howe points out the dominant symptoms of a mass society thus:

“Passivity becomes a widespread social attitude: the feeling that life is a drift over which one has little control and that even when men do, have shared autonomous opinions they cannot act them out in common.

.....

Disagreement, controversy, polemic are felt to be in bad taste.....

The era of causes, good or bad comes to an end; strong beliefs seem one chronic.

The pressure of material need visibly decreases. Yet there follows neither a sense of social release not a feeling of personal joy; instead people become increasingly aware of their social dependence and powerlessness ....” (PP 85-86).

Sordid examples of representatives of the mass society are found in many characters of *The Naked and the Dead*. The individuality of the minor characters is subdued by the dominant characters who hold the power. They are always placed in the fear ladder. The American populace have all physical comfort, but their traditional values have got eroded. This eroding of values forms a prelude to the increased incidence of violence in contemporary culture. Violence is found to be an integral part of American culture and the use of force, as Ronald Berman puts it, is “a sign of sincerity” (P 150). The contemporary American artist has made no effective protest against these manifestations of a deep sickness. The failure of the artist is due to his “infatuation with the economy of abundance” (AM 176).

Norman Mailer sees man as corrupt and confused to the point of helplessness in his *The Naked and the Dead*. He asserts that there are limits beyond which he cannot be pushed and even in his corruption and sickness, there are yearnings for a better world. The central conflict in *The Naked and the Dead* is between the mechanistic forces of the ‘system’ and the will to individual integrity. Commanding General Cummings, brilliant and ruthless evangel of fascist power and control, and iron-handed, hard-nosed Sergeant Craft personify

the machine. Opposing them in the attempt to maintain personal dignity and identity are Cummings' confused young aide, Lieutenant Hearn and Private Valsen, rebellious members of Croft's platoon. Mailer does not bring this conflict to any satisfying end; at the novel's end, Hearn is dead and Valsen's stubborn pride gets defeated but likewise, Croft is beaten and humiliated and Cummings' personal ambition thwarted. But while the resolution of the conflict may be ambiguous, the nature of it is not. The principal burden of the novel is to explore the condition of man struggling against the depersonalization forces of modern society. Through this novel, Mailer has depicted how the society and war play a havoc in the human values of man, who has fallen a prey to the American life and Culture. Randall H. Waldron observes:

“.... Thus we see Cummings' function as symbolic character has crucial implication for the central theme of the novel; that the machine is capable of extending its domination to the most fundamental level of man's existence of becoming a threat to his very nature and to his humanity” (P 77).

Mailer is deeply concerned with the relationship between American institutions and inner lives of the people. “Power in America does not belong to the nine-tenths of the people but is embedded in the management and labour executives, the military and the government hierarchy, the church and the mass communication media” (A.M.180). A pointed attack on the authoritarian or totalitarian attitude of such institutions of power is the main concern in Mailer's writings. *The Naked and the Dead* is fully of its own time in asserting the corruption and death of the liberal and human spirit in American culture. General Cummings, the incarnation of authoritarianism in the *The Naked and the Dead*, is seen as the person who slaughters the 'liberal spirits and humanistic values using the war as his tool.

*The Naked and the Dead* is in the naturalistic mode. This has been borrowed from Dreiser and Ferrell. In the words of Eisinger, “Dreiser's influence in the book is felt, particularly in the use of chemic compulsions to move the characters and the part chance plays in their lives” (P XII). Mailer has taken pains to make *The Time Machine* section appear an integral part of the novel by introducing them at appropriate places in the development of characters. Mailer makes a comment on the contemporary society through his 'The Time Machine'. Mailer's anxiety is to portray the implications of current history on future. Whereas Dos Possos is merely satisfied with analyzing the nature of the past, “Mailer's novel differs from Dos Possos' trilogy in its use of social elements to clarify a dramatic action, not a social argument” (Merill 31). Some critics hold the view that Dos Possos' *Three Soldiers* “with its contrasting social types and its negative attitude towards the war machine, was the most important influence on Norman Mailer's *The Naked and the Dead*” (David 48). John M. Mute also subscribes to this view and makes a comprehensive

comparison of the two works. Though Mailer learnt from his predecessors, he has always had his path of individual development. John M. Muste rightly observes:

“It is probably true .... that Mailer had the advantage of being in a position to learn from his predecessors, but this is not necessarily a proof that his work was therefore inferior to theirs. We do not downgrade Shakespeare because he learned from Marlowe or Kyd, nor do we denigrate Eliot’s accomplishment because he went to Pound and Donne ...” (P 365)

The period after publication of *The Naked and the Dead* was a period of experimentation for Mailer. He had to tackle the critical quarters which had thronged upon his literary piece. His next two works *Barbary Share* and *The Deer Park* were failures. His humiliating experience with the publication of *The Deer Park* did a serious damage to his self-prestige. Mailer was so much frustrated that he made a remark about the critics “they murder their writers and they decorate their graves” (AM 22). Mailer was modest enough to tell an interviewer,

“I think much better when people who read your book don’t know anything about you, even what you look like” (Rugged Times 25)

Mailer’s self-realisation brought about a change in his conception of the relationship between the artist and his work. He experiences the hard social reality that “without his egotism, no writer is likely to carry much weight” and a writer is not only what he knows himself to be” but “what he constantly fights for” (Kazin 249). In this situation, Mailer declared that “the way to save your work and reach more readers is to advertise yourself” (A.M.21). Mailer changed his outlook which led to the publication of *The White Negro*. Events of national importance such as Negro’s civil rights and political conventions became the theme of his writings. Then came his two novels *An American Dream* and *Why are we in Vietnam?* His *The Armies of the Night* won him the National Book Award and the Pulitzer Prize. After this, Mailer occupied an honourable place in the society. He understood what works for him and what does not.

In the period before World War II Communism looked an attractive alternative for the Americans who were worried with the disintegrating American society and dead values. Mailer was also committed to a liberal leftist position derived from Marxist – Leninist tradition. It was this heritage from the thirties that gave him a basis for his social criticism. The political substance of his novel *The Naked and the Dead* the clash between liberalism

and proto fascism derives from the leftist's view of society and the radical projection of history, largely as those framed in the thirties. The attack that Mailer makes upon American society finds its rationale in corruptions in mind and spirit wrought by decaying capitalism. But the Nazi-Soviet Pact belied all their hopes and announced the death of Marxism in America. The most serious aspect of Mailer's commitment to radicalism in *The Naked and the Dead* lay in the disillusionment with politics and ideology that overtook most intellectuals and writers in forties. "Politics was the God that failed in that time, not communism alone" says Chester E. Eisinger (P x). The liberal left suffered the sharpest rejection because it had promised the most. Mailer wrote *The Naked and the Dead* while this dissolution of belief was going on around him, but he does not seem to have realized until the end that his liberal – left tradition had failed him too.

Though the external theme of *The Naked and the Dead* is war, it has won the uniform critical acclaim as an "effective novel of social protest" (Harper 102). Richard Gilman rightly observes:

".... The chief fascination of *The Naked and the Dead* does not lie in its battle scenes, descriptions of Army life, or evocation of the general flavour of war, the elements that made it a best seller. The most memorable quality it has rests in Mailer's having been able to isolate certain stands of American actuality, the reality that lay, we might say, behind our presence in the war ..." (P 98).

According to Mailer, '*The Naked and the Dead* is not a realistic documentary, it is rather a symbolic book'. In this symbolic design of the book, General Cummings and Sergeant Croff stand for the authoritarian forces. Cummings is assuredly authoritarian in his political theories and conceptions of society. He represents the hot breath of the future through his thoughts, intentions and actions. The theme of man's obsession with power in *The Naked and the Dead* centers on Cummings and Croft. Both men are driven to the pursuit of power by personal and sexual failures easily in their lives and both later compensate for their failures by achieving sexual gratification in the exercise of control over men and matters. As power is a goal in itself, both figures view men as objects to be manipulated – as animals and machines are – for maintenance of power and both realize that manipulation or control requires the cultivation of fear and hate in men for those in power.

To conclude, Mailer's major concern in his novel *The Naked and the Dead* is to show the central conflict between the authoritarian forces of the centre and the will to individual integrity. Towards the end of the novel, Mailer seems to suggest that authoritarianism is a

plague and it leaves no one safe. General Cummings, who considered himself a demi-God, is himself defeated at the end. The victory is brought out by the unimaginative Major suggests that authoritarianism as an institution is more powerful than the individuals and it absorbs everything, even generals into it. Thus, the real concern of Mailer in *The Naked and the Dead* is to portray the loss of human values in the context of a war experience and in extension the American society.

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## Language Education in Karnataka Since 1956

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### Abstract

In Karnataka, now in 2020, Kannada education is at a perilous stage. This paper, “Language Education in Karnataka Since 1956”, (full title -- ‘Language Education (language as a subject and as a medium of instruction from 1<sup>st</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> standards) in Karnataka - A Journey from 1956’) intends to take the reader through twists and turns that school education in the multilingual state has taken in dealing with language issues. The role played by the committees, government and judiciary in formulating language policy is analysed. The changes that have taken place in language education are highlighted.

An attempt is also made to look at the socio-economic and socio-linguistic issues that have played a role in this struggle for existence of Kannada in the multilingual maze.

The journey passes through: the primacy of mother tongue in the primary schools from 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> standards (1956); status of Kannada as a ‘sole’ first language in the secondary schools (1982); only students whose mother tongue is English can study in English medium from 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> standards (1994) and now, the student or on his behalf parents or guardian has right to choose the medium of instruction (2014).

Ultimately it is proved beyond doubt that legal issues are important for judiciary and not the academic or cognitive issues.

The poor response of the students to study through their mother tongue, extraordinary love of English medium and support of the government for the same through setting up of new English medium sections, attempt of the government to compulsorily teach Kannada either as first or second language in schools, with ‘The Kannada Language Learning Act, 2015’ not taking off the ground in letter and spirit are discussed in this paper.

**Keywords:** Kannada as medium of education, legal issues, judiciary intervention, focus on English as the preferred medium, parental/student choice as legal instrument, downgrading value and importance of mother tongue as medium.

## **Introduction**

Karnataka, one of the states of the Union of India, was formed on Nov 1, 1956 by integrating different Kannada speaking geographical units on the basis of the language used by the majority, and geographic contiguity. One of the important reasons for bringing various parts into a single administrative unit was to facilitate effective administration and give an impetus for the development of the people. The integration of the geographical units that had Kannada as the dominant language was expected to help the people to work united for faster economic development and help wider participation of common people in the developmental activities initiated by the State. It was also expected to help develop Kannada as a fit vehicle of communication and education to meet the modern needs. So, the linguistic re-unification was followed by the enactment of the Karnataka Official Language Act, 1963 which declared

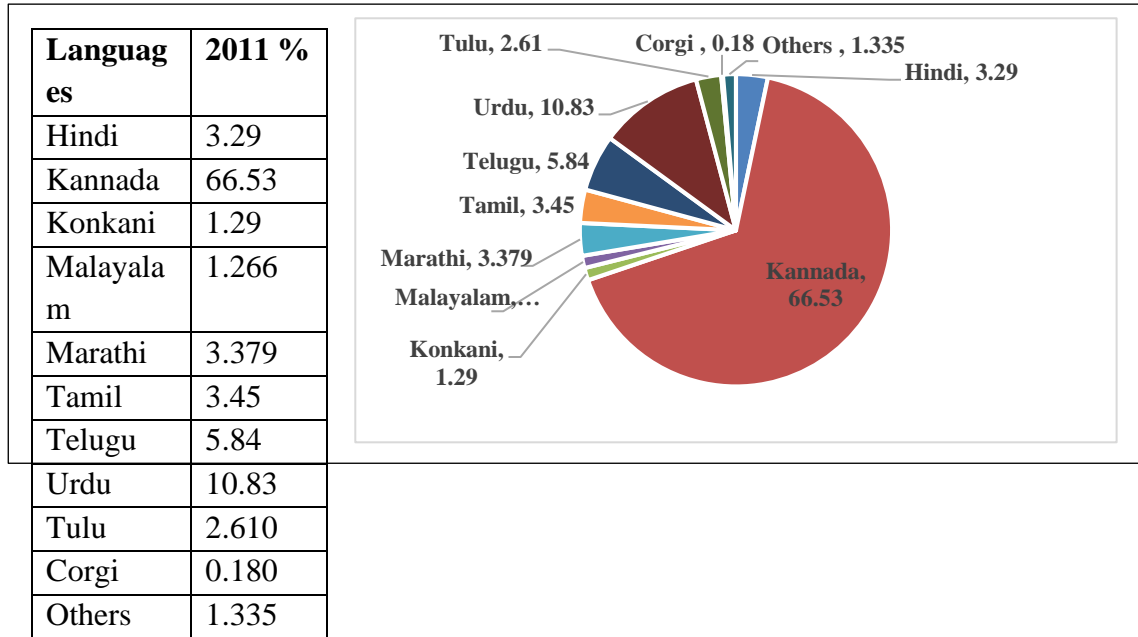
Kannada as the Official language of the State. Karnataka has common borders with Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Goa, Maharashtra, and Kerala states where Telugu, Tamil, Konkani, Marathi, and Malayalam are the Official Languages respectively. The bordering districts of these states have a large number of bilingual populations.

## **Linguistic Landscape of Karnataka**

Like India, Karnataka too is a multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-lingual pluralistic state. The linguistic demography of Karnataka presents a rainbow combination of mother tongues and it is the most multilingual state in the country. As far as multilingualism is concerned there is no parallel to Karnataka in India, so are the issues of language education in the state. This multilingualism is unique not only because of coexistence of many languages but also because more and more people are having competence to use more languages other than their mother tongue. It is to be remembered that Census of India in 1971 records 166 mother tongues in Karnataka. According to 2011 Census of the number of speakers of the 18 languages are: Kannada-4,06,51,090; Urdu-66,18,324; Telugu-35,69,400; Marathi-20,64,906; Tamil-21,10,128; Tulu-15,95,038; Konkani-7,88,294; Malayalam-7,74,057; Hindi-20,13,364; Kodava / Coorgi-1,10,508; Gujarati-1,14,616; Bengali-87,963; Tibetan-27,544; English-23,227; Odia-64,119; Nepali-19274; Punjabi-25981; Sindhi- 16,954 and 4 mother tongues are Lamani/Lambadi-9,74,622; Marwari-1,00,214; Banjari-25,373; Yerava-26536. First three of them are part of Hindi language and the last one is part of the Malayalam language.



### Languages in Karnataka: 2011



The socio-economic survey of Karnataka conducted by the Government of Karnataka (2015) elicits information from its citizens about the following mother tongues: Kannada, Hindi, Urdu, Telugu, Tamil, Marathi, Malayalam, English, Kodava, Konkani, Tulu, Byari, Arebhashe and Others (not named). Interesting additions are English a non-scheduled language, Arebhashe and Byari and exclusion of Lamani / Lambadi, Yerava, Marwari, Gujarati, Bengali, Tibetan which have a greater number of speakers than English in Karnataka. This indicates the increasing influence of English on society and the state government and in socio-economic-educational policy formulation. So, mother tongues like Lamani/Lambadi or Yerava are of no consequence in the language policy formulation in Karnataka. However, in the 2020-21 Karnataka budget establishment of Lambadi Academy is announced. It has to be noted that the Census of India 2001 provides a list of 146 mother tongues in Karnataka along with their population. This present survey may not yield meaningful data for language planning purpose, since the booklet to the enumerators did not have clear instructions as to how the mother tongue data should be elicited from the people. This inclusion of English reminds us the attempt of the British to know the number of people who know ‘to read and write English’ in 1891, 1901, 1911, 1921, 1931 and 1941 through decennial Census in India, as part of colonial administration.

Before unification, the different geographical units that came under the umbrella of Karnataka state had different patterns of school education, but as a result of unification, they were supposed to come under one system. A perusal of the documents from these regions that comprise the present-day Karnataka indicates the existence of three different kinds of schools: Vernacular schools, English schools, and Anglo-Vernacular schools. The vernacular schools taught the regional language and other subjects in the same language. Similarly, the English schools taught English and other subjects in English. Both these types of schools existed in almost all the regions. Although several common elements in the curriculum adopted in the different regions could be identified, there were differences in the curriculum from one region to another. Only languages having their own script had found a place in formal education at the time of unification. The aim of this education system was to spread "...European knowledge throughout all class of people and this was to be imparted to the upper classes through the medium of English and to the masses through their own spoken languages."<sup>1</sup> But precisely, after the unification, the role of Sanskrit in school education was the major crux before the *Shiksha Naekataasamiti*, at state level, chaired by the minister for education that went into the issues of common curriculum for the reorganized state. This committee included Sanskrit in the list of first languages in the school education. Though Karnataka was formed with Kannada as a major language of the state, it could not escape from including Sanskrit in the school curriculum at the secondary stage, though in reality it is not mother tongue of any person. According to this decision even the students with Kannada, Telugu, Marathi, Hindi, and Tamil can study Sanskrit as a first language. Here, many people are not very clear when they speak first, second, third language etc., in schooling. Pedagogically, it is the language which is first introduced to the student in the school and also it is the language through which he learns other subjects, that is it is going to be a subject of study as well as the medium of instruction. Chronologically it is the language to which the student is formally introduced first in the school. In most of the cases, logically first language is going to be mother tongue of the student. Sanskrit does not fulfil these pedagogic criteria. First language and medium of instruction are supposed to have correlation at the primary stage.

### **Primacy of Mother Tongue in the Primary Schools from 1st To 4th Standards (1956)**

Karnataka adopted for a uniform curriculum and syllabus for all its regions/districts in the state from 1959-60, and by the end of 1962-63 all the schools had totally switched over to the new uniform curriculum. Karnataka established the following pattern of language choice for education in schools since the linguistic reorganization of states in 1956.

1. **I to IV Standards:** The students would study only one language, that is, the mother tongue. Maximum 100 marks with a minimum of 40% for pass.
2. **V to VII Standards:** One more language out of the following ten languages -- Kannada, Urdu, English, Marathi, Hindi, Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam, Gujarati, or Sindhi. Maximum 100 marks with a minimum of 40% for pass, and this minimum was reduced to 35% for students from the VII Standard. The students from the III Standard to VII Standard could also study Hindi, or composite Kannada, but this was not

obligatory. A composite course may be defined roughly as the higher standard of its counterpart at the ordinary level. A composite course carried, generally speaking, more marks than the ordinary level and the students may have more than one paper for the final examination in the subject concerned.

### 3. VIII, IX, and X Standards:

- i. **First language:** Any one of the following languages: Kannada, Telugu, Tamil, Hindi, Urdu, Marathi, English or Sanskrit, or a composite course of one of the following languages consisting of three periods per week: Hindi, Urdu, Tamil, Telugu and Marathi and two periods of one of the following languages: Sanskrit, Arabic, Persian, or Hindi. The First language consisted of Papers I and II carrying 100 marks and 50 marks each respectively, together with the total of 150 marks.
- ii. **Second language:** Those who had taken English as the first language would study Kannada, Hindi, Urdu, Tamil, Telugu or Marathi as the Second language. Those who had not taken English language as the First language would study it as the Second language. It consisted of two papers with 50 marks each.
- iii. **Third language:** Those who learned Kannada as the First language would study Sanskrit or Hindi as the Third language. Those who learned Kannada as the Second language would study Hindi as the Third language. Those who studied Kannada either as the First or Second language would study Kannada as the Third language. The Third language consisted of only one paper carrying 50 marks. *This was compulsorily taught, but it would not count for a pass. It was left to the students either to appear or not to appear for the examination in that paper. (italics mine)*

When this was accepted, adopted and practiced, there were very less awareness as to the implications of such a formula both among the parents, language policy thinkers. What was important was Kannada should find the place in schooling from the point of Kannadigas and from others point of view it should be possible to study their mother tongue in the school. English was not much in demand as a medium of instruction. All were satisfied with English as a subject.

This pattern of language choice in school education was practiced for more than two decades in Karnataka. The late sixties and the early seventies witnessed strong opposition to Hindi since it was perceived as a threat to the existence, use, and development of Kannada. This had forced the Kannada mother tongue speakers to lean towards English. However, many among them also felt that Kannada faced a threat to its continuation as the dominant school language from Sanskrit. It was found that the students from the Kannada majority or other minority mother tongue groups also opted for Sanskrit as a subject of study in the schools. Students availing Sanskrit as first language scored more marks in the final examinations than their Kannada counterparts. It was perceived by many that the easy instructional materials used

in the Sanskrit classes, and a liberal evaluation system adopted by the examiners helped students to obtain higher marks in the final examinations contributed to its popularity among the parents as well as the students. The report of the Secondary Education Board constituted to examine the issues confirmed these views about Sanskrit. It was also possible to pass the State Board examination at 10<sup>th</sup> standard without passing the Kannada course in the scheme outlined above (*see italics*). Thus, it was realized that the Official Language of the state had no appropriate place and role in the language education system of Karnataka in the primary and secondary schools.

It was but inevitable, then, that this pattern of language choice created and widened the incompatibility between the policy of language choice for administration and the languages chosen for the purposes of education in the state. The State government employees lacked adequate knowledge of Kannada to use it as an effective medium of administration. This was found to be an impediment in using Kannada in the administration of the state at all levels. At the political level, there was a growing desire to use Kannada in as many departments of the government as possible. This pressured the State Government to create extra avenues to enable its employees to acquire a working knowledge of the State Official language through other formal or non-formal avenues.

Language movement initiated by various political parties, groups of Kannada teachers, students, college and university professors, literary critics, playwrights, and creative writers created an awakening among the Kannada speaking majority to seek a place of pride or pre-eminent place for Kannada in the affairs of the State. Their dream was to restore the primacy and the lost glory of their language as the only medium of governance in the linguistically re-organized Karnataka state. This awakening in favor of using Kannada as the language of administration was a consequence of many factors including linguistic movements, political agitations, and the general political awakening among the backward classes. This description of the linguistic situation in Karnataka can be easily applied to many other linguistically re-organized Indian states also. Spread of literacy mainly in Kannada, and the spread of general education among the people, also had led to a new awakening. The large-scale migration of people, mainly from adjacent states, for employment opportunities that opened up through fast industrialization of the state was perceived to be curtailing the employment opportunities for the Kannada majority. All these needed an avenue for the expression of anger and disgust among the people. The language choice in education provided an avenue to meet the challenge thrown up by industrialization and consequent migration of people from other linguistic groups. The *akhilabhaarata 49neyakannaDasaahityasammeeLana* held at Shivamogga during 1976 asked the government to (i) remove Sanskrit from the list of first languages and (ii) to create facilities in the schools to teach Kannada compulsorily from first to tenth standards. Also, *akhilabhaarata 51neyakannaDasaahityasammeeLana* held at Dharmasthala during 1979 asked the government to make Kannada compulsory first language in all the high schools of the state.

In post-independence India, after the reorganisation of the state on linguistic lines in Karnataka, Kannada failed to develop to the extent to which it was anticipated, failed to become a language of economic opportunities for Kannadigas, as medium of instruction it worked against Kannada medium students. The results of the 10<sup>th</sup> standard and 12<sup>th</sup> standard for decades together say a pathetic story of pass percentage of Kannada medium students. More students were opting of Kannada medium and more students were failing in it as compared to English medium students, year after year. Growth in economy, job openings allowed entry for English educated youngsters than others. Hindi has a pan Indian employment market and English has worldwide job opportunities. Kannada has employment market only in Karnataka which is consumed by English educated from Karnataka and migrants from other states. Thus, creating an imbalance in employment markets for Kannadigas. Kannada and Kannadiga's losing ground in the state of Karnataka found expression in the formation of Gokak Committee (1980) on school languages and Sarojini Mahishi Committee (1983) on linking land-language with employment.

The government decided to delete Sanskrit from the list of first languages in 1979 and included it in the second/third language list. But the government that took this decision did not remain in power to implement its decision. The subsequent government reconsidered the stand of the previous government and decided to maintain the status quo. Pro-Kannada groups protested against this decision. This agitation against retaining Sanskrit in the first language list made the government to think afresh about the language choice in school education. For this purpose, the Government of Karnataka constituted a committee (July 5, 1980) with Prof. V.K. Gokak as the Chairman and placed the following questions before it for appropriate recommendations.

1. Should Sanskrit remain as the subject for study in the school syllabus?
2. If so, how to retain it without it being offered as alternative to Kannada?
3. Would it be proper to have Kannada as a compulsory subject as per the Three Language Formula, and should the option of selecting the remaining two languages be left to students themselves?

Fairly well conceived questions that reflect the role that languages (role allocation in language planning terminology) have to play as subjects in the schools in a multilingual situation. This was aimed at repairing the damage that the decision of the *shikshaNa eekataa samiti* had done for decades to the state official language.

The Committee after eliciting opinion from the public and due deliberations recommended (January 27, 1981) to the government that:

1. Kannada should be introduced as a compulsory subject for all children from 3rd Standard.

2. Kannada should be the sole first language for the Secondary Schools (i.e., 8th, 9th and 10th Standards) carrying 150 Marks.

The Committee further recommended that this should be implemented for the education of Kannada speaking pupils from 1981-82 itself, and, in respect of others, from 1986-87, after taking necessary steps to teach Kannada to them from the 3rd Standard beginning with the academic year 1981-82 itself.

It was set up to suggest whether Sanskrit should be retained in the school curriculum, if retained how it can be retained as a subject of study without being an alternative to Kannada, and whether Kannada should be a compulsory subject and other two languages are left to the choice of students. The committee did not say anything about Sanskrit but focussed on providing primacy or so to say supremacy for Kannada. The report by the Gokak committee was devoid of understanding of multilingual nature of the state of Karnataka and played into the Kannada gallery. It messed up the issues that it was supposed to deliberate upon and make recommendations. The avoidable errors in formulation of language policy by looking into grouse of one linguistic group and forgetting multilingual nature of the state also is one of the causes of failure to implement its recommendations. In the recommendations, we can see a total shift of focus from Sanskrit to Kannada.

The order (April 30, 1982) issued by the Government of Karnataka on the basis of this report prescribed the following pattern for language study:

- At the secondary school level First Language Kannada or Mother tongue: Urdu, Tamil, Telugu, Marathi, English, or Hindi to carry 150 Marks.
- Two other languages Kannada, Hindi, English, Sanskrit, Arabic, Persian, Urdu, Tamil, Telugu, or Marathi, to carry 100 Marks each.

**NOTE:**

1. Students offering a language other than Kannada as First language will study Kannada as a compulsory language and any one of the remaining languages (from Group-B) both of which will be examination subjects for the S.S.L.C.
2. Students offering Kannada as First Language will take any two of the above languages (from B Group) except Kannada.
3. Students coming from outside the State and joining VIII, IX or X Standard and who have not studied any of the languages listed as First language may be allowed to take Additional English or Hindi as First language.
4. The Teaching of Kannada from III Standard in non-Kannada schools will commence from the academic year 1982-83 itself and the language pattern for the High Schools prescribed in Para (1) above will come into effect from the academic year 1987-88.

*It may please be noted that the above order issued by the government really addressed to the basic issue of Sanskrit which the Gokak Committee did not address and deleted it from the list of first languages though Gokak Committee did not make any statement on Sanskrit. It was included in the list of other two languages. The Kannada-speaking majority did not find this solution adequate to meet their demand for according a pre-eminent place to Kannada.*

### **Kannada a 'Sole' First Language in the Secondary Schools (1982)**

The Government after reconsidering its order issued the notification (July 20, 1982) detailing the language choice for school system and modus operandi for its implementation through the circular (August 11, 1982). According to this order:

1. At the secondary school level, the language pattern to be adopted shall be as follows (from the academic year 1987-88) A. First language: Kannada shall be the sole first language (to carry 125 marks) B. Two other languages from the following: Urdu, Tamil, Telugu, Marathi, English, Hindi, Sanskrit, Arabic, Persian, Malayalam or Kannada. (To carry 100 marks each). Note: 15 grace marks shall be given for a period of ten year(s) in the first language examination, to students, whose mother tongue is not Kannada, and (b) in Hindi examination to students who study Hindi and whose mother tongue is not Hindi .
2. Students coming from outside the State and joining VIII or IX Standard in the State of Karnataka and who did not study Kannada earlier may be permitted to take English or Hindi as first language.
3. The teaching of Kannada from the 1<sup>st</sup> standard in non-Kannada schools will commence from the academic year 1983 itself and the language pattern for High School prescribed in Para (1) above will come into force from the academic year 1987-88.

*The students who are joining to 8<sup>th</sup> standard from the year 1982-83 cannot take Sanskrit as first language or as a composite language. Pursuing this order, the Director of Public Instruction issued a Circular (August 11, 1982) indicating the strategy to be followed in the implementation of the order. Accordingly:*

"All the non-teaching Kannada schools in the State should begin to teach Kannada language from the 1<sup>st</sup> standard in the year 1982-83 as per instructions contained in para 3 of the Government order. For that purpose the following periods of subjects and textbooks and lessons for study are prescribed as under:

1. Periods: Five periods a week i.e., two periods from work experience, two periods for physical training, and one of singing education.
2. Textbooks: Kannada Bharathi.
3. Lessons for study: 1 to 16, 18 and 36 lessons.
4. Marks: This being a subject for examination, 100 marks are fixed.
5. Marks giving: Marks giving, and examination rules as prescribed for the 1st standard are made applicable to this."

An analysis of this language formula reveals an inadequate understanding of the concepts like 'mother tongue', 'first language' and strategy adopted for choosing languages for education. Also, this formula stands out as an exceptional case where a regional (majority) language/Official Language of the State is ascribed a special status of 'sole first language' in the secondary school, and this language is made a compulsory language for all students irrespective of their mother tongue with the same syllabus. This formula does not grade languages as first language, second language, etc., either in terms of pedagogical concepts, or in terms of chronology of their introduction in the school system. In this formula, the Kannada mother tongue student had an advantage over the students of other mother tongues. A mother tongue Kannada speaker has Kannada as first language. The Urdu or other mother tongue student has to take Kannada as the first language. He might select Urdu or another language as one of the other two languages. The third language may be English. Thus Hindi, one of the languages of the three-language formula will not become a part of his education. If he desires to take Hindi, his mother tongue will not become a part of his education.

Up to this point, in the debate or agitation over the choice of languages for school education, only Kannadigas were in the forefront. The linguistic or religious minorities or others did not participate in the debate actively. However, the Linguistic Minorities Protection Committee (*General Secretary, Linguistic Minorities Protection Committee vs State of Karnataka and others*), challenged the July 20, 1982 order and the circular of Aug 11, 1982 by the Director of Public Instruction in the High Court of Karnataka. The petition moved from the Single judge Bench to the Division Bench and then to the Full Bench. The following three questions came up before the Full Bench.

1. Whether the Government Order dated July 20, 1982 or any part of it is void being violative of the fundamental rights guaranteed to the petitioners under Articles 29(1) and 30(1) of the Constitution
2. Whether the Government Order dated July 20, 1982 or any part of it is violative of the pledge of equality guaranteed under Article 14 of the Constitution.
3. Whether, on the facts and in the circumstances of the case, the Circular dated August 11, 1982 issued by the Director of Public Instruction of the State Government is violative of Article 14, 29(1) and 30(1) of the Constitution?

This became a classic case in multilingual India and formed a basis for wide debate on the role of the Regional language/Official Language in the school curriculum and also on the question of student's mother tongue as medium of instruction. And who will decide the medium of instruction, state or parents? This has no analogy to the cases decided by the Courts till day in the country. After hearing all the concerned parties, the two Judges in the three Judge Bench ruled in one direction and another Judge ruled in another direction. However, the majority opinion, by law and practice, was to be accepted as the Judgment to guide the language policy of the State. So it is fascinating to find how different Judges of the same Bench looked at the language issues and the legal provisions that sought to address the issue.



The litigants (Linguistic Minorities Protection Committee and others) argued that - there is no rational basis for making Kannada as the sole first language; it is unreasonable for the State to compel the students to study the official or regional language if they do not have aptitude and if they intend to reside in the state only temporarily; providing opportunity to study their language is as much in the national interest as is the study of the regional language; to achieve primacy for Kannada, minorities need not be compelled to study it from the first standard in the schools; the parents and students should choose whatever they want to study and the State cannot 'indulge in regimentation' in the matter relating to the study of languages; children must have the benefit of having education in their mother tongue; children whose mother tongue is not Kannada get a discriminatory treatment and they cannot study Kannada and compete with Kannada mother tongue students; the right to equality under Article 14 is affected; the linguistic minorities have the right under Article 29 to take steps to conserve their language and also a right under Article 30 to establish institutions of their choice, which right includes a right to take a decision as to what language should be studied as first language; it is for them to decide in what manner their language should be conserved, preserved, produced and it is not for the Government to decide and the Government under the guise of public interest cannot impose conditions.

The State while arguing in favor of its policy said that - it has power and right to take steps for the development of Kannada, including making the study of Kannada compulsory to all the children from the primary school stage and as the sole first language in the secondary school since Kannada is the declared Official Language of the State and hence it is rational to make it compulsory; this is necessary to give primacy to Kannada in the affairs of the State; also 'the State has power to make regulations in the interest of excellence in education and any regulations so made by the Government cannot be regarded as infringing on the rights of the minority groups; the usefulness of a language is measured in terms of its use in administration, trade, industry, defense, managerial decision-making and such other wide variety of a range of domains and in social and family affairs. Such domains can be covered by more than one language used complimentary to each other. Language development is central to educational advancement on a mass scale; is central to economic, cultural, and political developments; is corollary to national development. India is a country with a population of sizable numbers, speaking and using different languages and therefore the problem becomes difficult and complex' and 'A child belonging to a minority section of the community in any State speaking a language other than the regional or the local language will thus develop its personality with two languages; one spoken at home, the other spoken beyond the threshold of his home, for in the absence of knowledge of the local language an individual would be at a severe disadvantage in participating in the daily life of the State. When a child or person learns two languages, one as his mother tongue and the other as the language spoken by the people around, both become his language. Therefore, it cannot be said that a child speaking a language other than the regional language at home is totally alien to the regional language'.

The Judges examined the submissions made before them. The majority opinion of the Bench on the teaching of Kannada compulsorily in the primary stage, and as the sole first language in the secondary schools and its insistence led to the violation or otherwise of various Constitutional provisions. Their opinions can be summarized as follows:

1. The Government order compelling all children to learn Kannada in the primary schools in the State including those established by minorities is arbitrary and violative of Article 14, because, this Article 'incorporate an injunction both to the Legislature and Executive not to deny equality before law and equal protection of the laws'. The children with Kannada mother tongue and others are dissimilarly placed because the children with Kannada mother tongue will not study any additional language, whereas the children with other mother tongues are forced to study the regional or the Official Language causing additional burden. This burden may cause dropouts. Curtailing the periods allotted to other subjects to accommodate Kannada is irrational and arbitrary.
2. The order prescribing Kannada as the sole first language at the secondary school level is also discriminatory because it prevents the students from having a language of his choice as first language. This will place him in a disadvantageous position from the student who comes with Kannada as first language from the first standard. The grace marks to be awarded to bridge the gap itself accepts this discrimination. Since grace marks are awarded only to the students who fail to secure minimum marks for pass and not to others, the order places everyone in unequal position. Since Kannada mother tongue students can study Kannada both as first language and as other language gives them an advantage over others who have to study three different languages in high school. This is against the three-language formula. Also from the point of view of Kannada, even the Kannada mother tongue children are denied an opportunity to take any other language as first language and enhance their knowledge (*Hidden meaning is Sanskrit*). The students coming from other States for VIII to X standards cannot opt for their mother tongue and have to opt for Hindi or English. This is a clear case of discrimination and is against all other regional languages. It is the opinion of various committees and commissions that children should not be burdened with an additional language in the primary school itself.
3. The issue of medium of instruction and first language are intimately connected. In most of the cases, the language chosen by the student as first language happens to be his medium of instruction also. So 'it would be incongruous to say that a linguistic minority's choice for medium of instruction is absolute but the choice of first language is not'.
4. From the point of view of the Karnataka Civil Services Rules, it is enough if an employee has obtained knowledge of Kannada from 'Having Kannada as medium of instruction or by studying Kannada as main or first language, or by studying Kannada as an optional subject, or as second language, or by passing an equivalent examination'. So, it is possible for a person even without studying Kannada as the first language but by studying as one of the languages can carry on the function of the Government in its

Official Language. Hence it is not necessary to study Kannada as first language alone to gain the knowledge of the Official Language. So, 'the study of the same can be insisted as one of the languages for study in the high schools, but not necessarily as the first language'. Hence, prescribing the study of the Official Language of the State as one of the three languages in the high schools under the three-language formula will not violate Article 14.

5. The language and script can be conserved through educational institutions. The rights guaranteed under Article 29 and 30 are not subject to restrictions. The State cannot either directly or indirectly take away or abridge, infringe or impart the right guaranteed by these articles. This language rule is not in the interests of the minority. Here the choice is of the minority groups themselves. The Government has only the right to prescribe the general standards to secure excellence in education in each of the subjects.
6. People in this country have one citizenship and under Article 16 have right to employment in service anywhere in the country. Since no other State has such a language policy this policy will be inconsistent with personal liberty and equality guaranteed under the Constitution.
7. In Karnataka minorities are not opposed to the use of Kannada fully in administration. Even then Kannada has failed to replace English. It is fancy for English that has retarded the progress of Kannada and its replacement in different walks of life.
8. The judges felt that this 'does not mean that Kannada, the Official Language, cannot be made compulsory subject for study for the students in this State'. They made it clear 'that the State which has, subject to the provisions of the Constitution, the power to prescribe the syllabus to regulate education, can prescribe Kannada as one of the compulsory subjects. It is also the duty of every citizen who is a permanent resident of this State to study Kannada. But the regulations made in this behalf must be of general pattern and should apply uniformly to all'.
9. They agreed that 'there are no two opinions on the primacy for Kannada in the affairs of the State and its occupation of pride of place in the affairs of the State' and 'that position must be accorded to regional/Official Language of each and every State of our country'. However, in the process of arguments, the possibility that the minority language speaking students who have already accepted Kannada as mother tongue may try to misuse the provision of grace marks by reverting back to their minority mother tongue, and that the allocation of grace marks is likely to condone under-achievement in Kannada, and thus frustrate the very purpose were ignored. Thus, in language-related litigation academic issues take a back seat and the legal issues come to forefront.

Justice Sri Balakrishna gave the note of dissent. According to him:

1. Kannada to be an intra-state vehicle of thought; undisputed spoken language of the masses; knowledge of the language of the state as imperative to one and all.

2. The element of compulsion for acquiring the Official Language of the State cannot be called reprehensible; here compulsion leads to enlightenment and enrichment; primacy to the official language is mark of distinction and not discrimination.
3. Language is a part of the syllabus, and State is entitled to formulate its domestic policy; access to mother tongue is not denied when offered as a second language.
4. No detriment is caused to the minorities in the matter of conservation of language, script and culture.
5. 'Extra efforts for extra knowledge cannot be regarded as undue burden compared with the benefits that flow to them; compulsion to teach Kannada does not affect the right to establish and administer educational institutions of the choice of the minorities.
6. And since possible disadvantages are overcome by the reasonable and adequate provisions in the notification; the government order in question has not violated any Constitutional provisions.

Based on the majority opinion, the court directed that the Government of Karnataka will be at liberty:

1. to introduce Kannada as one of the two languages from that primary school class from which the study of another language in addition to mother-tongue is made obligatory as part of the general pattern of primary education.
2. to make the study of Kannada compulsory as one of the three languages for study in secondary schools, by making appropriate order or Rules, and make it applicable to all those whose mother tongue is Kannada and also to linguistic minorities who are and who become permanent residents of this State, in all primary and secondary schools respectively, whether they are Government or Government recognized, including those established by any of the linguistic minorities.

Regarding medium of instruction, the High Court (General Secretary, Linguistic Minorities Protection Committee vs State of Karnataka) had said that the state government:

1. to provide and ensure that primary education up to first four years including pre-primary education up to first four years including pre-primary education is imparted in mother tongue of the children concerned, in Government schools as also schools established by any private agency including linguistic minorities which are recognised, whether receiving financial aid or not, subject to the existence of prescribed minimum number of children having a common mother tongue who have got themselves admitted to the school concerned; and
2. to leave the choice of selecting the first language for study in the High Schools to the students.

On the basis of the direction of the High Court, the Government of Karnataka elucidated the language policy for school education in its order (June 19, 1989) pending the decision of the Supreme Court. This now combines the issue of language as a subject and language as

medium of instruction in the schools. This is the first time that the government used the word '*language policy for education*' in its official document. Karnataka seems to be the first state in India to use the wordings *language policy for education* in the official documents.

Accordingly:

1. From 1<sup>st</sup> standard to 4<sup>th</sup> standard, mother tongue will be the medium of instruction, where it is expected that normally only one language from the group of languages, namely, Kannada, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Marathi, Hindi, Urdu, or English will be the compulsory subject of study. From 3<sup>rd</sup> standard Kannada will be an optional subject for non-Kannada speaking students. This will be taught on a purely voluntary basis and it will not be at the cost of any other instruction imparted in the school or any other school activity in which all school children participate. There will be no examination at the end of the year in Kannada language.
2. From the 5<sup>th</sup> standard onwards, where, in the normal course a second language is introduced, the child has to study a second language selected from the group of languages, namely, Kannada, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Marathi, Hindi, Urdu, English, Persian, Sanskrit, or Arabic, which will be other than the First language, subject to the condition that the child who has not taken Kannada as the First language will have to take Kannada as the Second language.
3. From 5<sup>th</sup> standard, provision will be made for the study of the third language which will be other than the languages studied by the student as First and Second language. This has to be chosen from the group of languages, namely, Kannada, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Marathi, Hindi, Urdu, English, Sanskrit, Arabic, or Persian.
4. Attendance in the third language class will be compulsory, writing of the examination in the third language will also be compulsory, but from 5<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> standards it will not be obligatory to pass the third language examination. No extra credit will be given in rank, division, class, etc., on account of the marks obtained in the third language examination from 5<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> standard.
5. At the secondary stage, i.e., from 8<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> standards, three languages will be compulsory. First language carrying - 125 marks, Second language - 100 marks and the Third language carrying - 100 marks. It will be obligatory to pass the examinations conducted in all these three languages, and one of them shall be Kannada.
6. The standard expected in second and third languages at the end of 10<sup>th</sup> standard will be what would have been achieved at the end of 6 years of study, if the language subject had been chosen as First language.
7. As contemplated in Government Order No. ED 113 SOH 79, July 20, 1982, Kannada-speaking students will not be given any grace marks in Kannada. Non-Kannada speaking students will be awarded up to a maximum of 15 grace marks to enable the students to pass the Kannada language examination.
8. Exemption from studying Kannada as a compulsory language can be given to the students whose parents have come to the state on temporary transfer.

The main differences between 1959 and 1989 formulae are:

1. In 1959, from 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> standards only one language was taught that is mother tongue. In 1989 mother tongue was declared as medium of instruction. List of mother tongues got restricted to 8 languages: Kannada, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Marathi, Hindi, Urdu, or English.
2. In 1959, from 5<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> standards one more language was to be chosen from the list of 10 languages: Kannada, Urdu, English, Marathi, Hindi, Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam, Gujarati, or Sindhi. In 1989 from 5<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> standards second language was to be chosen from the list of 11 languages: Kannada, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Marathi, Hindi, Urdu, English, Persian, Sanskrit, or Arabic, which will be other than the first language. It may be noted that Gujarati and Sindhi are deleted, and Arabic, Persian and Sanskrit are added. This indicates the sociolinguistic changes that have taken place in the span of 30 years in Karnataka. The students who have not opted for Kannada as first language have to opt for it as a second language compulsorily. Thus, Kannada becomes a compulsory subject from the 5<sup>th</sup> standard for all the students fulfilling the desire that the official language of the state has to be a part of the school education.
3. In 1959, from 8<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> standards, three languages are:

First language: one of the following 8 - Kannada, Telugu, Tamil, Hindi, Urdu, Marathi, English or Sanskrit, or a composite course

Second language: Those who had taken English as the first language would study Kannada, Hindi, Urdu, Tamil, Telugu or Marathi as the Second language. Those who had not taken English language as the First language would study it as the Second language

Third language: Those who learned Kannada as the First language would study Sanskrit or Hindi as the Third language. Those who learned Kannada as the Second language would study Hindi as the Third language. Those who studied Kannada either as the First or Second language would study Kannada as the Third language. This was optional for studying.

In 1989, from 8<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> standards three languages:

Three languages will be compulsory taught. It is compulsory to pass the examinations conducted in all the three languages, and one of them shall be Kannada.

First language: Kannada, Telugu, Tamil, Hindi, Urdu, Marathi, English or Sanskrit.

Second language: Hindi, English or Kannada

Third language: Hindi, English, Kannada, Sanskrit, Persian or Arabic

The Sanskrit re-enters into the list of first languages.

Meanwhile, the government, in order to implement the Education Policy 1986, issued curriculum guidelines (April 24 ,1992) to be adopted from 1992-93. According to them, the students could opt for mother tongue Kannada, English, Telugu, Tamil, Hindi, Marathi or Urdu in the 5th, 6th and 7th standards. The second language will be English for Kannada mother tongue students and Kannada for all others. The third language can be one of the following: Hindi, Sanskrit, Persian, Arabic or English. Here each language carries 100 marks. Learning Kannada is made compulsory. *The students opting for Sanskrit should answer in Sanskrit only.* In the secondary school, the first language consists of Kannada, Sanskrit, Telugu, Tamil, Urdu, Marathi, English or Hindi. The second language list has Hindi, English or Kannada. The third language list has Hindi, English, Sanskrit, Persian, Kannada, or Arabic. One of the three languages should be Kannada. Here the first language is for 125 marks, and other two 100 marks each.

The validity of the judgment of the High Court was questioned in the Supreme Court on the ground that the linguistic minorities are discriminated and they cannot be forced to study Kannada (violation of Article 14); linguistic minorities cannot be prevented from an opportunity to choose languages (violation of Article 350-A).The order of June 19, 1989 was litigated (*English Medium Students Parents Association vs State of Karnataka and Others*) in the Supreme Court of India. The court not only discussed the legal issues but also cognitive issues of the students and emotional issues of the people seeking a place for their mother tongue in the schooling. On Dec 8, 1993 it said that:

1. the element of compulsion at the primary stage is no longer there because the GO is unequivocal when it says from 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> standards mother tongue will be the medium of instruction...
2. from 3<sup>rd</sup> standard onwards Kannada will be an optional subject for non-Kannada speaking students ... the GO is in consonance with Article 350 A.
3. it cannot be contended that a student studying in a school from Karnataka need not know the regional language. It should be the endeavor of every State to promote the regional language of the state.
4. The state knows how best to implement the language policy. It is not for the court to interfere.

The choice of medium of instruction in Karnataka was also based on the statements in the Constitution and the Grant-in-Aid Code of the State government since Oct 19, 1969. According to this arrangement, 'In all primary schools, the medium of instruction shall ordinarily be the Regional Language or mother tongue of the child'. The English medium schools or English medium sections in the primary schools were permitted by the Director of Public Instruction to cater to the needs of migratory groups and 'Students whose mother tongue is a minority language for which there is no provision in the schools of the locality. 'The anti-Hindi stand of earlier decades, instead of supporting the regional language, gave rise to fast growth of education in English medium. This gave an added advantage to the linguistic

minorities who could opt for English due to their perceived threat from the regional language. Thus, the microscopic minority of English mother tongue succeeded in providing an universal umbrella for all the elites in all categories, the minorities as well as the majority, by creating a common avenue for education through English medium.

So, the primary and secondary education in English medium, like engineering and medical education, had become donation/capitation-oriented, and ultimately a tradable commodity. The legal provisions that were framed to protect minority rights became an effective means for every section of Karnataka society to make capital out of the very same legal provisions. There were institutions of the linguistic minorities imparting higher education and primary education in English medium but not through their mother tongue. The government took a policy decision not to sanction English medium schools, except in rare cases, where a considerable number of non-Kannadiga residents and minority institutions were involved. This led to litigation by those who failed to get permission or recognition for their English medium schools.

This policy was challenged by the Sahyadri Education Trust (*Sahyadri Education Trust vs State of Karnataka*) on the ground that the medium of instruction is one aspect of freedom of speech and expression. The student cannot be compelled to express in one particular regional language and not in English. The parents have every right to give education to their children in English and if there is a language policy it should be applicable to all the primary schools uniformly and according permission to some and not doing the same for others is a clear case of discrimination. The High Court saw a valid argument only on the ground 'that many other institutions have been given permission to impart primary education in English medium, but the petitioners have been singled out by denying them the right to impart education in English medium.' It directed the government to accord 'permission to the petitioners to start English medium primary schools'. However, this Judgment was viewed by many as support to the cause of English medium schools.

The rules of the government apply to the government and the institutions aided by it. But they do not apply to other private institutions. The law of demand and supply operated in Karnataka. Gradually, demand for English medium schools in the government and aided sector was there but the government had its own reason not to meet this demand from its resources. Hence, the private and un-aided schools mushroomed in the state to meet this demand and at the same time, the aided schools were in no mood to cater to the demand by levying reasonable fee. Thus, schools imparting education through English medium created by this demand and supply chain wanted that they too should be recognized. There are two socioeconomic forces in medium of instruction jugglery. Staunch Kannada medium interests and staunch English medium interests taking refuge under linguistic minority umbrella or under legal umbrella.

In order to guide the government in taking a policy decision regarding medium of instruction the government constituted a committee with Prof. H. Narasimhaiah as



Chairperson. The objective of the committee was to “... suggest remedy for the problems arising from the unrecognized English Primary Schools and also examine the question of Medium of primary schools...”. This is one of the best reports on medium of instruction for any multilingual context to decide about the medium of education for school education. The recommendations of this committee are linguistically professional, cognitively sound, socially and economically development oriented. But, politically may not be digestive, since a large number of politicians in the state run the private educational institutions either directly or indirectly, mainly teaching in English medium. On June 3, 1991 the committee recommended that:

- a. Permission should not be given indiscriminately to the existing unauthorised schools. After holding inspection of the schools if minimum facilities are available and if the rules and regulations of grant-in-aid Code are fulfilled, permission can be given to such unrecognised schools. No permission be given to other schools. Admission to the 1<sup>st</sup> standard should be given to study only in Mother-tongue in such recognised schools from June 1991. In case this condition is not fulfilled, the recognition of such schools should be withdrawn.
- b. In schools recognized as indicated above, opportunity should be given to complete the study in 4<sup>th</sup> standard in the medium in which the student are studying at present in 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup> standards.
- c. In case required number of students is not available to study in mother tongue medium or if facilities could not be provided to study in mother tongue medium, such schools should opt for the regional language as their medium.
- d. In the primary stage, no permission should be given to CBSE, ICSE schools in the state. Such existing schools should satisfy only the needs of the students who have the right to study in English Medium as per the Constitution, court decisions and as per provisions of Grant-in-Aid Code.
- e. In the existing recognised English Medium schools also, it is proper that medium of study should be the mother tongue of the student from the academic year 1991-92. In case required number of students is not available to study in the medium of mother tongue or for any other reason it is not possible to provide facilities to study in mother tongue, it is necessary to opt for the regional language as their medium of study. The Government shall take steps to provide facilities such required for this.
- f. In order to improve the position of Kannada Medium Schools and to raise their standards, the Government should take necessary steps on priority basis.
- g. Conditions should be inserted in the Rules of appointment, that those who seek appointment in Government and Aided Institutions should have studied Kannada language as their first language in SSLC.

### **English Medium Only for English Mother Tongue Students (1994)**

In pursuance of the Supreme Court Judgment of Dec 8, 1983, in the background of the recommendations of the H. Narasimhaiah Committee the Government issued the order of April

29, 1994 wherein it made a comprehensive policy relating to *language as a subject in the school education and medium of instruction* in Karnataka. Accordingly:

1. From 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> standards, the child's mother tongue will be the medium of instruction. It will be one of among-Kannada, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Marathi, Hindi, Urdu, or English.
2. From 3<sup>rd</sup> standard Kannada should be optional subject to non-Kannadigas. There is no examination in it at the end of 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> standard.
3. From the 5<sup>th</sup> standard, the student has to choose second and third languages. They can be one of the following: Kannada, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Marathi, Hindi, Urdu, English, Sanskrit, Arabic, or Persian. The student who is not studying Kannada as first language has to study it as second language. Attendance for classes and appearing for examination for third language is compulsory and it is not an examination subject.
4. From the 8<sup>th</sup> standard to 10<sup>th</sup> standard in the secondary schools three languages will be taught compulsorily. The first language for 125 marks will be any one of the following: Kannada, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Marathi, Hindi, Urdu, or English. The second and third languages for 100 marks each can be any two of the following: Kannada, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Marathi, Hindi, Urdu, English, Sanskrit, Arabic, or Persian. One of these should be Kannada. The students whose mother tongue is not Kannada and the students whose mother tongue is not Hindi will get grace marks up to 15. This will be in vogue for 10 years.
5. This order also had certain other clauses relating to medium of instruction. They are:(i) in all the government recognised schools from 1<sup>st</sup> standard to 4<sup>th</sup> standard medium of instruction should be mother tongue or Kannada from 1994-1995.(ii) students admitted from 1994-95 should be taught in mother tongue or Kannada.(iii) change over to English or any other language medium is permitted from 5<sup>th</sup> standard. (iv) only the students whose mother tongue is English will be permitted to study in the existing recognised English medium schools from 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> standards. (v) the unrecognised schools will be considered for regularisation if they fulfil the necessary conditions...the unrecognised schools which do not comply will be closed down etc.,

This was challenged in the High Court of Karnataka by the linguistic/religious minorities, parents associations, children/parents through their educational institutions run by majority etc.(*Associated Managements of Primary and Secondary Schools in Karnataka vs The State of Karnataka and Others*)This was referred to and adjudicated by the Full bench of the High Court. The questions that the bench answered after examination are:

- a. Is right to choose a medium of instruction a fundamental right?
- b. Whether parents and children have the right to choose the medium of instruction?
- c. Whether every citizen, a religious denomination and a linguistic or religious minority has a right to establish an educational institution of his/its choice?

The Full Bench ruled that:

- a. Right to education is a fundamental right. It flows from Article 21, right to life. Free and compulsory primary education is guaranteed to all the children in the age group of 6 to 14 years under Article 21 A as a fundamental right.
- b. Right to education includes right to choose a medium of instruction. This is the fundamental right of the parent and the child.
- c. Right to freedom of speech and expression includes the right to choose a medium of instruction. Right under Article 19(1)(g) to establish and administer an educational institution of one's choice, one's choice includes choice of medium of instruction.
- d. Also under the Articles every citizen, every linguistic and religious minority have right to establish and administer educational institution under 19(1)(a)(g), 21, 26, 29(1) and 30(1) and it also includes right to choose the medium of instruction which is the fundamental right of the management concerned.
- e. The policy that mother tongue or regional language shall be the medium of instruction in primary schools is valid and legal for the schools run or aided by the State.
- f. This policy is not valid in case of other recognized primary schools since it will be violative of Articles 19(1)(g), 26 and 30(1).

The government in 1992 had decided to give permission to (i) un-authorised English medium schools if they fulfil the conditions of the code of primary education (ii) English medium schools if they are not eligible for imparting education in English medium can impart education in Kannada or other language medium if they fulfil the rules of the grant in aid code. The students of these schools were at liberty to switch over to any other language medium from 5<sup>th</sup> standard. The Daffodils English School (*Daffodils English School vs State of Karnataka and others*) had questioned the validity of some of the clauses of this order of 2002 in the High Court of Karnataka. The petition was sent to the single Bench for decision in the context of the judgment of the Full Bench. The single judge bench of the High Court struck down the following clauses of the government order: (i) The medium of instruction should be mother tongue or Kannada in all the state government recognised schools from 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> standards with effect from the academic year 1994-95 and from the year 2002-03 from 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> standards the medium of instruction will be only mother tongue or Kannada. (ii) Permission can be granted to only students whose mother tongue is English, to study in English medium in classes 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> in existing recognized English medium schools. (iii) All unauthorised schools which do not comply with the above conditions have to be closed down.

The Government of Karnataka did not accept the judgment and filed a special leave petition in the Supreme Court requesting for stay of the High Court order of 2008. The Council appearing for the state argued that "...the children will imbibe better if the medium of instruction was in their mother tongue. We have to take care of the interest of the children. Learning through mother tongue is the universal law for all." The Chief Justice Balakrishnan who was hearing in the three-judge bench remarked that "It is easy to say things. They are unable to get even a clerical post. How do we survive in this world? Parents are ready to pay

Rs.20,000 to 50,000 for admission in English medium schools. This is the real state of affairs. They do not want to send their children to mother tongue medium schools. The choice should be left to the parents.” The Supreme Court refused to grant the stay. [The Hindu, July 5, 2009]

### **English from the 1<sup>st</sup> Standard (2007)**

Introduction of English in the schools of Karnataka from the first standard as a subject is one of the important steps. On Oct 29, 2006 it was decided to teach English as one of the languages (as a subject) from the first standard itself in all the Kannada medium schools and the schools of the linguistic minorities. In the year 2007, English was introduced as a subject of study in all the government and aided schools from the 1<sup>st</sup> standard without any training to the teachers and necessary pedagogic preparations that are needed for such an initiative. It has to be noted that hardly anybody opposed this move of the government, including the persons who were opposed to the introduction of Kannada on the ground that it creates a burden on children.

### **Right to Education and Languages (2009)**

I consider that the Right to Education (Aug 27, 2009), in the 21st Century is in search of a new paradigm for language education. In the document the “Right to Education” the language issue comes up directly at 3 points. They are extracted below for the help of readers.

- (i) “...child belonging to disadvantaged group” means a child belonging to the scheduled caste, the scheduled tribe, the socially and educationally backward class or such other group having disadvantage owing to social, cultural, economic, geographical, linguistic, gender or such other factor, as may be specified by the appropriate Government, by notification; (ii) medium of instructions shall, as far as practicable, be in child’s mother tongue;(iii) For sixth class to eighth class at least one teacher per class so that there shall be at least one teacher each for – (i) Science and Mathematics; (ii) Social Studies; (iii) Languages.”

The debate educational or legal hardly considers these language issues in the Right to Education Act. But, many other points of this are debated and attempts to implement are made. The important, dangerous and intelligent word (here in italics) provides an escape path to open English medium schools/classes: ‘medium of instructions shall, *as far as practicable*, be in child’s mother tongue’.

### **Student/Parent/Guardian has Right to Choose Medium of Instruction (2014)**

The Supreme Court which took up the petitions on the 2008 judgement of the High Court of Karnataka (*State of Karnataka and Anrvs The Associated Management of (Government Recognised Unaided English Medium) Primary and Secondary Schools and Others*) and on July 5, 2013 decided to refer the same to the Constitutional Bench with the following questions to be addressed by it:

1. What does Mother tongue mean? If it referred to as the language in which the child is comfortable with, then who will decide the same?
2. Whether a student or a parent or a citizen has a right to choose a medium of instruction at primary stage?
3. Does the imposition of mother tongue in any way affects the fundamental rights under Article 14, 19, 29 and 30 of the constitution?
4. Whether the Government recognized schools are inclusive of both government-aided schools and private and unaided schools?
5. Whether the state can by virtue of Article 350-A of the Constitution compel the linguistic minorities to choose their mother tongue only as medium of instruction in primary schools? Apart from the above said issues, the Constitution Bench would also take into consideration any other ancillary or incidental questions which may arise during the course of hearing of the case.

The Constitution bench after due deliberations and listening to both sides on May 6, 2014 decided that:

1. Mother tongue...means the language of the linguistic minority in a State and it is the parent or the guardian of the child who will decide what the mother tongue of child is.
2. ... a child or on his behalf his parent or guardian, has a right to freedom of choice with regard to the medium of instruction in which he will like to be educated at the primary stage in school.
3. ...imposition of mother tongue affects the fundamental rights under Articles 19,29 and 30 of the Constitution.
4. ...government recognized schools will not only include government aided schools but also unaided schools with have been granted recognition.
5. ...State has no power under Article 350 A of the Constitution to compel the linguistic minorities to choose their mother tongue only as a medium of instruction in primary schools.

I personally feel that the arguments from the government side as reported in the copy of the judgment fail to convince even people who are not that conversant with law. But the arguments from other side, succeeded in drawing the attention to their side. Two valuable reports one on *shikshaNa tagnara salahaasamitiya varadi* (Prof. Chandrashekhara Patil -1999) submitted to Sri. H. Govinde Gowda the then Minister for Primary and Secondary of the Government of Karnataka and *shikshaNa mattu boodhanaa maadhyama niitirupuNaa varadi* (Prof. Baraguru Ramachandrappa -2001) though are of high value as academic inputs to the government, people and judiciary - do not find worth implementing or emulating. It is the tragedy of language education policy in Karnataka.

This judgment is rebirth and revitalization of minute of Thomas Babington Macaulay in India in 1835 though there is a sea of change in the country. The 21<sup>st</sup> century may go into another kind of self-inflicted linguistic colonization.

In this context I like to recapitulate contribution of Lord Macaulay. He (Dec 28, 1859 to June 10, 1859) came to India (Madras) on June 10, 1834 as a member of the Supreme Council of India. Within seven days after he came to Madras, he went to Nilagiris via Bangalore and Mysore. The following is an extract from his famous minute of February 2, 1835:

“We have to educate a people who cannot at present be educated by means of their mother-tongue. We must teach them some foreign language. The claims of our own language it is hardly necessary to recapitulate. It stands pre-eminent even among the languages of the west... We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern; a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect. To that class we may leave it to refine the vernacular dialects of the country, to enrich those dialects with terms of science borrowed from the Western nomenclature, and to render them by degrees fit vehicles for conveying knowledge to the great mass of the population. Western nomenclature, and to render them by degrees fit vehicles for conveying knowledge to the great mass of the population.”

On March 7, 1835, William Bentinck the Governor General agreed with Macaulay’s Minute and said that “all the funds...be henceforth employed in imparting to the native population a knowledge of English literature and science through the medium of the English language.” Macaulay returned to England in 1838, after making a long-lasting impact on the language policy of the India. But we are yet to come out of this mania.

In the last few decades, India achieved rapid industrialization in several sectors and states. This has resulted in the relocation of people in the social hierarchy and mobility in some manner. This has also led to planned and unplanned growth of major Indian languages with the help of Constitutional, institutional, and individual support. Some languages achieved better status because of the support they received from the Union and the State governments. However, the last decades of the century are the decades of globalization and Information Technology. These two developments have jointly begun to make a great impact on the education scenario of the new millennium. Globalization and information technology have created a greater demand for English education, and education through English. The state governments are vying with each other, taking steps to cope up with the demands for English education and education through English. This is a new development. Hitherto the governments always were forced to take steps to curtail English education and education through English. Now some states have decided to introduce English from the first standard, and some others from the third standard as a subject of study. In India, English was never replaced, in spite of all the efforts, by any other Indian language, as a medium instruction of Science and Technology. Karnataka, at this juncture, is facing two challenges, one from the point of view of the preservation and development of Kannada language and culture as the Official Language of the State, and another from the point of view of coping up with the challenges thrown in by the market forces.

The language formulas that we come across for schooling are political ideas based on social, cultural, pedagogic, cognitive and economic considerations. All these are ignored when it comes to legal interpretations. The law has looked at language issue only on theory of equality, since all are supposed to be equal before law. By now after reading the earlier sections of this paper one is aware of the stand taken by aided, unaided etc., schools during the legal debate. Now, because of the judgment of the Supreme Court, and insistence of the High Court to the Government of Karnataka to implement the decision of the Supreme Court, the day may come when the numerical strength of such schools will go beyond fifty to eighty per cent. Already we are reading in the newspapers about closure of the Kannada medium classes/schools.

### Numbers Voice the Truth

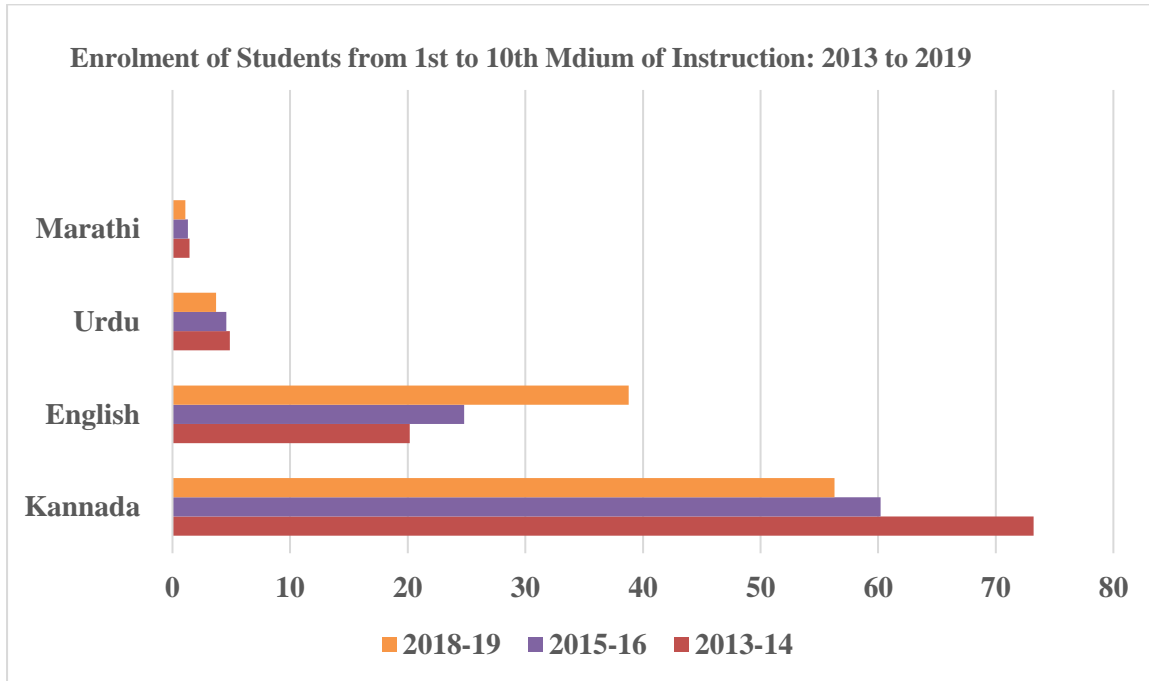
With this pedagogic and legal scenario of language education in Karnataka, it is essential to look into the fast-changing language education picture through statistics that are available in public domain. Source of Educational Statistics: U-DISE Reports, Government of Karnataka.

**Table-1**  
**Comparative Table Showing the Number of Students Enrolled For Different Medium of Instruction In 2010-11, 2015-16 And 2018-19**

Medium	Class	2012-13	2015-16	Difference 2012-13 & 2015-16	2018-19	Difference 2012-13 & 2018-19
<b>Kannada</b>	<b>L P</b>	41,01,132	39,36,732	-1,64,400	31,41,884	-9,59,248
	<b>U P</b>	14,42,032	19,05,406	+4,63,374	16,96,302	+2,54,270
	<b>Sec</b>	18,33,245	6,59,404	-11,73,841	10,01,423	<b>-8,31,822</b>
	<b>Total</b>	73,76,409	65,01,542	-8,74,867	58,39,609	-15,36,800
<b>English</b>	<b>LP</b>	8,70,548	11,11,550	+2,41,002	20,73,518	+12,02,970
	<b>U P</b>	4,62,713	8,50,968	+3,88,255	12,29,850	+7,67,137
	<b>Sec</b>	6,69,815	5,43,836	-1,25,979	7,21,332	+51,517
	<b>Total</b>	20,03,076	25,06,354	+5,03,278	40,24,700	<b>+20,21,624</b>
<b>Urdu</b>	<b>L P</b>	3,14,438	2,79,328	-35,110	2,25,867	-88,571
	<b>U P</b>	1,05,625	1,29,206	+23,581	1,07,487	+1,862
	<b>Sec</b>	81,086	53,190	-27,896	52,128	-28,958
	<b>Total</b>	5,01,149	4,61,724	-39,425	3,85,482	<b>-1,15,667</b>
<b>Marathi</b>	<b>LP</b>	73,986	63,013	-10,973	54,749	-19,237
	<b>U P</b>	32,214	41,485	+9,271	35,384	+3,170
	<b>Sec</b>	45,892	28,806	-17,086	24,368	-21,524
	<b>Total</b>	1,52,092	1,33,304	-18,788	1,14,501	<b>-37,591</b>

**Table-2**  
**Enrolment of students from 1<sup>st</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> in four Medium of instruction**

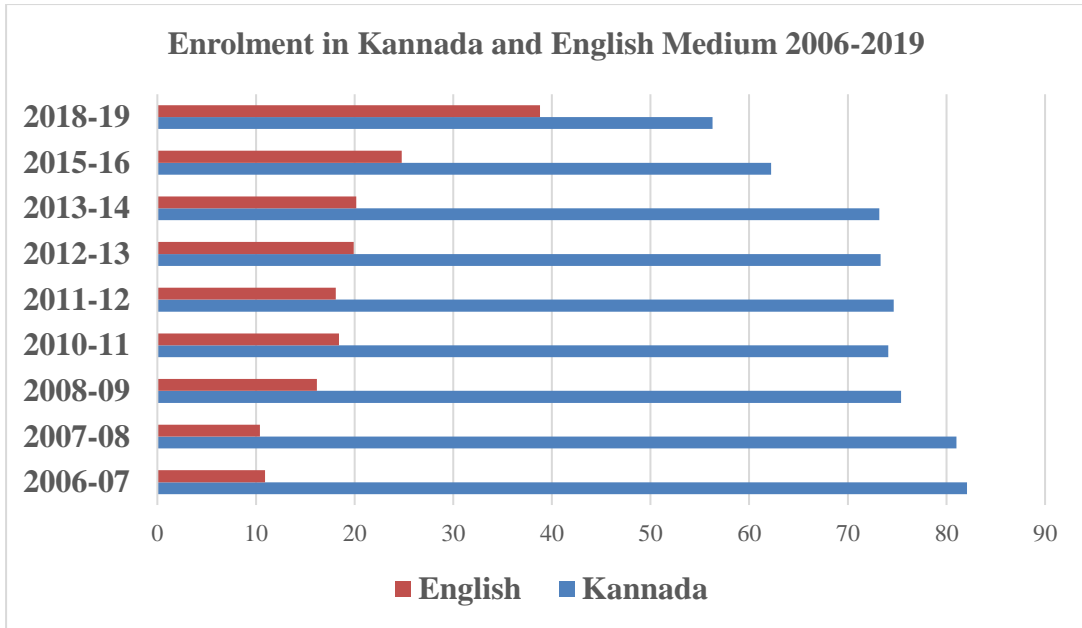
	2013-14	2015-16	2018-19
<b>Kannada</b>	73.210	60.210	56.288
<b>English</b>	20.179	24.789	38.794
<b>Urdu</b>	4.877	4.566	3.715
<b>Marathi</b>	1.454	1.318	1.103



**Table-3**  
**Enrolment of Students From 1<sup>st</sup> To 10<sup>th</sup> Standards in Kannada and English Medium**

Year	Kannada	English
<b>2006-07</b>	82.10	10.93
<b>2007-08</b>	81.02	10.40
<b>2008-09</b>	75.39	16.17
<b>2010-11</b>	74.10	18.40
<b>2011-12</b>	74.67	18.08
<b>2012-13</b>	73.31	19.91
<b>2013-14</b>	73.21	20.17
<b>2015-16</b>	62.21	24.78
<b>2018-19</b>	56.288	38.794





The above Table-1, 2 and 3 and their respective charts indicate that in case of Kannada, Urdu and Marathi medium of instruction the enrolment of students is rapidly decreasing from year to year. But it is progressively increasing in case of English medium of instruction. This clearly indicates that Indian languages are no longer sought out as medium of instruction by the students in Karnataka. English is most sought out medium of instruction. English as medium of instruction in the primary education is affecting every Indian language as medium of education.

These Comparative tables shows the numbers of students enrolled for different medium of instruction. It paints an alarming picture. It shows that much before the verdict of the Supreme Court on May 6, 2014, more and more students had started to opt for English medium in large numbers and the enrolment in the Indian language medium was depleting at an alarming level. Only in case of Tamil there is a little demand from students, it can be attributed to the language loyalty of the concerned speech community irrespective of the place where they are staying. Now, armed with the Supreme Court judgment, parents and owners of the educational institutions will accelerate the mushrooming of English medium in Karnataka. In the next one decade from now, the educational statistics will show pathetic picture of Indian languages as medium of education in the state.

Gradually, as we saw above, the number of students opting for Kannada medium is fast decreasing. The social and educational system, as already illustrated through various statistics, has covertly designated English medium for the elite and the regional language medium for others. The changing equations in the society are clear for everyone to see. English education bestows an advantage on those who adopt it. Naturally, the poor people also desire to somehow improve their lot by opting for the English medium education for their children. Their preference for the English medium may not really solve their problems. They continue to be

disadvantaged because, more often than not, their children happen to be first generation school-goers, with no help from the family members to improve their study skills. When the elite social groups do not care for their language and culture, why should others bother about the mother tongue, and education through that language? The fear is that if the present trend continues, the market forces will convert the regional and other Indian languages only as subjects of study and eliminate them as medium of instruction. This is an unfortunate and retrograde step for any society. Since independence, Indian languages have come a long way in their development through organized activities. One of the ways these can retain their status they gained in the first fifty years of Indian independence is through absorbing technology and regaining the confidence of their speakers by obtaining market value for them

The Table-4 illustrates the enrolment of students medium and school management wise during 2018-19 from 1<sup>st</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> standards. It shows that the private un-aided schools are housing 87.69 % of English medium students and only 13.72 % of Kannada medium students. Whereas the Government schools are housing 66.93% of Kannada medium students and only 3.44 % of English medium students.

**Table-4**  
**Enrolment of Students: Medium and Management wise During 2018-19**  
**from 1<sup>st</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> standards**

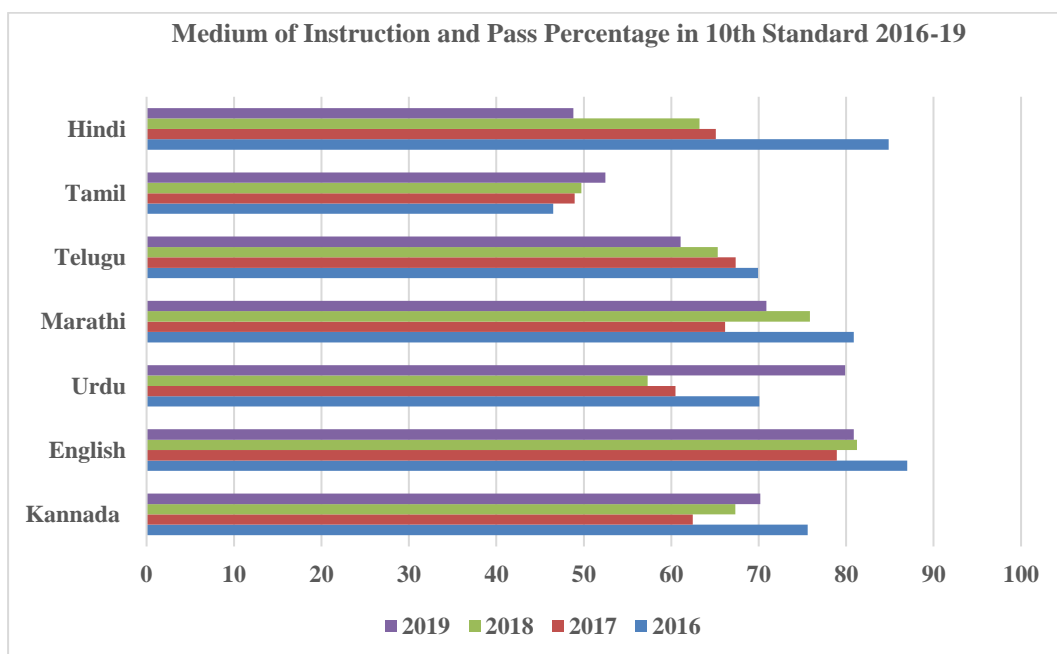
	<b>Kannada</b>	<b>English</b>	<b>Urdu</b>	<b>Tamil &amp; Telugu</b>	<b>Marathi</b>
<b>Education Department</b>	39,08,516	1,38,617	2,55,253	4,475	72,131
<b>Social Welfare</b>	19,823	1,58,187	628	0	0
<b>Local Bodies</b>	5,643	3,780	216	0	162
<b>Private Aided</b>	11,02,849	1,26,032	67,929	5,423	32,646
<b>Private Un-Aided</b>	8,01,378	35,29,312	60,956	236	9,209
<b>Others</b>	1,316	7,222	3	0	0
<b>Central government</b>	35	61,329	497	0	353
<b>Un-recognised</b>	49	221	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>58,39,609</b>	<b>40,24,700</b>	<b>3,85,482</b>	<b>10,134</b>	<b>1,14,501</b>

In this context of demand for English medium of education the Government of Karnataka is opening English medium sections in the government schools. As far as Kannada medium is concerned it is a retrograde step.

The Table-5 and the chart present pass percentage of students in different medium of instruction in 10<sup>th</sup> standard examination in four years. Medium divide in the 10<sup>th</sup> standard pass is very significant. Every year percentage of pass in English medium is higher than the pass percentage of students in all other medium of instruction. The pass percentage is considerably low in other mediums.

**Table-5**  
**Pass Percentage of Students in Different**  
**Medium of Instruction in 10<sup>th</sup> Standard Examination**

Medium	2016	2017	2018	2019
<b>Kannada</b>	75.61	62.47	67.33	70.19
<b>English</b>	87.00	78.94	81.23	80.88
<b>Urdu</b>	70.06	60.48	57.29	79.87
<b>Marathi</b>	80.86	66.15	75.86	70.87
<b>Telugu</b>	69.91	67.37	65.31	61.06
<b>Tamil</b>	46.51	48.96	49.71	52.46
<b>Hindi</b>	84.85	65.09	63.24	48.81



There are two major things that are always ignored in the discourse on language policy implications. First thing is that the common man who gets affected by the policy is not able to distinguish between learning a language as a subject in the school and learning a subject

through a language, that is medium of instruction. They look alike and understood in the same manner. He perceives both as one and the same and clamours for English medium. Second important thing is language teaching pedagogy whether it is teaching Kannada or English, sans ground realities of the socio-economic factors and actual needs of the students. These languages are taught in the schools not for communication purpose, but for literature and literary sensibilities. They took over the space of communication skills rendering the students poorly educated in both English and Kannada language skills.

Because of the landmark Judgement of the Supreme Court of India on May 6, 2014 where in it was said that "...a child or on his behalf his parent or guardian, has a right to freedom of choice with regard to medium of instruction in which he would like to be educated at primary stage in school", we can say that the issue of medium of instruction in the primary schools not only in Karnataka but also in the country has come to stabilise for next few decades until and unless some drastic political, constitutional changes take place in the country

At present Kannada is not endangered since it is having official patronage and is learnt as mother tongue by sizable group of people. Kannada has to survive through learning as a mother tongue by its people. If due to some reason or the other like the one that we are discussing now, if the group switches over to English or some other language, in due course of 3 to 4 generations, the number of speakers may dwindle. In another 8 to 10 hundred years, it may become a museum language. I think bilingualism in a dominant language like English and Hindi is more dangerous for the existence of Kannada.

Let us not be emotional but rational. Supremacy for Kannada is important in Karnataka but not at the cost of other languages spoken in the state. Kannada has a pressure group, but is Kodava or Tulu or Yerava or Lamani or Soliga has a pressure group to fight for the cause of their language in schools? There is a grave need to bring more and more non-school mother tongues into the school as subjects in the primary education. If we agree that our languages/mother tongues are our intangible heritage, it is essential that the policies are directed towards preserving such a heritage rather than making an attempt to document after they are extinct.

In 1956 since India wanted to come out of clutches of English and go to its roots in Indian languages wanted to impart education through the mother tongue of the child. This judgement in 2014 seems to be in tune with the present thinking of the elite and changed global and economic scenario. Impact of this judgement on mother tongue as medium of instruction is disastrous. In Karnataka here is a sample of number of applications received to start classes in 2015-16 in two educational districts as reported in The Hindu on Jan 2, 2015.

**Table-6**  
**Demand for Medium of Instruction**

		Bangalore North	Bangalore South	Total
<b>Pre-Primary</b>	<b>Kannada</b>	189	288	477
	<b>English</b>	168	311	479
<b>Classes 1 to 5</b>	<b>Kannada</b>	59	109	168
	<b>English</b>	442	654	1096
<b>Classes 6 to 8</b>	<b>Kannada</b>	10	0	10
	<b>English</b>	170	295	465
<b>Classes 9 &amp; 10</b>	<b>Kannada</b>	1	0	1
	<b>English</b>	52	74	126

The number of classes in English medium (2166), if permitted to start outnumbers Kannada medium (656) classes. But certainly, this indicates the market demand for English medium. The Hindu on June 24, 2015 reported that “*The High Court on Tuesday cautioned officials of Education Department that it would not hesitate to send them to prison for not adhering to the court’s directions for granting English-medium status to eligible schools in terms of the law declared by it in the Supreme Court.*” (Italics mine). During September 2015 the government of Karnataka is reported to have issued notification ‘...that schools registered in Kannada medium but imparting English medium education should be given retrospective recognition for English medium. Other schools that applied for conversion would get permission for English medium from the current academic year.’ (The Hindu, Sep 15, 2015)

Here is another kind of story of Kannada medium school reported in Prajavani on Aug 20, 2015. Al Kabir Kannada medium High School is an aided government school in Bannimantap area of Mysore. This school has Kannada, English and Urdu medium. There are less than 25 students in the 8<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> standards in the Kannada medium. So, the Education Department has ordered to close the same and asked to transfer the students to other schools.

This trend is going to change the language education scenario in the state and may also change the scenario in the country also. After a decade or so, Kannada will be learnt certainly as a subject since it is supposed to be a compulsory subject in the schools and there may not be any student left in the school interested to study through his mother tongue or Kannada medium. It will have a great impact on society and create rootless people. People may economically prosper but culturally they will be poor and second class citizens of their own country.

This essay will remain incomplete if I do not make observations regarding much repeated Three Language formula which is considered as strategy for the ills of multilingual schooling in India. The *National Policy on Education of 1968* spoke about the regional languages and the Three Language Formula. The 1986 Policy reiterated the earlier stand. The *States Reorganization Commission* had asked the Union Government to elucidate a policy outline for education in mother tongue at the Secondary stage. The *All India Council for Education* recommended the adoption of the Three Language Formula (TLF) in September 1956. The endorsement for this formula came from various directions. It was adopted by the Chief Ministers' conference. The National Policy on Education 1968 recommended the inclusion of the TLF 'which includes the study of a modern Indian language, preferably one of the Southern languages, apart from Hindi and English in the Hindi speaking states, and of Hindi along with the regional language and English in the non-Hindi speaking states' in at the Secondary stage. This was reiterated in the *Education Policy 1986* and was adopted as the Programme of Action by the Parliament in 1992. These are major attempts to arrive at a language policy for education. Since education is in the concurrent list of the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution, the language policy formulation for education and its implementation is left to the State governments under the Constitutional safeguards and broad guidelines cited above. The *National Curriculum Framework for School Education: A Discussion Document released on January 1, 2000*, while reviewing the Three Language Formula, states,

“In a number of states/organizations/ boards, however, the spirit of the formula has not been followed and the mother tongue of the people has been denied the status of the first language ... because of the changed socio-economic scenario, the difference between the second and the third languages has dwindled. Thus, in reality, there may be two-second languages for all purposes and functions. Some states follow only a two-language formula whereas in some others classical languages like Sanskrit and Arabic are being studied in lieu of a modern Indian language. Some boards/institutions permit even European languages like French and German in place of Hindi. In this scenario, the three-language formula exists only in our curriculum documents and other policy statements”.

According to this document the three languages are: (i) the home language/the regional language, (ii) English, and (iii) Hindi in non-Hindi speaking states and any other modern Indian language in Hindi speaking states. I do not find it necessary to say more than this in this regard

The question of language through which education has to be imparted always gets entangled with the issue of language(s) to be taught in the schools. The same thing happened in case of Karnataka too. So, we saw in the case of Karnataka the way the issue started with 'which language to be taught and when' but ended up in getting a judgment about teaching through a language too from the courts of law. The anti-Hindi stand of earlier decades, instead of supporting the regional languages, gave rise to the fast growth of education in the English medium. This gave an added advantage to the linguistic minorities who could opt for English

due to their perceived threat from the regional language. Thus, the microscopic minority of English mother tongue succeeded in providing a universal umbrella for all the elites in all categories, the minorities as well as the majority, by creating a common avenue for education through the English medium.

From the point of history of language policy formulation in multilingual contexts, intervention by individuals, groups of individuals in the form of support/pressure groups with or without common cause/interest, role of institutions like judiciary is an interesting and important issue to note and study. So also social, political, legal, linguistic and economic aspects linked with language play an important role in deciding position of language in education, media, administration and other domains. Here is an academic exercise of who did what during the language debate in the legal domains. The parties involved were: on one side - Linguistic Minorities Protection Committee, English Medium Students Parents Association, Associated Management of (Government Recognised, Unaided, English Medium) Primary and Secondary Schools, Daffodils English School etc. They did not argue for the cause of Kannada. All of them argued for protection of their constitutional rights, not for studying through their mother tongue but have the right to choose the medium of instruction. They succeeded. On other side, the State of Karnataka and some other organisations like the Kannada Development Authority argued in terms of pedagogy, cognition, culture etc. and could not persuade the judiciary from their rational thinking.

### **Implications**

After going through the decades of debates on language education in Karnataka, it is essential to see where we stand today. The judgments of the High Court and the Supreme Court on the choice of languages in education and medium of instruction have many implications for language education in multilingual India also. They are,

1. Now, the following is the pattern of language choice for studies in the secondary schools of Karnataka:
  - a. First language- Kannada, Telugu, Hindi, Marathi, Tamil, Urdu, English, Sanskrit. [100 Marks]
  - b. Second Language – English, Kannada. [80 Marks]
  - c. Third Language – Hindi, Kannada, English, Urdu, Konkani, Tulu, Sanskrit, Arabic, Persian. [80 Marks]

Attempts to remove Sanskrit have miserably failed. Success is in making Kannada a compulsory subject as one of the three languages. Welcome addition is Tulu, an indigenous language of Karnataka, as third language.

2. The three-language formula, which was so far designated as a strategy, and which had no direct Constitutional status and was totally dependent on the governmental and

institutional support, has now been given a legal sanction and status from the court of the country for its implementation.

3. Teaching a regional language, the Official Language of the concerned state as a compulsory language in the schools, more specifically at the secondary stage, is recognized as legally acceptable. It is even considered as a must.
4. Earlier research had claimed that learning more languages is not a load. The same is reinforced by the judgment that teaching more languages as subjects from primary schools is not a burden imposed on the students.
5. A government need not wait up to 5<sup>th</sup> standard to introduce a second language. It can be introduced from the 3<sup>rd</sup> standard itself. Introduction of English as a subject from the 1<sup>st</sup> standard itself is silently accepted by majority and minority. All the states might have done the same. If not done, may do now.
6. The judgement "... child or on his behalf his parent or guardian, has a right to freedom of choice with regard to medium of instruction in which he would like to be educated at primary stage in school", will result in linguistic re-colonisation of the country and create rootless citizens from the 21<sup>st</sup> century onwards.
7. This will immediately affect the linguistic-eco system of Karnataka and will also affect the linguistic-eco system of the India.
8. One of the good policy initiatives of the Government of India regarding the medium of instruction is that, according to the CBSE circular, the students learning under its scheme have to compulsorily register the name of their mother tongue. Also, they have to make their choice of third language known. (Prajavani, September 16, 2015)

### **Compulsory Kannada Learning (2015)**

We saw earlier (June 19, 1989) that (i) the Government of Karnataka's language policy for school education failed to make Kannada a compulsory subject of instruction in the schools and (ii) the Supreme Court (May 6, 2014) ruled that parents have the right to choose the medium of instruction for their children. In its latest effort to make the Official Language of Karnataka-Kannada a compulsory language in the schools of Karnataka the Government has taken a policy decision and come up with *The Kannada Language Learning Act, 2015* (Act No.22 of 2015). This Act aims to make teaching of Kannada compulsory from 1<sup>st</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> standards either as a first language or as a second language in a phased manner from the academic year 2015-16 in all the schools of the state irrespective of their funding, status and establishment. According to this policy '...student who has not opted his mother tongue (other than Kannada) as First or Second Language may study his mother tongue as Third Language'. This Act has not come into force with which it was intended to be implemented.



## Suggestions

With these implications, can we look at some of the remedial measures to save our re-colonisation? Many of our languages have rich experience in getting rid of mental slavery in their history. Classical example is of Kannada. It came out of the clutches of Sanskrit by devising new modes of expression. Instead of talking about English losing its ground elsewhere, Kannada has to confront the challenges that English is posing, and devise ways to rejuvenate itself for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The social, economic, political and linguistic situations may be different, but ways could be found out to come out of this.

**Concept of Mother tongue:** What actually is mother tongue? The Supreme Court was not clearly apprised of the concept and the precedence of the use of this concept in the official documents of the country. Even today, the same is not clear for the judiciary. It cannot be defined in clear cut way due to multilingualism being practiced in the country where it is not an exception, but a norm. However, the decennial Census of India uses a definition for the concept which is evolved since the British period. In the Census year 1971- ‘The language spoken in the individuals home during his childhood or a near equivalent such as the language which individuals parents spoke or which he first learnt to speak’; in 1991, 2001, 2011 – ‘The language spoken in childhood by the person’s mother to the person. If the mother died in infancy, the language mainly spoken in the person’s home in childhood will be the mother tongue. In case of infants and deaf mutes the language usually spoken by the mother should be recorded. In case of doubt, the language mainly spoken in the household...’The UNESCO in 1951, in its typology of language concepts had defined mother tongue as ‘the language one acquires as a child’.

**Language Policy:** The second reason to note is that the makers of the Indian Constitution did not lay down elaborately the policy for the domain of education in independent India as they did for administration or judiciary. Due to its sensitive nature and fluid language situation at that time, with broad guidelines they allowed the language law for education to be evolved in the context of multilingual situation under various rights bestowed in the Constitution through the process of adjudication. Karnataka is the only state in the country which has defined the language policy for the domain of education due to judicial interventions on its actions. As far as I know none of the other states possess such a well-defined policy which is adjudicated by the High Court as well as the Supreme Court. The Constitutional law experts opine the same. “A difficult question arises regarding the medium of education at various levels. The Constitution prescribes no policy or principle, and makes no provision, in this regard. To begin with, the matter was left to the legislative power of the States as ‘Education’ was a State subject. The States enjoyed full right to prescribe the media of instruction at the primary and the High School levels. [M.P. Jain: Indian Constitutional Law, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition]. Lack of policy is one of the reasons for the present conflicts in language education. Now, there is a need for a national policy on language education to be framed by taking into account the experience of post independent India and judicial pronouncements.

**Nationalization of Primary Education:** Many well-meaning educationists have said this, and in the light of the issues discussed here, repeating their opinion is not redundant. We saw the existence of different kinds of schools and their role in decisions relating to language issues. The independent nation should nationalize primary education and impart quality education to all the children through common schools, in their mother tongue. The present multi-variety schools are breeding inequality, they do not have a right to exist.

**Effective Language Education:** In the past 55 to 60 years the teachers and educationists have gained experience in language teaching and teaching through a language medium. All of us know how badly the present borrowed methodologies are failing in our classrooms since they are not indigenous. Indian languages have failed miserably in imbibing technological innovations in the information and communication technologies. In the context of Digital India initiative, language education methodologies have to be revamped. The time has come where in best minds will sit together and evolve indigenous language teaching methodologies to improve and update.

**Lesson from England for Education in Mother Tongue:** Wilson J, Deputy Commissioner of Shahpur while discussing about primary education in Punjab and the teaching of Punjabi... on April 21, 1894 wrote “The history of education in England affords an instructive parallel. In the dark age’s education was given only in Latin and was confined to a very small proportion of the population. Later on, French became the official language and education in that tongue spread among the upper classes. But it was not until the native English tongue was adopted as the means of instruction that education became general among the masses of the people.”

## **Conclusion**

While concluding I would like to say that the language policy of this multilingual state of Karnataka for education, as it stands today, was not framed and implemented in a single stroke, but it has evolved during the period 1956 -2020 through the process of conflict, understanding, adjudication and adjustment of roles for various mother tongues (home languages) as school languages. It has evolved in several stages with the decisions taken by the bureaucracy, recommendations of the committees, legislature and judicial intervention. These decisions were guided at times by the prevalent dominant public opinion, and often were adjudicated by the judiciary by looking into the claims and counterclaims of various mother tongue/language groups. Often social, economic, political, legal, and other issues not related to education have influenced the language choice for education. Still the language policy like many other policies is in a fluid state and may take some more time to get stabilised, but it is certain that it has come around one circle with the Supreme Court judgement in 2014 about the medium of instruction. Right to education in once own mother tongue has become right to choose a language medium of instruction for primary education.

Effective implementation of *The Kannada Language Learning Act, 2015* (Act No.22 of 2015) is yet to be evaluated. Only political will and alertness of state administrative machinery could help in its success. We have to watch and see what will be the result of making the issue of medium of instruction in the primary stage: a national issue by involving millions of citizens in signature campaign, or tackle politically by involving the chief ministers of the states of the Union, or international issue by raising it in the SAARC Literary Festival on South Asian Poetry during July 2015 at Bangalore, or a constitutional issue by seeking amendments to the Constitution of India. However, in the context of the New Education Policy, it is reported (The Hindu, Dec 30, 2015) that the Department of Primary and Secondary Education of the Government of Karnataka has recommended to the Ministry of Human Resources Development, Government of India that at the primary level the parents have final word in the selection of medium of instruction of their children. Also, it has recommended that in the higher primary level medium of instruction be bilingual – English as well as mother tongue and at the secondary level schools will have an option to choose the medium of instruction. Regarding number of languages to be taught, it has recommended that at the lower primary level be-2, at the higher primary level-3, at the high school level-2 and at the higher secondary level-1.

However, the Draft National Educational Policy-2019 states that “The three language formula, followed since the adoption of the National Policy on Education 1968, and endorsed in the National Policy on Education 1986/1992 as well as the NCF 2005, will be continued, keeping in mind the Constitutional provisions and aspirations of the people, regions, and the Union.” The NEP-2019 proposes that the “The three-language formula will need to be implemented in its spirit throughout the country, promoting multilingual communicative abilities for a multilingual country.” It goes one step ahead and states that “...all students from preschool and Grade I onwards will be exposed to three or more languages with the aim of developing speaking proficiency and interaction, and the ability to recognise scripts and read basic text, in all three languages by Grade3.” Regarding the medium of instruction, the draft NEP-2019 recommends that “When possible, the medium of instruction - at least until Grade 5 but preferably till at least Grade 8 - will be the home language/mother tongue/local language.” The next decisive course is awaited in the final and approved version of the New Education Policy based on the discussion on the draft of 2019 by the Government of India.

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#### Note

This is the revised and updated version of the paper ‘*Language Education in Karnataka: A Journey from 1956 to 2015*’ first published in 2017, in ‘*Indian Languages in School Education System*’. Ed. K V Narayana. Kuvempu Bhasha Bharathi Pradhikara, Bangalore. Paper first written in 2015 published in 2017. Revised and updated in 2020.

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## *Kurunthogai* Poem 40

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### **Abstract**

*Kurunthogai* is a classical Tamil poetic work (a collection of poems by different authors) from the *Sangam* literature, which is more than two thousand years old. The poems belong to the *akam* (love between man and woman) category, and each poem consists of 4 to 8 lines each, except poem 307 and 391 which have 9 lines. This paper discusses the content of the poem number 40, which describes the passion men and women in deep love have for one another, and how they describe the love they have for one another. Apart from the passionate description of love between men and women, this poem subtly points out how this love transcends all barriers, using a very ordinary, day to day sight or process in nature, which is easily and always taken for granted and not even noticed.

**Keywords:** *Kurunthogai*, poem 40, Sangam literature, true love between man and woman, beyond worldly constraints.

### **Introduction**

The *Sangam* literature structure suggests the surviving *kurunthogai* manuscripts have 402 poems. Now we are going to study the 40<sup>th</sup> poem of *kurunthogai*. This poem has been chosen for its popularity and certain time-tested values. It still represents value of true love and also its manifestation overcoming worldly barriers. It has the quality of immortal and eternal love something akin to John Keats' poem "Ode on Grecian Urn".

### **Theme**

The theme of the poem is a familiar idea about love. The hero expresses his love for the heroine in a tone which doesn't appear to be earthly. Treatment of love as the subject is common but what distinguishes the poem from others is its overtone. The poem is musical, passionate and universal. The lovers are not ordinary lovers and their passion is to be measured by the intensity of the expression and its everlasting quality.

Most of the *Sangam* period literature reflects a true sense of affinity towards nature. The themes are intertwined with Nature and the images and similes are drawn from Nature to

reiterate the themes taken up by the poet. In that sense this poem excels in communicating a powerful feeling of the lover who draws parallel from Nature to convey his thought, feeling and passion.

The poem is presented in Tamil below.

குறுந்தொகை 40 Kurunthogai 40  
யாயும் ஞாயும் யார் ஆகியரோ?  
எந்தையும் துந்தையும் எம் முறைக் கேளிர்?  
யானும் நீயும் எவ் வழி அறிதும்?  
செம் புலப் பெயல் நீர் போல  
அன்புடை நெஞ்சம் தாம் கலந்தனவே.

செம்புலப்பெயனீரார் பாடல்  
குறிஞ்சி  
தலைவியைப் புணர்ந்தபின் நீங்கும் தலைவன் தலைவியைத்  
தேற்றுகிறான்.

என் தாயும் உன் தாயும் யார் யாரோ?  
என் தந்தையும் உன் தந்தையும் எந்த வகையில் உறவினர்?  
நான் உன்னையும், நீ என்னையும் எந்த வகையில் அறிவோம்.  
அப்படி இருந்தும் நம் அன்பு உள்ளங்கள் ஒன்றோடொன்று  
கலந்துவிட்டன.

செம்மையான நிலத்தில் (மணல் பாங்கோ, களர் பாங்கோ இல்லாத  
நிலத்தில்) பெய்த மழைநீர் போலக் கலந்து நிலைபெற்றுவிட்டன.  
(இனி நிலமும் நீரும் பயிரை வளர்க்கும்)

### Tenor of the Poem

The lover describes his love for his beloved and also the love that existed between his father and mother and also the love that existed between her parents. He takes the analogy further suggesting that every relationship is born out of true love in diverse situations. The lover feels that their love is not born out of any earlier familiarity, but it happened out of mutual attraction between them. Their love is characterised by no material or worldly consideration, but it is like true union that happens between rainwater and the red soil, leading to the rain water changing its colour to red. When two hearts loving one another meet and have intimate relations, their hearts lose their individual traits and become one and the same.

*Kurinchi* in Tamil denotes the geography of forest and its adjacent areas. The poet uses the comparison of what happens to rainwater which falls on the red soil to reiterate organic unity between the lovers. There is no worldly consideration in their love and the love is spontaneous, pure and natural. This kind of love in such a natural setting is typical and the lovers are guided more by nature rather than by other interests.

The lovers are prompted by nature and they submit themselves to the natural instinct of physical relationship. She sobs after the event and her lover consoles her by stating that your mother and my mother are in no way connected to each other and so also your father and my father. We were drawn to each other as strangers, but the true love enjoined us as it happens between the red soil and the rainwater. Hereafter we will be guided by nature and like plants growing after the rain we will also be blessed with progeny.

The language used in the poem is simple, optimistic and touches our heart and spirit.

The author's name was not found anywhere, not included in the lines of the poem, etc. So, the ancient compiler/s have used the symbolic word in the poem, namely, sempulapeyalnir to coin the name of the poet 'sembulapeyalniran' as the author's name. The compiler/s show their great sensitivity to poem in the compiled work Kurunthogai.

### **Short Analysis of the Poem**

The interrogative lines at the beginning of the poem suggest the universality of the experience of true passionate love. The characters depicted are representative players of the universal drama of the conflict between nature and the society. True love conquers all is the theme. The lover's intention to convey the love for his beloved in a passionate and unequivocal way is evident. It is not a transgression but a submission to the will of nature.

### **Conclusion**

Though the poem was written 2000 years ago during the *Sangam* literature, it still has the power to touch heart and spirit to appreciate and glorify true passionate love between man and woman even today.

The name of the poet is not known.

A phrase that occurs in the poem is made as the poet's name- SEMPULAP-PEYAL-NIRAR.

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### **Acknowledgement**

I like to thank Professor Dr. R. Rajagobal who helped me with my research on Sangam Literature.

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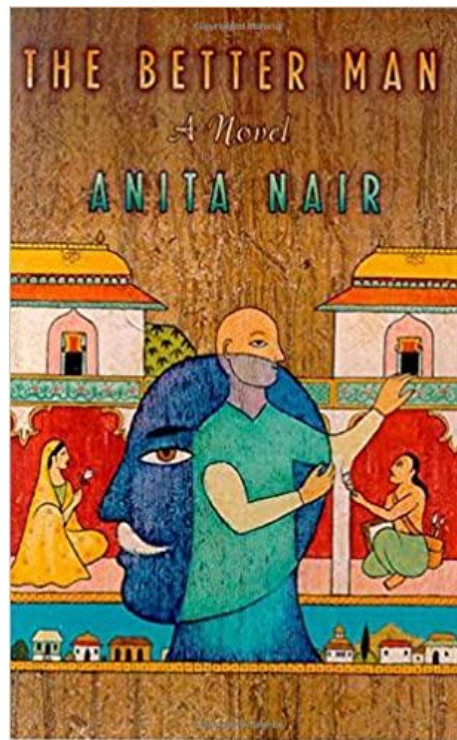
## A Feministic Perspective in Anita Nair's *The Better Man*

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[Nair/dp/0312253117/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?keywords=Anita+Nair%27s+The+Better+Man&qid=1584981796&s=bo](https://www.amazon.com/Better-Man-Novel-Anita-Nair/dp/0312253117/ref=sr_1_1?keywords=Anita+Nair%27s+The+Better+Man&qid=1584981796&s=bo)  
[oks&sr=1-1](https://www.amazon.com/Better-Man-Novel-Anita-Nair/dp/0312253117/ref=sr_1_1?keywords=Anita+Nair%27s+The+Better+Man&qid=1584981796&s=bo)

### Abstract

Anita Nair explores the women's world in her novels. Her novels are embedded in the Indian culture and setting. The writer explains the agony women face in the modern India. Anita Nair was born at Mundakottakurissi near Shoranur in Kerala on January 23, 1966. Anita Nair portrayed her imaginary village as Kaikurissi in her first novel *The Better Man*. Nair's love for her native place Kerala is echoed in her novels. Besides writing novels, Anita Nair is also a writer of poetry, prose, short stories, essays, articles, book reviews, travelogues, crime series and non-fiction.

Her first novel *The Better Man* is the exploration of inner conflicts of Mukundan. Even though the protagonist of the novel is Mukundan, who is a retired government servant (Assistant Works Manager); the novelist also depicts a few female characters who are victimized by the tyranny of the men in the family. His mother Paru Kutty asks Mukundan to take her to the city in which he lives to escape his father's tyranny, but he abandons the idea. Her father married another lady Ammani. He feels guilty for his act as her mother died falling from the stairs. Her mother's accident might have been a plan of her father. Anjana is another female character not comfortable with her husband; Ravindran who treats her brutally and hardly shared his thoughts and plans with her. This research paper titled 'A feministic perspective in Anita Nair's *The Better Man*' explores the trauma of Anjana and Mukundan mother Paru Kutty who tries to break free from the restrictions of male-dominated family.

**Keywords:** Anita Nair, *The Better Man*, beloved, menacing, furious, tyranny, inner conflict, male-domination.

### **Introduction**

The protagonist of the novel Mukundan, returns to his village Kaikurissi after his retirement as a government employee. His father lives in another residence with his mistress Ammani, their daughter Shanta and her family. Mukundan leaves his house at the age of eighteen in order to escape his father Achuthan Nair's domination.

'Amma', Mukundan asked in a troubled voice, 'why he is never satisfied with anything I do? Why is he so angry with me all the time?' (17). As Mukundan was away from the village for a long time and his father was not active, the leadership of the village Kaikurissi was given to PowerHouse Ramakrishnan who won a lottery and became a millionaire. Mukundan stays in his village home where he was born, brought up and lived in the tyranny of his father.

### **Paru Kutty**

Paru Kutty , Mukundan's mother , honoured her menacing husband resembled many Indian women. Achuthan Nair was unable to tolerate Paru Kutty's annoyance every few hours and left for Burma without her company when she was three months pregnant. He convinced her by saying "Have you thought of what you'll do when the baby is born? Here you have people to do everything you want. From washing your soiled clothes to bathing you and feeding you. You can't expect the same luxury of life elsewhere, and that too in a strange place. I think it would be best for you to remain here". (68) After four years he entered their house without any intimation. Mukundan saw his father only at the age of four. When Mukundan was afraid of his father, he criticized Paru Kutty 'What have you done to him to turn him into a pathetic creature like this?' (69)

At the age of forty nine, Achuthan Nair had a relationship with a woman Ammini. Achuthan Nair told Paru Kutty about his affair with Ammini 'I'm tired of having to visit Ammini in her house. The whole village knows about Ammini. So I might as well bring her here' (74). On listening to this intention of Achuthan Nair, Paru Kutty emerged with anger 'shrugged aside years of cowardice, squared her shoulders and said, 'No' (74). Anita Nair presents Paru Kutty in a different genre which means that Man cannot do whatever they wish. She swallowed her pain and said in a furious tone, 'Then it'll be over my dead body. For as long as I'm alive, I will decide who lives in this house and who doesn't' (74). Achuthan Nair never heard her use that tone in all these years. He left Paru Kutty in the big house went to live with Ammini in another house. She also opposes Achuthan Nair for not allowing to store paddy in her house. 'To the horrified amazement of the village, mounds of paddy were dumped on the dirt near the stile' (75). She also invited her second cousin Devayani for the first time in twelve years whom Achuthan Nair doesn't like visiting them. Devayani came to Kaikurrissi with her husband and two sons and stayed there for a week. Paru Kutty felt the house 'vibrate with Achuthan Nair's displeasure from across the road and reveled in the feeling' (77). After the death of her aunt's in the big house, she lived alone in the house for six months surrounded by memories, ghosts and all consuming desire.

Mukundan was haunted by his mother's ghost in the house. Mukundan has a guilt feeling as he didn't take his mother to Trichy, she had clutched at his arm and pleaded one more time, 'Take me with you son, I am so unhappy here.' (31). When he was a small boy, her mother shielded him from his father's cruelty and told him that his cruelty is simply another expression of showing love and concern. But when she spoke of her husband when he boards the train to Trichy to take her with him it is different. Her mother was very much terrified with his father and no longer tried to hide it from Mukundan. He convinced her mother Paru Kutty that he will find them another house, and he needs time to do that as he shares a room with another bachelor. He can't tell him to move out and take her there. Paru Kutty lived with her dominating husband Achuthan Nair throughout her lifetime. Paru Kutty succeeded in not allowing her husband with another woman under her roof. Even after her death Achuthan nair never brought her mistress Ammini home as it was the homing place for Paru Kutty's distressed soul.

### **Anjana**

Anjana was introduced to Mukundan as the niece to his former colleague K.M. Nair. She got married to an unfit man named Ravindran. Her parents educated her, and she works as a teacher in a school in Ottapalam. Anjana didn't get a suitable alliance until she was twenty seven years old, so her parents educated her to get herself occupied. She mastered all the arts for a housewife. 'She learned how to milk the cow and what to do when the rose plants were afflicted with a disease that turned their leaves brown and caused them to curl. She experimented with recipes she found in magazines. She fashioned shopping bags out of plastic wires and gave them

away to friends and relatives. She painted virulent sunsets, lonely shepherds and chubby-cheeked gods on the back of glass and had them framed. She even made a little palace using sheets of glass and tiny injection vials. And still no perspective groom appeared on the horizon' (223).

A marriage broker came with an alliance for her. Ravindran, a thirty-five year old man, who is a medical representative in a pharmaceutical company. His parents were not alive, and his only sister got married and lives in Jamshedpur. Anjana and her parents agreed for the marriage. After the marriage Anjana and Ravindran went to live in Kozhikode. Anjana was satisfied, even though the house was small and part of a housing colony in a little suburb called Beypore. Anjana made plans even before she entered into her marital home.

Anita Nair portrayed Anjana's suffering and women's expectation after marriage 'Late in the evening, bathed and dressed in a pink cotton sari with tiny white flowers on it, and a matching pink blouse she had made herself, Anjana went in search of Ravindran' (225). She tried her best to keep him happy, but he always hated her presence and behaved in a rude manner. A little conversation took place between them and hardly any companionship. When she tried to talk to him about his job, he said, 'You won't understand what I am talking about' (228).

When Anjana's mother fell in the bathroom and broke her hip after four months of their wedding, she went to her parents' home. Ravindran asked her to stay at her parents' home, as he is planning for a new business. An agarbathi factory making incense sticks and decided on the name Anjana Agarbathi. She felt the fragrance of love and joy. Anita Nair portrayed how Indian women are overwhelmed with their husband's love and affection even though it is unworthy. Ravindran rarely visited Anjana and he often changed his business, Agarbathi, Mattresses, red oxide floor colouring, special kind of industrial stapler and then an inverter. In spite of all his failures in business, Ravindran forgets Anjana and doesn't care about her. When her parents see her daughter suffer even after her marriage, they decided it is better for her daughter to live alone. 'My daughter can manage very well without a husband like you. If you ever hurt my daughter again, I'll throw you out of this house. Do you understand?' her father told Ravindran (232).

After her parents' death, Anjana woke up and realized in spite of being married she can very well termed a spinster. Anjana's emergence from the unsuccessful marriage and realization to remain a spinster depicts Indian women are not always in their boundaries. When she meets Mukundan, she decides to apply for divorce. She finds Mukundan as the better person than her former husband. She decides a life breaking free all the bonds of the society. Anjana is twenty two years younger than Mukundan, but she never cared for it. She adores true love and affection. Mukundan also disappointed her when she was not ready to accept her before the society. Anjana is optimistic this time, she is ready to reject Mukundan and remain individual.

## Conclusion

Anita Nair gave a vivid picture of both the women Paru Kutty and Anjana. Achuthan Nair realized his fault and he came to his big house ignoring her daughter Shanta. He understands the value of his wife Paru Kutty and always called out her name in his death bed. Men can dominate women, but they can't live a life without their care and affection. Anjana, a young schoolteacher had a bitter past and falls in love with the protagonist of the novel Mukundan. Again she experiences a setback. Finally Mukundan realizes his blunder and pleaded her to forgive and accept him. Thus, these two women characters won the heart of their beloved at the end of the novel. Paru Kutty, after her death, and Anjana, through her survival in the novel.

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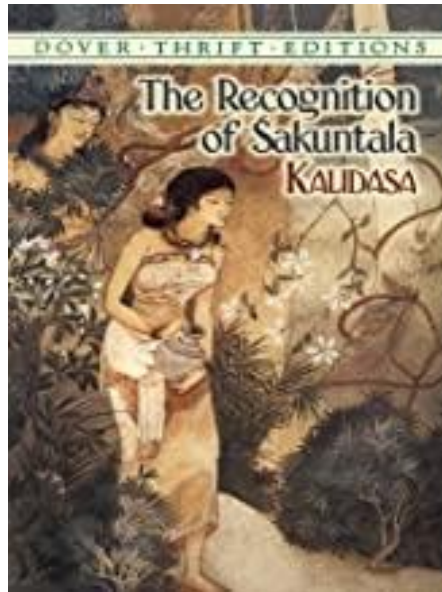
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## Growth and Development of Indian English Drama

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### Abstract

Drama in India is a much older yet respected literary genre. In India the art of staging the plays began with Sanskrit language based on Bharat Muni's 'Natyashastra'. Sanskrit Drama flourished in India by length and breadth and became popular across the world. Before independence Drama in India became one of the most popular and powerful means of expressions. Dramatists of pre-independent India won world-wide commendation and recognition. After independence also India theatre writers and artists enjoyed much popularity and gifted India and the world with lot many classical plays which are still staged across the world. Though the shine of India drama faded a little due to smaller screen (TV and Mobiles), there is still a silver lining for this lively art form.

**Keywords:** Indian Drama, English Dramatist, Indian Playwrights, Theatre in India, Natyashastra

Man started learning the art of communication 500,000 BCE. Symbols were developed about 30,000 years ago. The very base of communication accompanied by gestures gave rise to the art of acting. Gradually man perfected this art and started giving presentation as a form of ritual or of entertainment. Drama as a literary genre is the most active of other genres of literature because of the immediate impact it has on the audience. Drama is the only branch of literature which tries to imitate life and presents it realistically to the people. It is said that drama is mimetic as it imitates and mirrors life. Lord Krishna also describes life as Leela—the Divine Play. In Bhagvatgita, He says, ‘Mayavidambanamavehe yatha natasya, i.e., consider all the deeds of Krishna as a drama played by the player. William Shakespeare too considers the world as a stage where all the men and women are merely players. These presentations became so popular means of entertainment and education that it soon achieved the status of a great culture and of art form called as theatrical art.

India is one of the oldest countries where drama flourished and blossomed in its fullest form. Drama in India has always remained as one of the most popular and effective means of entertainment and educating the masses. It has been used for the representation of the follies, foibles, feelings, anxiety and sufferings of human beings and for their amusement, moral teaching and social consciousness. The origin of Indian drama can be traced back to the Vedic period.

In India, the art of staging the plays began with the then prevailed Sanskrit language in first century CE. The Sanskrit drama flourished in India by length and breadth. With the passage of time, India witnessed kaleidoscopic changes in its culture and inhabitations which kept on reflecting in dramas. Sanskrit theatres were performed at religious places and at royal courts. In those days only men used to play all the characters. Even the female roles were played by the male characters only. Later female performers were included in the drama companies by the stage manager (sutradhar) for better and just presentation. Hereafter the art of Indian drama gained momentum resulting in the production of world class dramas. Indian Dramatic Art gained wide popularity. Being a live form of art, it soon won the hearts of masses. People used to throng to theatre with family, friends and in groups. The audience used to appreciate every aspect of drama. Seeing the response and appreciation of audience, the drama artists too got motivated to give the best. Thus history of Indian drama has glorified Indian art and tradition with all its hues and colours.

Bharat Muni is called as the pioneer of Indian theatre in Sanskrit. He sowed the seeds of drama in India through his world acclaimed treatise on theatre, ‘*Natyashastra*’. It is the oldest known work in Sanskrit drama ranging from 200 BCE to 200 CE. It is a theoretical treatise on

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Indian performing arts including theatre, dance, acting, music, make up, props, audience, competitors etc. The work describes all the essential details required for a drama to be successful. It is said that *Natyashastra* is the combination of four vedas composed by God Brahma. *Natyashastra* describes that drama uses eight basic emotions of man's life—love, joy, anger, sadness, pride, fear, aversion and wonder. Muni's *Natyashastra* remained an important text in fine arts for many centuries. The celebrated playwrights of ancient period such as Bhasa, Sudraka, Kalidasa, Bhavabhuti, Harsha, Dandin and many others followed Bharat Muni's dramatic principles of *Natyashastra*. Mahakavi Bhasa is one of the earliest known Sanskrit dramatists of ancient India. He enjoyed great popularity through his thirteen plays in Sanskrit. The plots of Bhasa's plays are based upon the stories of Ramayana and Mahabharata. Some of the most popular plays of Bhasa are '*Pratima-nataka, Druta Ghattotkacha, Druta Vakya, Urubhanga, Swapnavasavadatta, Pratijna-Yaugandharayana*'. After Bhasa, Sudraka, an Indian King further glorified Sanskrit drama through his three plays '*Mricchakatika, Vinavasavadatta and Padmaprabhritaka*'.

Then Kalidasa, the dramatist of 1st century BCE, took the genre of drama to its peak through his plays '*Vikramarvasiyam, Malavikagnimitram and Abhijnanasakuntalam*'. His magnum opus play '*Abhijnanasakuntalam*' became the most popular play staged across the world. It has been translated almost in all the Indian and foreign languages. Sir William Jones translated this play in English in 1789 and made it popular at European continent. Thus through Kalidasa, the world acknowledged the literary genre of India. Kalidasa's favourite part of speech was 'simile' which he used in most of his plays and hence he was also known as Upama Kalidasasya.

After Kalidasa, Bhavabhuti continued the tradition of Sanskrit plays. He wrote three plays '*Malati-Madhava, Mahaviracharita and Uttar Ramacharita*' in 7th century CE. presenting the popular episodes of 'Ramayana'. Sri Harsha, an Indian Emperor of 7th century was another playwright and epic poet who contributed a lot in enriching Sanskrit drama. His plays '*Ratnavali, Nagananda and Priyadarsika*' became so popular that epic based dramas became the trend of that time. Dandin was one more popular playwright who also registered his contribution to Indian drama through his works, mainly a handbook of classical Sanskrit poetics '*Kavyadarsa*' (Mirror of Poetry) and '*Dasakumaracarita*'. All these dramatists enriched the soil of classical theatre thereby making Indian drama popular across the world.

### **Theatre in India Before Independence**

The advancement in technology and industrial revolution largely affected the staging of the plays of eighteenth century. With the help of electronic gadgets and advanced equipment, the dramatists could make the play livelier by introducing spectacular effects and scenic spectacle. It was now possible for the dramatists to present the three unities on stage flawlessly and with coherence. New technology facilitated the dramatists to bring many changes in the form, style



and techniques of presentation of plays on stage. When India was ruled by British Empire, English language started gaining wide acceptance by well-educated people. Also, the colonizers started staging English plays in India. They brought English drama in India that provided Indian writers far better platform not only for understanding Western drama but also for popularizing Indian drama in English. English and Italian troupe toured India and performed many English plays in cities like Bombay, Madras and Calcutta.

The first playwright of this revived art form was Krishna Mohan Banerjee whose Bengali plays were translated into English by the poet Michael Madhusudan Dutt. The first translated play '*Is this Civilization*' was staged in 1871. The new journey of English drama in India started with translations and adaptations of the plays written in regional languages. Later the playwrights Sri Aurobindo, Rabindranath Tagore and Harindranath Chattopadhyay revolutionized Indian drama through their timeless classical works.

Sri Aurobindo, a sage poet and philosopher wrote many plays between 1891 and 1916. They are— *Perseus the Deliverer* (1955), *Vasavadutta* (1957), *Rodogune* (1958), *The Viziers of Bassora* (1959) and *Eric* (1960). The variety of themes in the plays of Aurobindo exhibits his wide range of knowledge and global consciousness. The Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore contributed a lot in strengthening the roots of literary art form in India. Though poetry dominated Tagore's literary reputation, he wrote many classical dramas which have been drawing the audience towards theatre even today. Some of the notable plays of Tagore are— *Valmiki Pratibha (The Genius of Valmiki)*, *Sannyasi or The Ascetic* (1884), *The King and The Queen* (1889), *Chitra* (1892), *Malini* (1895), *Sacrifice* (1895), *Gandhari's Prayer and Karna and Kunti* (1897), *The King of the Dark Chamber* (1910), *Dak Ghar (The Post Office)*, (1912), *The Cycle of Spring* (1916), *Mukta Dhara* (1922), *Raktakaravi (Red Oleanders)*, (1924), *Natir Puja* (1926), *Chandalika (Untouchable girl)*, (1933)' and others. Tagore touches upon a variety of themes in his dramas. Tagore's variety of themes, reflection of society, plight of the downtrodden and oppressed, music, lyrical touch, universality, closed knit plots all together gave new dimensions to drama. Because of his versatile genius, Tagore won world-wide commendation and recognition.

Another significant pre-independent dramatist and celebrated actor was Harindranath Chattopadhyay. His first play '*Abu Hassan*' (1918) is a light fantasy. He wrote seven plays on the lives of great Indian saints like Tukaram and Pundalik. His '*Five Plays* (1937)' written in prose are noteworthy for social vision and human sympathy. T.P. Kailasam is a seminal dramatist whose contribution to Indian theatre proved to be noteworthy. He wrote drama both in English as well as in Kannada. He took the popular episodes of Ramayana and Mahabharata as the themes of most of his dramas. His notable plays are— *The Burden* (1933), *Fulfillment*

(1933), *The Purpose* (1944), *Karna* (1946), and *Keechaka* (1949). Kailasam, being an actor, was fully aware of all the stage directions and hence his plays are actable on the stage.

The only woman playwright of colonial India who occupied her prominent place in Indian English drama was Bharati Sarabhai. She gave her contribution through her two plays namely: '*The Well of the People* (1943)' and '*Two Women* (1952)'. The first play, *The Well of the People* speaks for the sufferings of the people of India struggling to free herself from the shackles of old order of discrimination and caste system. Her second play '*Two Women*' dramatizes the two opposites— tradition and modernity, spiritual and material, eastern and western culture.

Another English dramatist of pre-independent period who nurtured Indian drama with his artistic skills is A.S.P. Ayyar. Some of his noteworthy plays are— *In the Clutches of the Devil* (1926), *Sita's Choice* (1935), *The Slave of Ideas* (1941), and *The Trial of Science for the Murder of Humanity* (1954). His plays are eye-openers and set morals against social evils like caste system, widow marriage, gender discrimination and the prevalent prejudices. After Ayyar, J.M. Lolo Prabhu further added essence to Indian English drama through his '*Collected plays*' which was published after independence in 1956.

All the above pre-independent dramatists of India experimented different forms of drama—romance, opera, comedy, farce, tragedy, melodrama and historical and mythological plays. With the efforts of these dramatists, drama in English established its strong root in Indian literature by the use of social, religious, historical, mythological and spiritual themes which were enjoyed by Indian audience in pre-independence era.

### **Theatre After Independence**

The Indian playwrights who gave significant contribution in flourishing English drama after independence are Manjeri Isvaran [*Yama & Yami* (1948)], G.V. Desani [*Hali* (1950)], Lakhan Deb [*Tiger's claw* (1967), *Vivekananda* (1972) and *Murder at the Prayer Time* (1976)], Pritish Nandy [*Rites for a Plebeian Statute* (1969)], Dina Mehta [*Myth Makers* (1969)], Manohar Malgonkar [*Line of Mars* (1978)], Pratap Sharma [*A Touch of Brightness* (1968) and *The Professor has a War Cry* (1970)], Nissim Ezekiel [*Nalini* (1969), *Marriage Poem* (1969) and *The Sleep Walkers* (1969)] and Gurucharan Das [*Larins Sahib* (1970)]. These playwrights continued enriching the soil of Indian drama before and after independence thereby making the road wider for the next generation dramatists to launch their creative works. Due to globalization, increasing mobility of the people and the spread of English education, the post-independence English drama further enjoyed great success.

The prolific playwrights Asif Currimbhoy, Gurucharan Das and Pratap Sharma took the genre of theatrical art to its epitome. These playwrights dealt with contemporary subjects and

introduced new techniques in every aspect of drama viz. settings, style, appearance, music, light effects etc. Currimbhoy wrote nearly thirty plays of which a dozen plays are worth studying to know the depth and understanding of Currimbhoy towards the sufferers, the artists and the common men. His famous plays are *'The Doldrummers (1960), The Dumb Dancer (1961), Thorns on a Canvas (1962), The Captives (1963), The Refugee (1971), Om Mane Padme Hum! (1972), Angkor (1973)* and *The dissident MLA (1974)*.

Lakhan Deb and Gurucharan Das popularized historical plays in India. Lakhan Deb's play *'Tiger's Claw (1967)'* is a powerful dramatization of Shivaji's killing of Afzal Khan exhibiting Shivaji's heroism. His popular play *'Murder at the Prayer Meeting (1976)'* deals with the killing of Mahatma Gandhi while he was offering prayers. Gurucharan Das also wrote three successful plays— *'Larins Sahib', 'Meera'* and *'9 Jakhoo Hill'* which were published in 2003. *'Larin Sahib'*, a prize-winning play at the Edinburgh Festival, is about Henry Lawrence, a British Resident in Punjab of pre-independent India. We find similar theme of pre-independent India in Manohar Malgonkar's *'Line of Mars'*, in which a royal family resorts to immoral means to sustain its power that they lose because of Lord Dalhousie's cunning doctrine of lapse.

Gieve Patel and Pratap Sharma further enhanced Indian drama through their use of unique themes. Gieve Patel's play *'Princes (1970)'* is the first Parsi play focusing the conflicts of two Parsi families for the possession of a solo male child. Pratap Sharma, a bold writer, exposes the theme of sex in his two famous plays— *'The touch of Brightness' (1964)* and *'The Professor has a War Cry' (1970)*. With his two plays only he registered his remarkable contribution to English drama in India. His plays proved to be a trend-setter for future dramatists for discussing the sexual issues so boldly on the stage.

The above playwrights discussed various issues of ancient and modern era, of individual and society, of male domination and female suffering, of hypocrisy and honesty, of independence and partition, of problems and solutions and of penance and salvation. If we collectively take the works of the playwrights till 1970, we observe that almost all the contemporary issues of that time have been evenly touched upon by one or the other playwright. They elevated Indian drama in English to greater heights and provided a strong platform for further dramatists.

In spite of remarkable success, Indian drama, however, couldn't reach up to that height as Indian poetry and novels could. The Indian drama failed to attract a sizeable number of audiences. At the dismal sight of the progress of drama as compared to poetry and novel, R.K. Dhawan and V.K. Reddy analyze, "Unlike poetry and novel, drama is a composite art involving the playwright, the actor and the audience in a commonly shared artistic experience, calling for total commitment of the persons concerned to create a lasting impact. Moreover since the normal

medium of conversation in India is the mother tongue, it is difficult to make a dialogue between Indians in English sound natural and convincing.”

Martin Cobin, a dramatic critic opines that the lack of Indianness in English dramas is mainly responsible for the low and negative response of the audience. Realizing the faded status of Indian drama, some sensitive and influential dramatists like Prithviraj Kapoor, Bijon Bhattacharya, Ritwik Ghatak, Utpal Dutt, Khwaja Ahmad Abbas, Salil Chowdhury, Pandit Ravi Shankar, Jyotirindra Moitra, Niranjana Singh Maan, S. Tera Singh Chan, Jagdish Faryadi, Khalili Faryadi, Rajendra Raghuvanshi, Safdar Mir and some more artists together formed an association in 1942 in Bombay under the banner of *Indian People's Theatre Association (IPTA)*. Its goal was to bring cultural awakening among the people of India. This association provided a concrete platform to the emerging dramatists of the times. Since its inception, IPTA has been staging not only the plays of Indian dramatists but also of the renowned dramatists across the world.

The first staged play of IPTA was '*Yeh Kiska Khoon*' of Ali Sardar Jafri which was directed by Anil de Silva. The notable directors and prominent contributors of IPTA are Habib Tanvir, K.A. Abbas, R.M. Singh, Satyadev Dubey, Ramesh Talwar and Rakesh Bedi. Some of the well-known Indian writers adapted and translated the popular plays of foreign dramatists in Indian languages. The plays adapted by the directors of IPTA are George Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion* as '*Azar Ka Khwab*', Henrik Ibsen's *Ghost* as '*Ateet Ki Parchhaiyan*', and *Doll's House* as '*Gudiya Ghar*', Bertolt Brecht's *Exception and the Rule* as '*Dekha-Andekha*' and many more.

Despite growing popularity of drama, Indian drama in English couldn't achieve the expected success on stage till 1970. This decade didn't show much improvement in dramatic content. Most of the drama churned out in this decade proved to be larger than life, unrealistic and inane pot-boilers. The dramatists of late 1970 however, tried to catch the real pulse of the audience. They made fruitful attempts to depict Indian elements through their works. They either translated the plays written in regional languages into English language or adopted the local or regional themes in their English works to bring Indian touch in it. This translation method enjoyed huge success for its innovative concept and fruitful experiments in terms of both thematic concerns and technical virtuosity. Indian audience gave a rousing welcome to this new genre of drama. In this context the names of the dramatists Mohan Rakesh (Hindi), Badal Sircar (Bengali), Vijay Tendulkar (Marathi) and Girish Karnad (Kannada) are worth mentioning. These playwrights helped the Indian theatre to grow in its stature.

Mohan Rakesh came into limelight through his '*Nai Kahani*' movement after 1950 which became highly popular amongst the literally class. His first popular play is '*Ashadh Ka Ek Din*'

staged in 1958. In this play, Mohan Rakesh portrays the sufferings, struggle and helplessness of an Indian woman who is mostly used as a puppet by his counter male to fulfill his needs. Rakesh's play '*Lahron Ke Rajhans*' (1963) is based on the story of renunciation of Buddha and its effect on his own people. '*Aadhe Adhure*' (1969), an autobiographical play of Mohan Rakesh, is an insight into the dramatist's personal life. It depicts the complexity of a modern man, the conflicts of identity crises and the shattering of moral values and the family system. Through his plays, Mohan Rakesh examines man-woman relationship from different angles and portrays psychological dilemmas and emptiness of modern men and women. He brings the marital problems to the surface which is quite common in Indian families. Thus Mohan Rakesh attempted to change the face of Hindi drama by opening new vistas for it through the depiction of real modern India.

The next stalwart of Indian theatre in Bengali is the innovator of contemporary Indian theatre, Badal Sircar. He is the pioneer of street theatre and '*Third Theatre (Free Theatre)*', and hence is also popularly known as '*Barefoot playwright*'. He began his career with a humorous play '*Solution X*' but became popular through his first philosophical play '*Evam Indrajit*' in 1963 which exposes the hollowness of the middle class section of society. Later he gifted Indian theatre with his world class plays like *Baaki Itihas* (1965), *Pagla Ghoda* (1967), *Shesh Naai* (1969), *Procession* (1972), *Bhoma* (1974), *Basi Khabar* (1979) and many more. Overall he wrote more than fifty plays in Bengali of which most of them have been translated and staged into many Indian and international languages. Being known as the inventor of '*Third Theatre (Free Theatre)*', he made Indian theatre free from the restrictions and pressure of traditional methods of staging the plays. His dramatic style not only breaks the dichotomy between the actors and the audience but reduces drama to its barest by dispensing with conventional story, plot, characters and dialogue. Veena Noble Dass appreciates him, "If there is any playwright in the contemporary Bengali Theatre who is capable of creating a genuine people's theatre, a theatre supported and created by the people and not merely performed by the people, it is Badal Sircar."

The next towering figure in the field of theatre is Girish Karnad. He is a multi-dimensional personality who not only brought glory to Indian theatre but also proved his mettle in the field of literature, acting and academics. He is well-known for his indigenous use of history, myths and folktales to tackle the issues of contemporary socio-political conditions. Karnad has extensively used mythological stories thereby honing the rich cultural heritage of India. Karnad's first play '*Yayati (1961)*' has a mythological based story from Mahabharata. In this play, Karnad portrays a failed father who is left to face the consequences of shirking responsibility of his own actions. Karnad's most successful play '*Tughlaq (1964)*' is a historical play on the life of Sultan Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq. Through this play, Karnad explores Tughlaq as an alienated personality who experiences social and interpersonal alienation and self-estrangement. Karnad's play '*Hayavadana (1971)*', is highly symbolic and spectacular and reveals the ambiguous nature

of human personality and the dichotomy of life. His other popular plays are '*Naga-Mandal (1988)*', '*Tale-Danda (1990)*', '*The Fire and the Rain (1995)*'. In order to project the world of uncertainties and to bring the mythological environment of the past on the stage, he aptly makes use of masks, curtains, puppets, music and chorus. Karnad's contribution to Indian theatre has brought him immense popularity and has enriched the Indian literary scene.

Vijay Tendulkar is another golden gem of Indian drama. He is one of the most prolific playwrights who epitomized Indian theatre with his Marathi dramatic hues (art). His plays are not restricted up to Marathi stage and Marathi knowing audience only but are popular worldwide. Though his domain of creativity includes articles, short stories, one act plays, dramas, screen plays, literary criticism and translation but his forte remains drama. His plays depict the agonies, suffocation and cries of middle class man. Through his most famous plays '*Shantata! Court Chalu Ahe (1967)*' and '*Sakharam Binder (1972)*', Tendulkar raises several questions on love, sex, marriage and false moral values advocated by the hypocrites of the society. He elevates the agonies of the wretched victims Miss Leela Benare and Laxmi in his plays by perfect use of irony, satire, pathos and even mock element. In '*Ghasiram Kotwal (1972)*' Tendulkar exposes the power politics of marginalization and subjugation on the basis of caste, class and gender. This play of Tendulkar won him international fame. It is one of the longest running plays in the world with over six thousand performances in India and abroad. In '*Dampadwipcha Mukabala (1968)*', Tendulkar, with his sharp sarcasm, attacks the political leaders and hypocrite people of society. Tendulkar's plays have been defined as '*Gynocentric*' as he depicts his women characters as bold and courageous who do not hesitate to raise their voice against the wrong done to them by the men.

Following Vijay Tendulkar's use of traditional folk forms in modern contemporary theatre, many playwrights and directors like B.V. Karanth, Habib Tanvir, Bansi Kaul and Rattan Thiyam took Indian drama to the level of Indian poetry and Indian novel. Feroz Khan is another accomplished playwright who has to his credit several outstanding plays like '*Tumhari Amrita*', '*Mahatma Vs. Gandhi*' and '*Salesman Ramlal*'. These playwrights together changed the concept of larger than life, formula oriented theatre to a more realistic and socially concerned type theatre. Besides, a few women playwrights too gave their noteworthy contribution in strengthening the roots of Indian drama. We cannot conclude the history of Indian theatre without registering the names of the female playwrights like Mahashweta Devi, Uma Parameswaran and Manjula Padmanabhan.

Mahashweta Devi emerged as a pioneering advocate for the weaker and oppressed section of society. Her major plays are '*Aajir*', '*Hazar Chaurashi Ma (1975)*', and '*Urvashi O' Johnny*', '*Byen*' and '*Water*'. The play '*Aajir*' deals with the issue of slavery in which a slave is denied the right to love and to live freely. The play '*Hazar Chaurashi Ma*' was written after the Naxalite

movements of West Bengal that proves her concern for Dalits. The play *'Water'* depicts the humiliation and sufferings of tribals of West Bengal when they were denied the basic right of collecting water from the public wells by the upper caste feudal. Through her works, Mahashweta Devi tries to awaken the suffering class against the atrocities of the dominants and also provides possible solutions to their problems.

Uma Parameswaran wrote the play *'Sons Must Die'* (1962) on the theme of partition of India and Pakistan in 1947. It depicts the pathetic story of three women of India who lose their sons during the riots of partition. Uma's other plays *'Meera'* (1971) and *'Sita's Promise'* (1981) are written with an aim to attract Canadian students towards Indian art tradition. Her play *'Rootless but Green are the Boulevard Trees'* (1998) centers around an East Indian family living in the suburbs of Winnipeg presenting three generations.

Manjula Padmanabhan's play *'Harvest'* (1997) fetched her first prize in the Onassis International Cultural Competitions. *'Harvest'* is the story of a miserable poor family living in a compact chawl of Mumbai. Padmanabhan brings forth the pangs of poverty and the countless sufferings of the poor. The play *'Lights Out'* (1986) reflects the plight of poor women who are molested everyday by the stone-heart men.

After Padmanabhan, Mahesh Dattani emerged as welcome shower of hopes for theatre lovers. He is the first Indian playwright writing in English to be honoured with the *Sahitya Academi Award* in 1998 for his creation *'Final Solutions and other plays'* published by East-West Books, Chennai. Alexander Viets praised Mahesh Dattani in the International Herald Tribune as "One of India's best and most serious contemporary playwrights writing in English". Dattani through his works enjoyed great popularity in and outside India. His plays *'Tara'*, *'Thirty Days in September'*, *'Dance Like a Man'* receive standing ovation from the audience. Dattani, in his creative canvas, covers varied themes reflecting urban Indian bourgeois, its double standard, religious prejudices, gender discrimination and homosexuality. His works secure unique and special room for him in the galaxy of international playwrights. Through the depiction of real problems of the marginalized in his plays, he has opened up a dialogue on certain key issues that have plagued mankind since primeval times. Because of his choice of universal themes, he has been winning international laurels for his creative art.

### **Future of Indian Theatre**

If we give a cursory look to the creative works and achievements of Indian playwrights, our faces definitely have the right to shine in its pride. The Indian playwrights through their pain staking efforts in this genre have taken the theatrical art form to its culmination point. The Indian theatre resides on the world platform in parallel with the top most theatres of the world. However, the theatre in India is experiencing setback since last two decades. The exodus from

the theatre to films seems mainly responsible for this setback. Also due to wide popularity of Tele-serials, Mega-serials and Soap Operas, the theatre artists are attracted towards smaller screen. As compared to theatre, television and films provide more money, glamour and market opportunities to artists. Due to these reasons, the Indian theatre is gradually losing its grip and the theatrical art is fading away. However, there is a silver lining waiting ahead for the theatre artists as people are fed up of small and big screens and want to enjoy live performances of the artists.

Many leading companies, social and art promoting organizations, state and central government departments too are showing their concern not only to keep this art alive but also to flourish it worldwide. Apart from providing financial assistance to the leading theatres, these organizations arrange advertisement campaigns to promote aesthetic values and to attract more and more audience towards theatre. Theatre festivals and carnivals are also organized by these societies so that the theatre lovers can enjoy and discuss lot many plays on one platform.

The National School of Drama has been regularly organizing National Theatre Festival, '*Bharat Rang Mahotsav*' during second week of January every year. Till date 'Prithvi Theatre' has organized more than a dozen theatre festivals under the banner of '*Prithvi Festivals*'. It also organizes '*National Festival of Street Theatre*' in association with a social organization named *Child Relief and You (CRY)*. These kinds of festivals move from Mumbai to other big cities like Delhi, Calcutta, Chennai, Bangalore, Pune etc. On this line, Rudra Sengupta's Calcutta based theatre group '*Nandikar*' has also been organizing theatre festival every year across the country. Dramas organized by these theatre groups are performed each year with the sole objective of promoting Indian art. There is still a plethora of talent today for the theatre which would provide a wider scope for its development. Because of the incessant and collaborative efforts of contemporary theatre artists, the Indian theatre would certainly regain its lost glory and would re-enjoy the world-wide popularity.

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## **Playing Difficult to Understand? -- Single-verb Sentences and Nominal Sentences in Marathi**

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### **Abstract**

The significant role of the verb in the sentence semantics has been established by various theories of verbal cognition in ancient Sanskrit literature as well as in the modern Linguistics. While a few theorists explain a sentence from a structural point of view, others consider the semantic aspect of it. We study the very first sentence-definition given by an ancient Indian grammarian and philosopher *Bhartr̥hari* in the second chapter of his magnificent work ‘*Vākyapadīya*’ (circa 5<sup>th</sup> Century CE) which attributes the status of a sentence to a single-verb in the conversations.

This paper attempts to investigate the cognitive aspect of this definition along with a contrastive analysis of purely nominal sentences, and complete sentences to explore the interplay among them. The subjective reports of 100 neurologically healthy Marathi native and non-native speakers obtained from two web-based experiments suggest that the single-verbs in Marathi conversations are certainly comprehensible and hence can be regarded as a complete sentence. With the contrastive analysis, it is observed that, even though single-verb sentences and nominal sentences seem difficult to process, average Marathi readers understand them with similar effort as they process complete sentences. A few sociolinguistic variables which might affect the data such as age, gender, first language and period of language acquisition are taken into consideration while analysing the data and some inconsistencies among the results are noted. The effect of some textual features such as difficulty and familiarity with the text are also discussed. We account for the results by performing a statistical significance test using a standard t-test and z-test formulations and also by offering general remarks, observations, and discussion. The data is validated by calculating the inter-annotator agreement. Some limitations with respect to the data set, methodology and participants are given along with the possible future work before concluding the topic.

**Keywords:** Marathi, verb, nominal sentences, Language comprehension, web-based experiment

**“His sentences didn’t seem to have any verbs... All nouns, no action...”**  
**-Jennifer Cruise, ‘Charlie All Night’, 1997<sup>1</sup>**

## **1. Introduction and Literature Review<sup>2</sup>**

Language is an integral part of the human communication process. Ancient Indian thinkers have devoted themselves to study the language from different analytical aspects such as phonetic, syntactic, semantic, logical, etymological, epistemological and metaphysical, etc. They have addressed various topics such as the source of the speech, different layers of the language, the ultimate unit of the language, notion of a word and a sentence, role of the function words, ways to disambiguate the word-meanings and determine the intended meaning, the process of verbal cognition, etc. The notions of a sentence and sentence-meaning have been a captivating area of discussion since then. Various ancient Indian etymologists, grammarians, logicians and rhetoricians have defined the sentence either from a formal perspective (i.e. structural- considering the only syntax) or from a semantic perspective.<sup>3</sup> They have explored the meaning of the sentence which is in the form of an ‘action’. The discussion was carried on by modern Indian and western scholars about what makes a sentence and what are the necessary conditions for it. The complete discussion revolves around the presence or the absence of the verb in it. While few scholars agree that it is necessary for a linguistic string to have at least one verb to make it a sentence, others argue that Sanskrit, by resorting to Paṇini’s grammar, allows constructions of purely nominal sentences which are devoid of any verb, either attested on the surface level of the language or understood mentally.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This famous quote is taken from the novel ‘Charlie All Night’ written by a NYT bestselling author Jennifer Cruise. It captures the role of the verb in the sentence perfectly well where author emphasizes that the verb in a sentence expresses the action. (The quote is taken from a web link: <https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/230954-his-sentences-didn-t-seem-to-have-any-verbs-which-was> Accessed on 09 January, 2020)

<sup>2</sup>The list of abbreviations is presented at the end of the paper.

<sup>3</sup> The definition ‘*saṃhitā padaprakṛtiḥ*’ (Ṛk.Prā.2.1) (Meaning: ‘A sentence is a group of the words’), ‘*ākhyātam sāvya-kāraka-viśesanam vākyam*’ (Meaning: ‘A sentence is chiefly the action-word, accompanied by the particle, nominal words, and adjectives’) and ‘*eka tiṅ vākyam*’ (V.10-11 on P.2.1.1) (Meaning: ‘a sentence is that [cluster of words] containing a finite word as an element’) (both by Kātyāyana) look at the sentence from the structural perspective. The definition ‘*arthaikatvādekam vākyam sākāṅkṣam ced vibhāge syāt*’<sup>3</sup> (Pu.Ms. 2.1.46) by Jaimini (Meaning: ‘So long as a single purpose is served by a number of words, they form one single unit called a sentence’) deals with the semantic aspect of the sentence.

<sup>4</sup> From a derivational perspective, Deshpande (1987) argues that the construction ‘*rāmaḥ sundaraḥ*’ can be derived without making any reference to the finite verb since here, *rāma* is neither an agent nor the patient of any action stated by any verb which is present or understood. He takes the derivational of such NS without any reference to the copula as against Bronkhorst (1990) who argues that not all NS are complete. He provides illustrations given by *Patañjali* i.e. in a sentence ‘*vrksaḥ plaksaḥ*’ (Meaning: ‘the Figtree [is] a tree’), the word ‘*asti*’ (is’) is understood.

This paper attempts to study the first definition of a sentence given by Bhartṛhari in his text ‘*Vākyapadīya*’.<sup>5</sup> The definition ‘*ākhyātaśabdaḥ*’ suggests that the single-verb can be regarded as a sentence itself. The explanation of the definition as given by Bhartṛhari himself is: ‘when by a mere verb, definite means of action are understood then the single-verb can also be regarded as a sentence.’ The commentator *Puṇyarāja* offers an illustration that, an utterance of a single-verb ‘*varṣati*’ (‘[he/she/it] pours’) also conveys the *kartā* (i.e. ‘*devaḥ*’- ‘God’) and *karma* (i.e. ‘*jalam*’- ‘waters’) of the action ‘raining’. Since it conveys the complete meaning of a sentence ‘*devo jalam varṣati*’, the single verb ‘*varṣati*’ can be considered as a sentence itself. While the major part of the sentence semantics can be conveyed by the mere verb, the role of the other words in the sentence is to confirm that meaning.

The text ‘*Vākyapadīya*’ is studied by various ancient and modern Indian and western scholars, mainly from philological (Manjali 1995), philosophical (Iyer 1969, Pillai 1971, H. Coward 1976), linguistic (Manjali 1996) and psychological (G. H. Coward 1973) points of view. The cognitive aspect of the theories on the analysis and interpretation of the language presented in the text has also been a topic of discussion in the recent time (Tiwari 2008) mainly from the perspective of modern cognitive linguistics (Houben 2003). Gajjam et al. (2018) have studied the first definition from the experimental perspective by conducting an eye-tracking experiment to derive the importance of the verb in the sentence semantics and also considered some textual (Gajjam and Kulkarni 2018a) and sociolinguistic variables (Gajjam and Kulkarni 2019a) while analysing the data. In their later work, the authors have provided guidelines to convert theoretical discussions provided by Bhartṛhari and other ancient Indian scholars into an experimental perspective (Gajjam and Kulkarni 2019). Some philosophical insights have also been provided by them (Gajjam and Kulkarni 2019b).

This paper, too, by an experimental method investigates whether a single verb in Marathi conversational data conveys more than what is warranted by its form alone and hence be considered as a sentence itself. For contrastive analysis, we also take purely nominal sentences (NS, henceforth, in which there is no verb at all) and complete sentences (CS, henceforth, in which there are other words including the verb) to explore the degree of comprehension along with the single-verbs (SV, henceforth, in which there is only a verb). These three types of sentences are abundantly found in the conversational data, especially in the Indo-European languages. The meanings of the unuttered words in

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<sup>5</sup> The eight definition enumerated by Bhartṛhari are as follows:

“*ākhyātaśabdaḥ saṅghāto jātiḥ saṅghātavartinī, eko ’navayavaḥ śabdaḥ kramo buddhyanusamhr̥tiḥ | padamādayaṃ pṛthak sarvaṃ sākāṅkṣamityapi, vākyam prati matirbhinnā bahudhā nyāyavādinām ||*” (VP II. 1-2) (P. R. Sarma 1980, 1) (Meaning: ‘Theorists hold different views about the notion of a sentence. [Thus a sentence is defined as:] the verb, the close combination of the words, the universal which resides in that close combination of the words, an utterance which is one and devoid of parts, the sequence [of the words], the meaning principle which lies in the speaker, the first word itself, any word in the sentence having mutual expectancy of each other’.)

the single-verb expressions and nominal sentences are denoted by the attested words on the surface level of the language. The very feature of the language is used in a spoken or written language mainly to avoid the repetition of the message to be conveyed and also to bring about effective and speedy communication. A competent listener or the reader comfortably processes these meanings with proper attention and capacity to bridge the necessary words from the previously stated message to the next string where it is needed.

While the definition primarily talks about the Sanskrit language, we extrapolate it to the Marathi language. The main reason behind this is that all earlier works on this topic focus on the Sanskrit language and thereby, on non-native speakers of Sanskrit language. In order to study the scope and working of the definition among the native speakers, the Marathi language is chosen for the research. Marathi belongs to the Indo-European language family and is one of the 22 official languages in India spoken by almost 83 million of the population primarily in the Maharashtra state, by both native and non-native speakers.

**Hypothesis:** Our primary hypothesis is: ‘single-verb’ in Marathi conversations can successfully convey the complete meaning hence can be regarded as a sentence in itself. The study also aims to measure the degree of comprehension of single verbs with respect to the complete and nominal sentences in order to understand whether SV sentences are as difficult to process as CS.

**Research Questions:** We try to find answers to the following questions: (1) Can a single-verb in Marathi conversational data convey its *kāraka*/s (a.k.a. means of the action denoted by the verb)?<sup>6</sup> (2) Can a single-verb be completely meaningful in all the cases such as difficult and easy texts, familiar and unfamiliar texts? (3) Does the definition hold true given varied external conditions such as different age groups, the gender of the readers? (4) Does the native speaker process single-verbs more efficiently than the non-native speaker? (5) Does the linguistic exposure play part in the comprehension of the single-verbs? The major aim of this study is to test the working and the scope of the definition and understand its limitations in the human comprehension process.

## 2. Experimental Design

Two web-based experiments were conducted on the neurologically healthy and adult, native and non-native Marathi speakers in India by creating a Google form containing the experiment and the questionnaire. The form is sent to the randomly chosen readers with the help of the emails and social networking medium. The experiment is divided into three main parts: (1) The first part consists of the introduction to the experiment, instructions for the participants about the need for attentive reading and

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<sup>6</sup> *Kārakas* are also known as thematic roles played by the words with respect to their verbs. According to Pāṇinian grammar, there are six *kārakas* such as agent (*kartā*), destination (*karma*), instrument (*karaṇa*), beneficiary (*saṃpradāna*), a point of departure (*apādāna*) and a substratum (*adhikaraṇa*).

annotation input method. Participants were asked to give their consent before participating in the experiment along with their personal information such as age, gender, etc. which is used only for the data analysis. No participant was aware of the purpose of the experiment beforehand. (2) Six paragraphs containing the conversations in Marathi constitute the second part of the experiment. Paragraphs were chosen and finalized from the active online Marathi webpage<sup>7</sup> by two expert linguists. All of them are modern writings in Marathi. During the experiment, one paragraph was presented at a time along with the questionnaire. They contain a minimum of 8 to a maximum of 20 lines (Refer to Table 1) and were presented in the *Devanagarī* script. Each paragraph has at least one single-verb sentence in it. For Exp 2, we chose the paragraphs containing nominal sentences as well.<sup>8</sup> Other words in the SV are dispersed in the paragraph and the omitted verb in the NS needed to be carried from the previously presented message in the paragraph (Figure 1) by the readers.

With proper attention, an average reader can comfortably construe the complete meanings of these sentences. The number of the sample is six owing to the restriction posed by the average attentive span of the reader. To eliminate the effect of mental fatigue and boredom, we have kept the sample size small hence no filler was added in between the paragraphs. Each paragraph was tested and analyzed to derive the conclusion. Another reason to choose the six paragraphs is: to test one of the six *kāarakas* in each paragraph. Readers are requested to complete the experiment in one sitting without a break. (3) In the last part of the experiment, the feedback form and the acknowledgment receipt are attached.

**Table 1: Experiment Details**

	<i>Type of Data</i>	<i>Topic of Interest</i>	<i>Sample Details</i>	
			<i>Paragraphs</i>	<i>Participants</i>
Exp 1	Conversations, Modern writings	Single-verb sentence, Complete sentence	6 Para, 8-15 lines	Total 59 Age- 21 to 57 years
Exp 2	Conversations, Modern writings	No-verb sentence, Single-verb sentence, Complete sentence	6 Para, 15-20 lines	Total 41 Age- 21 to 43 years

<sup>7</sup> <https://misalpav.com/> (Link accessed on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2019)

<sup>8</sup> Few examples of all types of sentences from both experiments are mentioned here:

Single-verb sentences such as: ‘*bolā*’ ([Please] speak up’) (Paragraph 6, Exp 1), ‘*lāvuyā*’ ([We] will plant [the saplings]) (Paragraph 5, Exp2)... Nominal sentences such as: ‘*tī mulagī*’ ([People just refer to me as] ‘that girl’) (Paragraph 1, Exp 2), ‘*nakkich ajobā*’ (‘Sure, Grandpa!’ [I will water the plants.]) (Paragraph 6, Exp2)... and Complete sentences like ‘*andhāryā abhyāsikece paḍade odhalele hote*’ (‘Curtains were drawn of the dim study room.’) (Paragraph 4, Exp1), etc.

Each paragraph contains two questions related to the textual features such as difficulty-level and the familiarity with the paragraph. Readers are expected to rate the difficulty level on 5-point 'Likert scale', where the value 1 denotes the least difficulty and 5 denotes the highest difficulty level. Similarly, readers were asked to choose one among two options whether the paragraph was familiar or not. The next question was related to the SV in the paragraph. The question and the answers are constructed in such a way that the correct answer to this question confirms the successful comprehension of the respective SV along with the mean/s of the action (i.e. the *kāra*). The next question was concerning the CS. The motivation behind this question is that to compare it with the SV. The correct answer to this question ensures successful comprehension and attentive reading. In Exp 2, we added one more question related to the NS. The correct answer to this question confirms the successful bridging of the omitted verb in the NS which is carried forward or assumed or filled in based on the previously presented message in the paragraph. Answers marked to all questions are considered to calculate the inter-annotator agreement in order to ensure the attentive reading of the readers.

Participants belonging to the age group of 21 to 57 years were randomly selected. They are both native and non-native speakers of Marathi. Almost all of them have acquired language in their early years of life i.e. before age 6 except for a few. Many of them also have daily exposure to the written Marathi texts and almost all of them use Marathi in their day-to-day communication.

In the web-based experiment, the investigator cannot observe readers' reading behaviour, speed and reaction time taken to annotate the answer after reading the question. However, the accuracy of the comprehension and the degree of comprehension can be tested, given the fact that the readers perform an attentive reading. The subjective reports are highly useful if readers are honest with their annotation input and have not marked the random answers. Since the reader could view both paragraphs and the questions at the same time on a single page, nowhere in the experiment readers' memory is tested. One expert linguist who is also a Marathi native speaker has validated the data set giving his 100% agreement that the paragraphs are comprehensible, which forms the ground truth of our experiment.

## Paragraph 3

रेघवाल्या मुलीचा नावासाठी हट्ट चालूच होता. हिच्यासाठी काहितरी नाव शोधायलाच हवं. डोंगरे सरांनी काहीतरी आठवेल, सुचेल या हिशोबाने आजूबाजूला नजर फिरवली. काळ्या फळ्याचं काळंशार आकाश, त्या आकाशात दूरवर ती पांढर्या खडूची अक्षरे चमकत होती. काळ्या रंगावर चमकदार दिसणारी पांढरी शुभ्र अक्षरे.

.....ठरला! भाषण तुझं नाव शुभ्र ठेवूया. चमकदार सगळ्या रंगाना सामावून घेणारा रंग पांढरा शुभ्र! शुभ्र.

"आ काका, काय सल्लीड नाव सुचवलंत! शुभ्र! मस्त... शुभ्र!"

नाव मिळाल्यामुळे शुभ्र हरखून गेले होती. तीचे ते ठिपक्यांचे डोळे अगस्तीचा तारा चमकवावा तसे विलक्षण तेजाने चमकू लागले.

"काका तुमच्याकडे खडू आहेत आणखी?" बराचवेळ फळ्यावरच्या काळ्या मैदानात पांढर्या खडूच्या रेघांनी आखलेल्या कौलारू शालेकडे पाहून झाल्यावर तो रेघवाला मुलगा, अररर...! त्याचे नवे नाव 'नील' म्हणाला.

"बघतो हं. का रे, काय झालं? काय करायचं आहे? सवयीने डोंगरे सरांनी त्यांचे खिसे चाचपले.

"हो, आहेत की!" खिशातल्या अखंड चार-पाच खडूच्या कांड्या काढत डोंगरे सर म्हणाले. "पांढरा, तांबडा, निळा हिरवा आणि पिवळासुद्धा आहे."

"आखू खडू?" नीलचे ते ठिपक्यांचे डोळे विस्फारले होते. इतके अखंड खडू तो बहुतेक आयुष्यात प्रथमच पहात असावा. अर्थात तेही खरेच होते.

शालेच चित्र काढताना शालेच्या इमारतीपासून सुरवात व्हायची. शिकणारी, खेळणारी मुले ही सर्वात शेवटी. तो पर्यंत संपत संपत खडू बोटाच्या

पेराएवढा तुकडा झालेला असायचा. खर्चा शालेचही अतंज होतं की. शालेत शिकणाऱ्या, खेळणाऱ्या मुलासाठी सर्वात शेवटचा प्राधान्यक्रम असतो.

डोंगरे सरांच्या मनात आले.

"काय हवंय तुला?" त्यांनी नीलला विचारले.

"मला ना, सांगू का? अं अं... मला ना... काय बरं! मला..." काहीही ध्यानीमनीसुद्धा नसताना अचानक काय हवे ते देणारी जादूची छडी मिळावी किंवा काय हवं ते मोग म्हणत देव प्रसन्न व्हावा आणि भांबवल्यामुळे आजवर रोज घोकत असलेल्या हव्या असलेल्या शंभर गोष्टींपैकी एकही गोष्ट आठवू नये अशी काहिशी नीलची अवस्था झाली. तो नुसता 'अं ...अं...' म्हणत राहिला.



**Figure 1: A Screenshot of a Sample Paragraph: With examples of all types of Sentences**

### 3. Results, Analysis and Discussion

The primary aim of the data analysis is to explore the nature of the single-verbs namely whether the SV can convey the means of action too. This forms Part I of the data analysis in which we test the comprehension vs. non-comprehension of the SVs in both experiments. This offers the answer to whether Marathi speakers can comprehend SVs in the written conversational data which in turn prove our hypothesis. To measure the degree of SV comprehension *viz.* to discover the comparison between the SV, NS and the CS comprehension, we have performed a contrastive study of them and present the results in Part II. While doing so, we analyze the overall data set along with the separate analysis of the paragraphs. Few sociolinguistic factors and other textual features that affect the comprehension of these sentences are considered in Part III and IV of the analysis respectively. We also compare the inter-variable differences to have a clear broader picture of the data in Part III. To account for the readers marking less correct answers and for other discrepancies, we present the error analysis in Part V by providing some remarks and discussion.

#### *Part I: Comprehension of the Single Verb (SV) Sentences:*

**Overall comprehension:** We take the answers marked by all readers to the SV questions in both experiments and present the results in Table 2. We set a cut-off limit at 70% since this is not a high-load experiment.<sup>9</sup> We found that more than 95% of the population has

<sup>9</sup> Conventionally, the cut-off is set to 65% in the high-load tasks.



more than 70% accuracy, which shows the successful comprehension of the SV sentences in both experiments. The single verbs in Marathi conversations denote the complete meaning and hence can be regarded as the sentence.

**Table 2: Population-wise Accuracy of Single-verb sentence comprehension**

Population-wise Accuracy		
Accuracy	Exp1	Exp2
100%	86%	75%
83%	12%	20%
67%	-	5%
50%	2%	-

**Inter-Annotator Agreement:** To validate the data, we perform the inter-annotator agreement of all the participants for all paragraphs in both experiments by using *Fleiss' Kappa* and we found that many readers show full agreement with respect to most of the paragraphs (values ranging from 0.6 to 1= almost perfect agreement to perfect agreement) with respect to the difficulty level and familiarity with the paragraphs along with the answers to the SV, NS and CS sentences. Paragraph 4 shows the least agreement i.e. 0.41= moderate agreement. This validates that participants have read the texts attentively and have not performed random markings of the answers.

**Table 3: Inter-Annotator Agreement table for both Experiments**

	Exp1				Exp 2				
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5
Para 1	0.75	1	1	0.97	1	1	1	0.9	0.55
Para 2	0.59	0.93	0.97	0.97	0.74	0.82	1	0.9	0.54
Para 3	0.7	1	1	0.94	1	0.9	0.86	0.86	0.51
Para 4	<b>0.41</b>	0.88	0.94	0.97	1	0.56	0.78	0.86	<b>0.48</b>
Para 5	0.53	0.97	0.91	0.97	1	0.86	0.71	1	0.53
Para 6	0.56	0.91	0.91	0.94	0.74	1	1	0.95	0.59

**Part II: Comprehension of Single Verb (SV), Nominal Sentence (NS) and Complete Sentence (CS)**

To perform the contrastive analysis of different types of sentences and to understand the interplay among them, we consider SV sentence, NS and CS in both experiments and present the accuracy results along with the t-test/ z-test results in Table 4. In experiment 1 which has the easy paragraphs, both SV and CS have similar accuracy namely 86% of the

total population has 100% accuracy. The p-value being insignificant (0.42),<sup>10</sup> we can argue that both sentences require a similar amount of processing. In experiment 2 where the difficulty level is increased, CS is seen to be processed in a more undemanding manner than the rest two. Among SV and NS, it is the single-verb which has more accuracy than the nominal sentence suggesting that the verb and their means were understood easily as compared to the pure NS. However, this difference cannot be confirmed by the statistical significance test as the p-value is 0.1.

**Table 4: Comprehension of Single-verb Sentence in Both Experiments**

	Exp 1			Exp2				
	SV	CS	P	SV	NS	CS	P	
			SV vs. CS				SV vs. CS	NS vs. CS
Overall	86%	86%	0.42	76%	54%	68%	0.3	0.1

#### Paragraph-wise comprehension:

When we perform a separate analysis for all paragraphs in both experiments, we found no difference in Exp 1. However, some inconsistencies are seen in Exp 2. The significant p-values for Paragraphs 2, 4, 5 and 6 show differences in the comprehension of SV and CS. It is interesting to note that among these four paragraphs, SVs in Paragraphs 4 and 5 have more accuracy than the CS. These single-verbs in these two paragraphs ‘*kādhato*’ (‘[I will] draw [a picture].’) and ‘*lāvūyā*’ (‘[We will] plant [the trees].’) demanded their complements playing the roles of *karaṇa* and *apādāna kāraṇa* respectively. Here, readers have easily understood the complete meaning of the single-verb sentences along with the means of action denoted by the verb. The complete derived meaning i.e. ‘I will draw with a chalk’ and ‘We will plant the trees starting right from the *pārijātaka* tree’ by the single-verb alone. The competent readers have used the extra meaning which is previously presented in the conversation. In these two cases, since the single-verbs conveyed complete desired meaning, they can be considered as the sentence. In Paragraphs 2 and 6, it is the CS that gained more accuracy than the SVs where the single-verbs ‘*sāngā*’ (‘[Please] tell’) and ‘*ghe*’ (‘take’) demanded *karma* and *adhikaraṇa kāraṇa* respectively. While readers could easily understand the *karaṇa* and *apādāna kāraṇa* of the verbs, it is seen that the *karma* and *adhikaraṇa kāraṇa* were not understood when they are not attested explicitly. No difference can be seen in remaining paragraphs i.e. 1 and 3 where both SVs and CSs are comprehended with a similar amount of processing. The single-verbs ‘*dyā*’ (‘[Please] give’) and ‘*tharala*’ (‘[It is] decided’) in these two paragraphs and

<sup>10</sup> P-value is the probability value obtained from the t-test or z-test (also known as the statistical significance tests) which is less than 0.05 rejects the Null hypothesis mentioning no-difference in two variables.

their means of action i.e. *saṃpradāna* and the *kartā* respectively were comprehended as easily as the complete sentences.

**Table 5: Paragraph-wise Comprehension of all types of Sentences in both experiments**

	Exp 1			Exp2				
	SV	CS	p	SV	NS	CS	p	
	Q2	Q3		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q1vs.Q3	Q2vs.Q3
Para 1	100%	100%	0.5	100%	100%	100%	0.5	0.5
Para 2	97%	98%	0.26	85%	90%	100%	<b>0.003</b>	0.3
Para 3	100%	100%	0.5	100%	95%	93%	0.29	0.4
Para 4	93%	97%	0.19	100%	68%	88%	<b>0.01</b>	<b>0.01</b>
Para 5	98%	95%	0.12	100%	93%	83%	<b>0.001</b>	0.1
Para 6	95%	95%	0.5	85%	100%	100%	<b>0.003</b>	0.5

Coming to the comprehension of the NS in Exp 2, we see the significant difference only for Paragraph 4 where NS is comprehended with the least accuracy as compared to the CS. In the remaining paragraphs both NS and CS do not show the difference in terms of comprehension. The NS in Paragraph 4: '*laṅgadī khelaṅārī, lagorī khelaṅarī*' (Meaning: '[Please, draw the boys] playing hopscotch and seven-stones'.) demanded the verb '[Please] draw' which was not construed properly to derive the desired meaning by the majority of the readers, which in turn was not comprehended successfully.

To conclude, the majority of the readers of Marathi comprehend the NS as easily and successfully as CS. They are seen to construe the required verb with the NS to reach the desired meaning which amounts to conclude that there is a similarity between NS and CS comprehension (i.e. NS=CS). While analysing the interplay among SV, NS, and CS, it is seen that SV sentences show similarity with the NS and CS comprehension for only 33% of times (SV=NS=CS). For other 33% of times, they outperform CS (SV>CS) and for remaining 33% of times CS outperform SV (CS > SV). Based on the available data, we cannot derive the hierarchy among the comprehension of these three types of sentences, but the similarity among them. More types of such sentences and a large sample size might help to conclude about the interplay among them.

### ***Part III: Sociolinguistic Factors that affect the comprehension***

In this section, we consider readers' demographic data to explore what factors affect the comprehension of the sentences in Marathi speakers. We take the information regarding readers' age, gender, first language, time of language acquisition, and exposure to the written language. Daily life language usage is also taken into consideration. The results

related to the population-wise accuracy for all types of sentences for all these features are presented in Table 6 along with the t-test and z-test results.

**Table 6: Sociolinguistic Factors and Accuracy in the Comprehension**

		Exp 1			Exp 2				
		SV	CS	P	SV	NS	CS	P	
		Q2	Q3	(Q2Vs. Q3)	Q1	Q2	Q3	(Q1Vs. Q3)	(Q2Vs. Q3)
Age-wise	>30	84%	84%	0.4	73%	62%	65%	0.3	0.3
	30<	93%	93%	0.5	80%	40%	73%	0.4	0.1
Gender-wise	M	88%	81%	0.4	78%	52%	70%	<b>0.04</b>	0.06
	F	85%	91%	0.2	72%	56%	67%	0.31	0.5
First-Lang.	Nat	89%	85%	0.5	86%	54%	69%	<b>0.05</b>	0.13
	Non-nat.	77%	92%	0.3	17%	50%	67%	<b>0.04</b>	0.3
Lang Acq.	>6	85%	87%	0.4	77%	51%	72%	0.3	<b>0.05</b>
	6<	100%	100%	-	50%*	100%*	0%*	0.4*	-
Lang. Expo.	Daily	#	#	#	79%	52%	64%	0.1	0.2
	Rarely	#	#	#	50%	50%	83%	0.1	0.1
Lang. Usage	Regular	#	#	#	79%	53%	68%	0.2	0.1
	Rare	#	#	#	33%	67%	67%	0.3	0.5

\*Sample size is small. # Data is not available for particular variables.

As it can be observed from the Table 6, Exp 1 does not show any kind of difference concerning SV and CS comprehension with respect to any of the factors mentioned above. The p-value for each variable is insignificant (i.e. higher than 0.05). Readers have comprehended SV sentences with similar efforts as of CS. The verbs in SV sentences denote the complete meaning and can be regarded as the sentence itself, similar to CS. Few inconsistencies can be seen in Exp 2, where male readers have processed SV in a better manner than the female readers (p-value is 0.04) while female readers show no difference in SV and CS comprehension (p-value is 0.31). Similarly, the basic difference

in the comprehension among native and non-native speakers of Marathi can be seen in the comprehension of the SV and CS. Native Marathi speakers have comprehended SVs easily than the CS as 86% of SV sentences and only 69% of CS has 100% accuracy. As against this, non-native readers of Marathi have comprehended CS easily than the SV since only 17% of the SV sentences have 100% accuracy while 67% of CSs have 100% accuracy. Both native and non-native readers show significant p-value i.e. 0.05 and 0.04 which amounts to say that SV sentences are more demanding for non-native readers of Marathi. No difference can be seen in any other factor with respect to SV and CS comprehension.

Coming to the NS comprehension, it can be argued that readers who acquired language before age 6 have difficulty in processing NS as compared to the CS. Logically, earlier the language learning, more the period of language exposure! However, it is interesting to note that readers who began learning Marathi before age 6 years process CS more effortlessly than the NS as only 51% of NS gained 100% accuracy while 72% of CS gained 100% accuracy. The p-value is significant (0.05) showing a difference in comprehension in NS and CS. For other variables, the comprehension of NS and CS has no difference. The NS is processed by assuming the verb just as the CS is processed.

**Inter-variable differences:**

**Table 7: Inter-variable differences: Experiment 1 and 2**

		T-test or Z-test Results					
		SV		NS		CS	
		Exp1	Exp2	Exp1	Exp2	Exp1	Exp2
<b>Age</b>	>30 vs. 30<	0.1	0.4	#	0.2	0.12	0.4
<b>Gender</b>	M vs. F	0.4	0.3	#	0.2	0.1	0.5
<b>First Lang.</b>	Native vs. Non-native	0.3	<b>0.01</b>	#	0.43	0.5	0.44
<b>Lang. Acq.</b>	>6 vs. 6<	<b>0.01</b>	0.4	#	<b>0*</b>	<b>0*</b>	<b>0*</b>
<b>Lang. Expo.</b>	Daily vs. Rarely	#	0.3	#	0.2	#	<b>0.04</b>
<b>Lang. Usage</b>	Daily vs. Rarely	#	0.2	#	0.3	#	0.5

\*Sample size is too small for data analysis. #Data is not available for particular variables.

In Part III, we have seen the effect of sociolinguistic factors on the comprehension of SV vs. NS vs. CS. In the current section, we present the difference of comprehension of SV, NS and CS in diverse sample i.e. native vs. Non-native speakers etc. In contrast to the earlier results presented in Table 6 where male readers have comprehended SVs better than the CSs, here there is no gender-wise difference (Table 7) which means that both male and female readers have comprehended all SV sentences, NSs and CSs in a similar manner in both experiments. Similar to the results presented in Table 6, we can see a significant difference (i.e. 0.01) among the native and non-native speakers of Marathi in the comprehension of SV sentences in Exp 2. Similarly, the age of language acquisition has proved very important when we study the comprehension of all three types of sentences since there is a significant difference (i.e. 0.01) in the processing of sentences among readers having learned the language before age 6 and after age 6 years. Readers who have rare exposure to the language, process the complete sentences in a different manner than those who have daily exposure to the language as the significant difference can be seen i.e. 0.04, In connection with Table 6, it can be seen that readers having daily exposure to the written Marathi texts have understood SV sentences more easily than the CS as opposed to the readers having rare exposure to the Marathi texts.

It can be concluded that age and gender have no effect on the comprehension of the sentences in Marathi readers. However, readers' first language, language acquisition period and language exposure play an important role in the comprehension of different types of sentences. With the contrastive analysis, it is observed that the complete sentences are processed in a more undemanding manner than the single-verb sentences which in turn are easier to comprehend than the nominal-sentences.

#### ***Part IV: Textual Features that affect the comprehension***

Only 7 readers among a total of 59 readers in the Exp1 have marked the paragraphs as the 'average difficult', however, all of them have marked all the correct answers to both the questions. No reader has marked any of the text as 'the most difficult'. Among remaining 52 readers, 36 readers have scored full marks for both questions. Only one reader P17, a 21 years old female reader who was familiar with all the paragraphs scored 100% accuracy for both types of questions, while no other reader was familiar with any of the text presented to them. In Exp 2, only 4 out of 41 readers were familiar with the paragraphs and all of them have marked all correct answers for all types of sentences. Similarly, 4 out of 41 readers marked the paragraphs as 'average difficult' and have marked all correct answers to SV sentences. One reader (P18) marked the paragraphs as 'difficult' who has 83% accuracy. Logically, the difficulty-level and familiarity with the text can affect successful comprehension. However, we cannot find any such effect from our study. The main reason might have been the conversational aspect of the paragraphs which can easily be read and understood even though the readers are reading it for the

first time i.e. s/he is unfamiliar with the content of it. The more specific and refined experimental design having multiple levels of difficulty such as extremely easy, easy, average, little difficult and the most difficult paragraphs may show some useful insights and shed some light on this topic.

#### ***Part V: Error Analysis***

As given in Table 2, while 98% of the population has more than 70% accuracy, only 2% of the population has the least accuracy in Exp 1. The participant (P31) is a 28 years old male reader and native Marathi speaker who was unfamiliar with all the paragraphs and marked them as ‘average difficult’. We cannot account for the least accuracy for SV sentences that he shows since he has scored 100% accuracy for CS. The 5% of the population who shows 65% accuracy (Table 2) in Exp 2 scored the least marks in SV comprehension. Even though they have acquired language before age 6 and read Marathi text daily, they have less accuracy for SV compared to NS and CS comprehension.

In Exp 2, paragraphs 2, 4, 5 and 6 show significant differences with respect to the SV and the CS comprehension (Table 5). While accounting for this difference, we found that single-verb sentences in these four paragraphs demand their *karma*, *saṃpradāna*, *apādāna*, and *adhikaraṇa kārakas* respectively, which demanded more mental efforts to process than the complete sentences. The single-verbs of remaining two paragraphs 1 and 3 demanded *kartā* and *karaṇa kāraka* which were easily understood by the readers. Similarly when it comes to the native and non-native speakers of Marathi, both types of readers show the same kind of linguistic behaviour as they process complete sentences in an undemanding manner than the single-verbs as shown in Table 6. However, if we only focus on the SV comprehension in both experiments, native speakers of Marathi perform better than the non-native speakers as shown in Table 7. It is obvious to conclude that the native speakers having early exposure to language and more usage in daily life process SV better than those of non-native ones.

#### **4. Discussion, Limitations and Future Work**

*Some implications of the study are:* Readers while processing single-verbs in the written conversations also consider the meanings of the means of the action denoted by the respective verb in order to derive the desired meaning. A competent reader does this process easily and efficiently with the help of the previously presented message in the conversation. As per the task demands, the meaning of the means of action is uncovered and used with their respective verbs. In such cases, since the single-verbs are capable of denoting the meanings of means of action too, even though these means are not attested at the surface level of language, they are considered as the sentence itself.

In the case of nominal sentences when presented with the context i.e. in the conversations, readers construe the suitable verb which is congruent, both semantically

and grammatically, with the words in the nominal sentence in order to understand the meaning completely and accurately. The words in the nominal sentence are understood as the means of the action denoted by this copular verb. We found that readers take the copular verb to fill in the gap left out by the verb so as to construe meanings of all the words with the respective verb.

***Significance of the results compared to the previously conducted experiments on the Sanskrit language:*** Earlier works on the comprehension of SV, NS, and CS focus on the conversational text in the classical and modern writings in Sanskrit language using more than 150 readers (Gajjam, Kanojia and Kulkarni 2018, Gajjam and Kulkarni 2018a, Gajjam and Kulkarni 2019, Gajjam and Kulkarni 2019a, Gajjam and Kulkarni 2019b). The lacuna left by this research is: each participant is the second language speaker of Sanskrit. The current research on the Marathi language which is focused on both native and non-native speakers of Marathi tries to fill in that gap left by earlier studies. As a result, the population having the 100% accuracy in the comprehension of Marathi is higher than that of in Sanskrit (98% and 74% respectively) (Sanskrit data is taken from an unpublished research).

The broader perspective to look at the phenomena is the universality and generality of the sentence-definition ‘*ākhyātaśabdah*’. Even though it is mentioned nearly 1500 years ago in the Sanskrit versified form by ancient Indian grammarian, the applicability and prevalence of the theory can also be seen even today, for a different language than Sanskrit, for different kind of texts (i.e. modern writings) and for diverse kind of samples (i.e. age-wise, gender-wise etc.).

***Limitations and Future work:*** The main limitation of this research is that the experiments are conducted online in which the investigator has very little control over readers’ reading behaviour. The same experiment if conducted using the offline pen-paper method in the classroom-controlled environment or by using some machines such as EEG, fMRI, the researcher can get some insights into the real-time processing and speed of the comprehension. Another limitation concerning the data set is the lack of a variety of texts. All the paragraphs from both experiments are taken from the modern writings in Marathi depicting day-to-day conversations. Similarly, classical literature can be used with varied literature styles to test the results. The same research can be extended for other European languages with different experiment designs on a large number of speakers to have a better view of the comprehension process and disclose different angles of the same sentence-definition. A large amount of such data can be employed in several computational applications to enhance the accuracy of various algorithms such as word-sense disambiguation, sarcasm detection, etc. The panoramic view of the whole data can



help in the betterment of the language models created for the people having language difficulties such as aphasia, dyslexia, etc.

## 5. Conclusion

Average Marathi readers have processed the single-verbs along with its *kāra* to arrive at the desired complete meaning with similar efforts as they process complete Marathi sentences. Thereby these single-verbs are considered as complete sentences. Given some diverse external conditions such as different age-groups, different native languages, gender, etc., the definition also holds true. We have a better perspective of comprehension of single-verbs when we compared it with the comprehension of nominal sentences and complete sentences and found no major difference in all types of sentences with respect to age and gender. However, native Marathi readers process single-verbs in an easier manner than non-native speakers. Similarly, readers who have acquired Marathi before age 6 process single-verbs more effortlessly than those who learned after age 6 years. Daily exposure to the written Marathi texts has a facilitating effect on the comprehension of single-verbs. Coming to the nominal sentences, it is found that readers assume the suitable verb in order to construe all the words in the nominal sentences with it to have a complete, meaningful linguistic string. The definition ‘*ākhyātaśabdaḥ*’ given by Bharṭṛhari presents its universality and generality when it also applies to the Marathi language.

### List of Abbreviations:

Abbreviations	
acq.: acquisition	<i>P</i> : p-value (i.e. probability value)
CS: Complete Sentence	<i>P</i> : Participant
Exp: Experiment	Para: Paragraph
expo: exposure	Pu.Ms.: ‘ <i>Pūrvamīmāṃsā Sūtra</i> ’
F: Female readers	<i>Q</i> : question
Lang: language	<i>Rk.Prā.</i> : ‘ <i>Rgveda Prāṭisākhya</i> ’
M: Male readers	<i>SV</i> : Single-Verb
<i>M<sub>D</sub></i> : Mean-Difference (between two variables)	<i>V.</i> : Kātyāyana’s <i>Vārttika</i>
NS: Nominal Sentence	<i>VP.</i> : ‘ <i>Vākyapadīya</i> ’

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## **A Comparative Study of Alice Walker's *The Color Purple* and Anita Desai's *Fasting Feasting* with Bildungsroman Theory**

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### **Abstract**

Anita Desai and Alice Walker are extensively acclaimed novelists to emerge in the literary horizon of twentieth century. These two writers have the common trait in their novels, though they hail from different continents. All the protagonists grow psychologically in the novels and in their lives. In the beginning, the women characters are innocent, psychologically weak and immature. Though they hail from different geographical regions an Indian, and an African American, they are interested in women and have focused on major female characters in their novels. In a broad sense, gender inequality is a complex issue. The question of how women and men and in between genders are constructed is a matter of much dispute. In the present paper, it is an attempt made to study the gender and women issues as focus on the gender bias which has become a part of our life.

Anita Desai is often considered to be the representative Indian Woman Novelist in English, who has made a considerable patriarchal society. Alice Walker, the most notable female writer in the world of African American literature today discuss different issues like racism, sexism, classism and child abuse etc. She delineates the humiliation, exploitation and marginalization of the blacks in general and black women in particular.

The present paper investigates into the theme of sexual overtones and gender inequality in Anita Desai's *Fasting Feasting* and Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*. Later on, we could note the growth in these characters when the novel progresses by undergoing many sufferings in their life. Environment, situations, problems and oppression all these elements make them strong psychologically which are related to the theory of Bildungsroman. The main characteristic of bildungsroman is to shape the person intellectually, spiritually through the experiences of the world.

I propose to make a comparative study here on two women writers of feministic views who focus on class, gender, sex, alienation and women psyche. When we try to find out origin of gender inequality and women's oppression, we must understand that gender and sex are two different concepts. However, when we go through various data available about gender equality

and discrimination, we will find that women are far behind than men in various fields of life. On the other hand, women are exploited, degraded, violated and discriminated in their homes and outside world. This type of discrimination is easily seen in Indian and African American society.

**Keywords:** Alice Walker, *The Color Purple*, Anita Desai, *Fasting Feasting*, Bildungsroman Theory, Gender Inequality, Discrimination, Patriarchal Society, Sexual Overtones, Women Oppression.

## Introduction

The theory of Bildungsroman represents women protagonists in their novels. The Bildungsroman is identified in the works of two women novelists of two continents. This theory builds up a character from adolescence to a sensible matured being. Self enduring, self-sacrificing women change themselves into a matured personality based on the situations and complications of their sufferings. The main characteristic of bildungsroman is to shape the person intellectually, spiritually through the experiences of the world.

The Harlem Renaissance denoted a defining point for African American literature. Before this time, books by African Americans were essentially pursued by other Black people. With the Renaissance, though, African American literature as well as black fine art and a performance art began to absorb into mainstream American culture. Major Harlemites of the period are Claude McKay, Zora Neale Hurston, Alice Walker, Toni Morrison, Gayl Jones, Rasheed Clark, Ishmael Reed, Jamaica Kincaid, John Edgar Wideman, David Antony Durham, Tayari Jones, Mat Johnson and Colson Whitehead. Theoretically African literature comprehends the interconnectedness of race, class, sex, oppression. Subsequently it understands that there are White men and women, and definitely Black people who try to topple structures of their societies.

## Alice Walker As A Feministic Writer

Alice Malsenior Walker, African American writer, poet, feminist, and activist born on 9 February 1944 in Eatonton, Georgia. It was a tradition in those years that black people are not supposed to get their education, they are supposed to work in farms with their parents. Growing up with an old tradition, listening to stories to her grandfather is a major inspiration for Alice to start writing at the age of eight.

Stephanie Fitzgerald in her book *Alice Walker: Author and Social Activist* portrays about the life of Alice Walker in her young age,

From the time she was young, Alice knew that the world was a different place for a black child in the South than it was for a white child anywhere. All she had to do was look around her. White people lived in the nicest houses. Black people lived in shacks, and they did not even own those. (Fitzgerald, 22)

In all her works, Alice Walker has expressed with graceful and devastating clarity, the point of liberty Black Women have in her community. Alice Walker celebrates the survival of Black people. All her works confronts the pain and struggle of Black people's history. She has found that creativity of Black Women is a measure of the health of the entire society. Alice Walker's main concept is sharpened by her use of the history of Black people in America especially in the south where they were most brutally enslaved and marginalized.

In a book *Alice Walker* by Maria Lauret explains that "In the bracketed reference to 'girliness' Walker appeals to a notion prevalent in black feminism of the 1970s that white women's sense of their own oppression was like to cry of a spoiled child" (Lauret, 19). This sets the epithets for the womanist women which invokes the black femininity with the white femininity.

*The Color Purple*, Alice Walker's masterpiece work published in 1982 is taken for the study of Bildungsroman. During the first half of the twentieth century, the novel shows the struggle of Black women in Georgia. It starts with an African American girl of fourteen years, protagonist, Celie a timid girl writes a letter to God expressing her agony that she suffers by her stepfather Alphonso. Later that had become a habit to Celie to write letters to God often to express her sufferings and an unspoken pain. Alice Walker states clearly about the diffident nature of an uneducated girl Celie's foolishness in the beginning of the novel. Celie, the protagonist had faith in God that her letters reaches to God and thinks that her difficulties of life every day to day would be solved. She deliberates innocently to look for help from the God and need to survive in the world by overcoming her spiritual, emotional and physical abuses by her father. Instead of telling it to other people, Celie shares her sufferings to God shows her immature nature when the novel opens. Celie is helpless when her just born babies are taken away by her stepfather Alphonso. She does not even know where her children are growing, and her ignorance makes to write letters about all her struggles to God and talks to Him by imagining as though the other person is sitting beside her. Though Celie faces many emotional and physical abuses by her stepfather, she fails to fight against him boldly when she is exploited and subjected to rape even. The awareness of handling the situations are unimaginable to Celie in the beginning of the novel, when is young and timid.

Her father Alphonso stops her from telling anybody except to God about her abuses. The moment she becomes pregnant she writes a letter to God "I'm big. I can't move fast enough. By time I git back from the well, the water been warm. By time I git the tray ready the food be cold. By time I git all the children ready for school it be dinner time" (Walker, 3). Whereas, motherhood becomes burden to Celie when she is not allowed to love her own kids as they are taken away from her by her stepfather and a man named Albert who is a widower with four children marries Celie out of a compulsion by her father. Celie refers to him initially, as Mr. but he too exploits her and treats her with contempt and brutality. Slowly the evolution of maturity develops in Celie's thoughts which comes from her experiences and the struggles that she has faced by many cruel men in her family and in the surroundings where she lives. She realizes the vainness of her attempts to communicate with an abstract God. Slowly she

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begins to communicate with her sister. She writes letters to Nettie “I don’t write to God no more I write to you” (199). Under Shug A Very’s influence, Celie leaves her husband Albert who victimizes her. Albert is shocked to the words spoken by Celie. “It’s time to leave you and enter into the creation” (Walker, 207).

Celie learns from Shug A Very to be bold, courageous and reclines herself slowly to transform herself from a wounded, beaten woman to a strong independent loving individual. Through tough experiences many lessons were learnt by Celie. At the end of the novel, Celie gains the strength of the human spirit and turns to fight for Shug A Very on her behalf. She develops an ability to design and make pants for both genders and becomes a business lady.

Dr. Prasanta Kumar Padhi, International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention says:

Alice Walker’s *The Color Purple* is a novel that wonderfully portrays the gradual forming of a new black woman, Celie, who evolves from patriarchal oppression to an independent self-awaken. She a black poor, uneducated African American girl able to change her life gives the symbol of hope and courage to the suffering women of same kind impresses the readers with her strength, faith and courage.

Alice walker is deeply by the evils done to the Black Americans, and her bitter experiences and feelings are revealed in her writings. The harsh environment of her vision is visualised from her first novel. She is certainly affected by the pervasiveness of the violent racist system of the south and an impact has on Black families. There were many Africa American writers who already written lots of works on the relationship between sexism and racism. Those writers were insulted, ignored and maligned. Walker knows that she too would face the same situation. Those writers expressed their views contrary to the accepted American world view. And they were criticized. And so Walker was also criticized and ignored by her own community.

Walker’s non-stop inscribe is chiefly about their degeneration and regeneration. She identifies herself with the oppressed Black women. This provides her more pleasure that she is sharing in their peculiar oppression. Walker deals with the external realities of poverty and exploitation suffered by Black Americans and Black Women. In 1982, Walker published her novel *The Color Purple* which showcased her as a best-known novelist. Walker’s concern for the African American family is evident in *The Color Purple* where she examines the meaning of relationships. She exposes the evil practices perpetrated by men in the man-woman equation and makes a strong case for the fumigation of all forms of hypocrisy in familial relationships. Through Celie, she examines the magnitude of the psychological trauma as a fall out of relationship that are founded on brutal and merciless exploitation. It is compelling to see how patterns of womanist relationship that provides the long-awaited release from all forms of

bondage. The novel is about a young black woman sufferer fighting her way through not only racist white culture but also patriarchal black culture; it was a resounding commercial success. The book become a big hit and was made into a movie. The contact that Alice Walker establishes with Africa.

Maryemma Graham's in *The Cambridge Companion to the African American Novel* discusses about the narratives styles "When African Americans made the move from the writings of narratives to the writings of the novels, they are stepping across the void on matter how close the last narratives to the first novels" (Graham, 18). African American writers are extremely recreate and restructure in their writings. Likewise in Alice Walker's *The Color Purple* the writing is unique and portrays from an emerging of identity struggle.

*The Color Purple* is widened into a conceptual space to accommodate more complex characters, an almost complete span and sense of time, a wrestle with the constituting elements of History, and separation of civilizations with tabulations on how the White man become distinct from the Black man causing in the bargains, the emergence of separate consciousness.

### **Major Role of Alice Walker in Her Work *The Color Purple***

Alice Walker slowly develops the persona of Celie in this novel. As the time passes on, Celie realizes the real meaning of life and proves herself that she can stand independently in the society. Celie's journey from a dumb, illiterate, ignorant ugly black girl turned into the awakened and self-conscious woman. Walker has structured the novel *The Color Purple* in such a way that it remains a guiding star to Black women who have been entangled in various degrees of obscurity. Alice Walker with excessive struggle, appeals them out of conceivable obliteration and rinses them. She clothes them with a new fabric, called self-esteem and self-sufficiency by eradicating the old and dirty one. Walker is very particular, and she never permits her women to go empty-handed, losing everything. Sofia has inherent fighting spirit that she fights within the home as well as outside. Though she is punished severely with a twelve-year imprisonment or while being reduced to enslavement in Millie's, White woman home, after twelve years she is reunited with her family and survives as a victorious being. Nettie, Celie's sister, also possesses the quality of fighting to the end. Albert, Celie's husband, has a desire for Nettie who is very pretty and cleverer than Celie. He asks her stepfather's permission to marry her, but he refuses.

Walker restructures her female protagonist begins after a long suffering. One may marvel at Walker's transforming the disloyalty into richness at the extraordinary end of their life when they achieve old age and they nearly become an exhausted being losing their vitality in the long run of endurance. Walker wants to prove that age is not the matter of fact for Black women to fight on their battle. She is of the firm belief that experiences alone can guide her people to just direction, not the age. So, she lets her women to gain experiences centring them in difficult environments and wants them to come out as perfect beings. Survival to the maximum for Black women is the main objective of Walker and all other aspects seem

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secondary to her. She with utmost effort struggle to liberate her women from the dark cell where they are locked so as not to see the reality. Walker magnanimously, gives them many options with the sole intention of bringing them out from the dormant we band she initiates a new bond lesbianism that she hopes will release the Black women from the violent sexuality of Black men.

Critics have raised numerous objections regarding to her strong indignation over heterosexual bond that pleasures Black men however torments Black women. Black women's vulnerability in sex is highly oppressed by men and they are exposed to torment during every moment in sexual intercourse. The agony inflicted on them in sex compels them to be indignant on heterosexuality. It does not mean that Walker supports homosexuality but she, in order to save Black women from the pain caused by heterosexual bond, opens a new avenue for Black women with the prime aim of releasing them from humiliation, finding no other option.

Finally, Walker successfully turns the Celie as a respectable woman. The isolated Celie is surrounded by a group of women who assist her to raise her position. The full empowerment of Celie arrives in full force when Nettie returns her and she has Shug by her side. Her children Adam and Olivia return to her. Celie is now with a large group of people whom she loves. For her, this is the greatest moment of her life and then she remarks that she feels younger than she has ever felt before. Finally having a family return and to be loved by other people are equivalent to starting a new life for Celie. Thus, the ending is really the beginning of Celie. She excitedly manifests her present delightful moments. "But I don't think us feel old at all. And us so happy. Matter of fact, I think the youngest us ever felt" (Walker, 244). Walker transforms Celie as a complete woman providing her a contented life. Celie was erased by men, but through own realization she reaches the highest degree of glory fighting back her oppressors and she manages to survive an amazing woman.

Anita Desai is renowned as the Indian author writing in English who mainly addresses about the condition of women in India and focused seriously on the feminist themes. Unlike Nayantara Sahgal and Kamala Markandeya, an example of few Indian writers who respond primarily to the external social and political circumstances of their female characters, Desai focuses on the survey of the psychological condition of the oppressed women who, at first, are entirely passive. In *Fasting, Feasting* (2000), Desai's main concern is about the condition of women in India and is related to women in general. She relates the culture based oppression of women in contemporary Indian society to psychological suffering of women in American society and concludes that women are being considered as domesticated secondary beings with little scope to open up themselves in society as well as in family, based on the portrayal of the characters Uma, Melanie and her mother, Mrs, Patton resulting in ideology condition signifying how patriarchy is all encompassing irrespective of culture or place.

In a book *A Critical Study of the Novels of Anita Desai*, N. Raj Gopal explains about the women characters in Anita Desai's works as, "Anita Desai is no exception insofar as she

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has written by and large about women characters and no wonder if most of her novels move around women characters in her novels.” (Gopal, 18) In Anita Desai’s works the women characters are pre-occupied with the theme incompatible martial couples across different kinds of characters.

Uma is the central character of the novel which similarly features of bildungsroman. Uma, the protagonist of the novel is exposed as school going child who always has a desire towards education, and she makes herself busy in doing homework, drawing and doing all the household work in the beginning of the novel. Suddenly, Uma is forced to leave the school education and look after her newborn younger brother Arun. Intentionally, Uma is enforced to give up her convent education by finding fault with the silly reason that she has failed to get good marks and stops her from going to school. Even though, Uma goes to the convent to request her convent sisters that she would continue her studies which becomes a wild goose chase. When she grows up, she is forced to marry to an elderly person who has already a wife and a child by her parents Mama Papa. “Uma’s unmarried state was not only an embarrassment but an obstruction” (Desai, 87).

In a book *The Novels of Anita Desai: A Critical Study* edited by Manmohan Krishna Bhatnagar, Mittapalli Rajeshwar discusses about the husband and wife relationship in Anita Desai’s works as, “One of the aims of Anita Desai in her novels is to display how this characteristic spirit of the age has loosened the bond of husband-wife relationship.” (Ed. Bhatnagar, Rajeshwar 33). Anita Desai’s novel portrays about the identity crisis as a result of husband and wife polarity as a predominant theme in her novels.

### **Comparative Study with the Theory and the Novel**

One of the characteristics bildungsroman is that the Protagonist undergoes a lot of suffering for some period of time. The Protagonist, Uma suffers a lot who is married and divorced within a short period of time. Against her parents will she neither questions nor raises her voice. She fears to reject in some extreme situations. At the point when Uma is divorced, her parents feel like an affront for them which gives an extension to their neighbour’s who gossips about the unsuccessful marriage instead of her happiness. “Uma was considered ill-fated by all and no more attempts were made to marry her off” (Desai, 98). Like this Uma faces many struggles in her life one after the other. Uma’s parents show little concern on her and leaves her life towards her fate without the second thought of her future.

Uma starts her routine life in her parents’ house i.e., look after them, arranging each and everything. Without raising her voice, Uma does all the demanded household works all the time. She even trembles with her mother’s fear for a simple thing which she expresses very clearly when her sister Aruna, asks her to cut her hair instead of making a pigtail or plait. Then Uma immediately responds that “Mama will kill me” (Desai, 107).

Uma's parents discard Uma to attend the coffee party invited by Mrs. O Henry. Uma wants to attend the party, when her parents oppose it Uma raises her voice against her parents. To her Mama Papa for the first time she shows her anger to attend the party and too to enjoy the party. Uma's life starts after this situation when she questions her parents especially when they want to stop her from going to the Mrs. O'Henry's party, this states the clear transition period in Uma's behaviour. "She is giving a party, a coffee party, not a tea party and she has invited some ladies, and me." Why? What is wrong? (Desai, 115). Uma even replies her Papa when he instructs her to sit at home and do the work. Uma then replies, "I do my work all the time, every day" Why can't I go out sometimes? (Desai, 117).

Nevertheless, Uma joins the party and is exposed to all other women for the first time in her life. When Mrs. O. Henry talks about her entire experiences related to Christmas cards, fair and about the people all over the places, Uma listens passionately towards her speech and then enquires Mrs. O. Henry innocently whether she has made all the Christmas cards by herself. This thought of exposing to herself in the new environment is not seen in the beginning of her behaviour. One of the characteristics of bildungsroman is getting change in the characters through sufferings. Later on, Uma meets Mr. Joshi for the very first time and requested him to accept her for better projections in her career and wants to be independent in her life for the first time. "A career, leaving home, Living alone" (Desai, 34).

### **Cultural Analysis of Female Condition**

When we analyse the novel from Indian cultural point of view, the essence and significance of both Uma's and Arun's pilgrimage(s) and also, we have to complete first the list of elements of which the landscape of their respective journey is composed. Uma's pilgrimage begins shortly after the birth of her brother Arun when she is in her early teens. Her brother is more important to Uma's parents because he is a boy, at her house a 'son' is heard everywhere in the house; when they pronounce it, it can be a confusion with the sound of 'sun.' The atmosphere of the household is changing, Mama is proud to have fulfilled her life role by giving birth to a son, Papa is proud to have been able to produce, finally, a male offspring and lets Mama into the realm of patriarchal structures, although only as an instrument. Mama Papa do not allow Uma, who has previously been sent to a Catholic convent school, to continue her education and she, although not a good student, is an eager one and opposes fervently her parents' decision. Now that there is a son in the family, to waste money and education as such on girls which will be necessary to spend on the boy. Subsequently, Uma feels she needs to get away but she does not know yet exactly what for. It is the mystery chambers of the inward world what Uma treasures, for the external world is horrid and dark.

Uma is continuously brought into the inner world of Hindu legends and tales by Miramasi, an enthusiastic worshipper of Shiva. Miramasi's stories show the dual character of the woman's fate. One of the heroines is a victim, dies after having been abandoned by her husband; the other is a poetess, independent, struggling for recognition; in the meantime, she is considered a madwoman (allusion to Mira Bai, a legendary sixteenth-century's poetess and

a Krishna's devotee known for her rebellious attitudes). With Miramasi, Uma feels that she is "admitted into some sanctuary that had been previously closed to her" (Desai, 42). But there is then some progress for Uma; she realizes that it is necessary to search for a different reality than that defined by her parents, yet she does not know where to turn. In the company of Miramasi she has a feeling that at least she receives a certain attention and recognition as a person. The inner world of contemplation of existence is open to her. The inner structures of her culture are revealed to her so that she can better understand how they work. Further on, in another escapist action she undertakes with Miramasi when they go to an ashramas pilgrims, she is free enough to think. While Miramasi carries on her worship duties, Uma wanders around, feeling she is caught between two forces pulling in different directions, the power of patriarchal education and tradition, and the urge to get free of it. There is a river but is not easy to approach during the day because the sand is burning from the sun. But towards the evenings Uma can walk along the river and she becomes sure that she cannot turn to Miramasi any more for guidance. Uma stays unmarried but this does not mean that she is spared efforts to be married off, according to the custom of arranged marriages. She has to go a long and painful journey through this suntrap of the valley of marriage arrangements.

To look at it more closely it will be useful first to follow how Desai compares Uma with the other two of her girl relatives. If Uma's sister Aruna is dismissed out of the sphere of patriarchal influence soon after the birth of Arun as "having started a lifetime of bridling, of determined self-assertion" (Desai 17), then everything in her life including her marriage she carries on with "a kind of steely determination, a dogged ambitiousness, that seemed to be born of a desperation" (Desai 67). Maria Mies in her book *Indian Women and Patriarchy: Conflicts and Dilemmas of Students and Working Women* discusses about the role of a men and women after marriage,

Hindu marriage is a sacrament -- for the husband one among many, but for the wife the only one through which she can acquire spiritual gains. ... If a grownup woman dies without this sacrament she roams about after her death as an evil spirit (Mies, 50).

### **Sense of Ignorance in Families about Women**

Uma's thoughts are to be ambitious of being independent, a successful job and identity. Desai defines Uma's character of being avoided by people around her, a helpless divorcee, she was rejected twice by perspective grooms for her incorrigible provincial outlook, organizes all the household work effectively given to her by Mama Papa without hesitation has changed her thought to grow independently. Struggles dexterities Uma to think herself of being liberated and identified in the society. Through the portrait of Uma, Desai wants to give a new perspective to women gender which has formed the core conception in women studies. With the example of Uma, Desai reveals the pathetic conditions of women's lives during and after independence in India.

## Conclusion

Thus, the two women novelists endow their women characters with an intension to help them by giving the power of knowledge. With this power, they would cross the roads of empowerment and make themselves free from the outranked conditions. The prophetic vision of women writers is to empower the powerless women by making them psychologically strong to overcomes all the segregations in the society especially which are based on social and political issues.

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## Favored Variety and Cultural Othering: Semantic Enclave in Hindi Cinema

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### Abstract

Hindi cinema has a wide market across the world, and hence it affects the use of Hindi language to a large extent. But what is officially known as Hindi cinema also includes the movies in regional varieties of Hindi language without any acknowledgement of the variety. Varieties of signs are involved in generating a text of cinema, and hence it turns out to be a Semantic Enclave. The cinema develops a kind of Creole that is more or less understood by the standard Hindi language users. Present paper investigates the codes developed in three films based on regional milieu. The way the standard codes are modified, and newer text-specific metaphors are generated are the thrust of this investigation. The unavailability of standard Hindi subtitles is also significant. The fourth film, which acts as a counter example, implies the selection of regional variety which is to do with the dichotomy of rural and urban. The films also question the mainstream propaganda of development and how the reality is alienated from the audience at large.

**Keywords:** Hindi cinema, Semantic enclave, regional codes, metaphors, micronarratives, intention, Cultural Othering.

### 1. Introduction

India is a multilingual and multicultural space. Multilingualism is a norm and not an exception. Under such circumstances, the biggest and richest film industry of the country, Bollywood, is basically a Hindi film industry. And more interesting fact is that the centre of Hindi film industry is in a non-Hindi dominated state, i.e. Maharashtra. The official language of the state is Marathi. Bollywood produces more than 350 films a year and it represents 43% of Indian net box-office revenue. The Hindi films are released all over India, including the non-Hindi speaking states and all other major countries of the world. Thus, Bollywood is one of the most powerful instruments of spreading Hindi language in the world.

Indian education system has accepted three-language formula: the state language, Hindi and English. So the children whose native variety is not accepted by the state have to learn all three languages at the school level without any prior exposure to these languages. The children are exposed to Hindi cinema to some extent and normally TV or films are their first encounter to standardized Hindi or English. Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, and Rajasthan are the states where Hindi is accepted as an official language. But all these states have multiple varieties of Hindi language spoken in different regions of the states. When I say, Bollywood is a powerful instrument of spreading Hindi language; I am talking about the ‘standardized’ variety of Hindi. I prefer the term ‘standardized’ instead of ‘standard’ because “standardization” is a deliberate and artificial process; ‘Standard Hindi’ or ‘Standard Language’ implies “naturally” standard, which is not the case.

For our present purpose, I have selected four recent movies, each situated in one of the “Hindi” states. Any work of art is significant if it has some universal appeal. The selected films are categorized as per their themes. Feminism is one such theme that appeals across the borders. The films ‘*Anarkali of Aarah*’ and ‘*Parched*’ have this theme. And the other two films, ‘*Guddu Rangeela*’ and ‘*Talvar*’ have the theme of crime, especially, honor killing. The themes have an appeal to all the classes and types of audience. But, out of these four, three films are in regional varieties of Hindi language which are quite difficult for the audience to comprehend. 1. ‘*Parched*’, released in 2015 the film is a story about four female friends and their day-to-day struggle of survival and sexuality in the state of Rajasthan. The state of Rajasthan has accepted Hindi and English as its official languages. 2. ‘*Anarkali of Aarah*’, released in 2017, the film is a story of a female dancer from *Aarah*, a small town in the state of Bihar. Bihar accepts Hindi and Urdu as official languages. 3. ‘*Talvar*’, released in 2015, the film is based on murder mystery situated in Noida of Uttar Pradesh. The state of Uttar Pradesh also accepts Hindi and Urdu as its official languages. 4. ‘*Guddu Rangeela*’, released in 2015, the film is based on casteism and *Khaap Panchayat* of the state of Haryana in which Hindi and Punjabi are accepted as official languages. Though the themes have universal appeal, the audience doesn’t have the direct connection with the issues raised in the films. How will the audience connect and comprehend the cinematic texts? Will the linguistic variety used in the movies be hindrance to the comprehensibility? Except ‘*Guddu Rangeela*’, the rest of the films are considered multiplex-movies, i.e., they target the upper-class, upper-middle class, while ‘*Guddu Rangeela*’ is for the audience of single-screen theatres, more popular in nature than the other three. Does the urban-multiplex-audience interpret the themes correctly, or they enjoy it in terms of “otherness” of the characters? What is the impact of linguistic variety used? How different is the used variety from the standardized variety? Isn’t it a risk to make a cinema in a single language in the multilingual market?

## 2. Mainstream Hindi Cinema as Semantic Enclave

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Communication is understood in terms of recoding and decoding the messages. The language of cinema includes visual codes and linguistic codes. One doesn't normally need the formal training in comprehending visual codes, but linguistic codes require prior exposure in order to be effectively comprehended. Majority of the movies normally use the 'so called' standardized variety of Hindi and hence, don't generally pose question for us. The challenge is the films made in regional varieties of Hindi. Regional varieties of Hindi are used very frequently; even the movies which are made in standardized Hindi have some characters who speak regional variety, plus there are characters who use Hindi with Gujarati, Marathi, Punjabi or Bengali words and phrases. Urdu is also used quite lavishly, especially in songs. Earlier films' title used to be given in three languages: Hindi, English and Urdu, but now-a-days Urdu is slowly evaporated, at least in written form. Thus, there is not a single code which can be decoded and comprehended without problem, in fact, the code of Hindi is modified and moderated as per the need of the characters and communication. Thus, Hindi cinema has always been a 'semantic enclave', i.e. various sign systems can be found in a single text or work of art (Wallis, 1971: 4; Harris, 1998: 228).

There are very few examples of films which are made entirely in some regional variety. The 1961 film *Gunga Jumna* was entirely in Avadhi variety of Hindi which is dominantly spoken in Allahabad area of Uttar Pradesh. Normally, screen-writers amalgamate regional lexicon with the standardized language to create an effect of the regional variety, at the same time it remains more or less comprehensible for the audience. They create a kind of Creole for the screen which is understood easily and still it carries some features of the distinct regional culture and nuances. Communication is a process in which we exchange our thoughts, ideas, emotions, etc. with others. But in terms of Media communication, the case is little different. In ordinary communication the roles of addressor and addressee keep changing, but in media communication the audience always remains at receiving end. The form of media, the cinema in this case, is the addressor. Media communication is unidirectional and directive in nature.

### 3. Language and Identity

There is a wide-spread belief that in media, regional or social variety is invoked to highlight and target a specific group of people. Moosmuller (1989: 165) claims that, "Standard language variants is most often associated with intelligence, competence and status-related traits whereas dialect language variants are generally associated with sociability, social attractiveness and trustworthiness." Woods (2006: 12) also expresses similar stand discussing the language in advertisements and claims that,

research on television advertising in New Zealand finds, for example, that advertisers tend to favour speakers with strong local dialects, in order to associate their products with

Kiwi identity and values. For broadly similar reasons, advertisers may employ speakers with foreign accents or deliberately use foreign words to evoke an impression of mystery or a sense of the exotic.

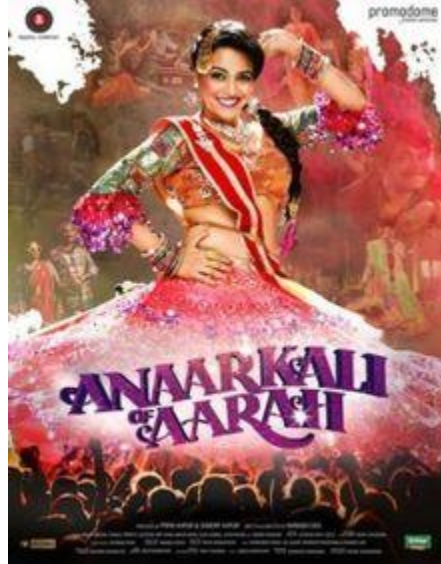
While Bollywood employs many characters using “bad” Hindi to imply that the specific character is outsider or non-Hindi speaker. The most employed characters are the British who speak accented Hindi with blond wig. But, for the major characters’ native identity, the variety of language is just a supplement. The identity is formed more audio-visually with the help of their clothes, music and surroundings. Say for example, if the character is Gujarati, from the state of Gujarat, *Garbaa* – the traditional dance from of Gujarat will inevitably be used. Apart from that, an entire sentence in the respective language will be put in the mouth of the character; but, that would be one or two sentences only, the rest of the dialogues will be in Hindi.

In the case of the selected films all the characters are ‘Hindi’ speakers from the perspective of linguistic identity. But, from the perspective of the province, they are either Rajasthani or Haryanvi or Bihari. So, in order to give them, the complete character traits, apart from their accent, their clothes, surroundings and music play an important role. The distinct vocabulary in their language makes them rustic and genuine. In the movie *Parched*, the characters are also tattooed in the traditional Rajasthani fashion. Thus, only linguistic variation is not enough to bestow the character an authenticity for the given situation and text.

#### **4. Significance of the Selected Texts**

The most essential role of any work of art is to represent the socio-cultural and political milieu faithfully. In this age of Visual media and internet, the authorities can easily portray an illusory rhetoric of all-round development and happiness. The development is normally confined to the metros and big cities, as the notion of ‘development’ is also directly associated with industrialization and mechanization. “But it is often punctuated, interrogated, and domesticated by the micronarratives of film, television, music, and other expressive forms, which allow modernity to be rewritten more as vernacular globalization and less as concession to large-scale national and international policies.” (Appadurai 1996: 10) The movies in question attempts to put local issues on a global platform.





Courtesy: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anarkali\\_of\\_Aarah](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anarkali_of_Aarah)

The exploitation of local entertainers, especially the female ones, by the powerful people is presented realistically in the movie *Anarkali of Aarah*. The name Aarah refers to a small town in the state of Bihar. Through the movie, we get to know the plight of public performers in general and the adult-performers in particular. Above all, the audience is exposed to the whole new realm of adult-performance which includes vulgar dances and songs. The common man's way of looking at such performers is also portrayed well. All the characters, in this movie, used linguistic variety which is clearly different from the standardized variety of Hindi. Even the educated characters use the same variety. The linguistic variety is consistent throughout the movie and it's not just insertion of some words of some different variety in the Hindi phrases. The variety is so rustic that audience has to depend on the subtitles for complete and literal sense of the dialogues. For this film, the subtitles are available in English and Persian.



Courtesy: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parched>

'Parched' is a story of three female friends set in a small village of Rajasthan. It raises the issues of female sexuality, freedom and empathy. The day-to-day struggle of the female-folk in this small village and the dominant patriarchy are portrayed. The village is not specified. Though it is called a Hindi movie, almost all the characters use the Hindi with a mixture of many Gujarati words. There are two educated characters that use some standardized Hindi as well as English. We are not sure how authentic variety of Hindi is this. But, for a person who is not aware of Gujarati language or some of the Rajasthani varieties may find the dialogues difficult to comprehend. For this movie, one can find the subtitles in Persian, French, Greek, Indonesian, Malayalam, and Sinhala, apart from English. The movie was first screened at Toronto International Film Festival 2015 and it was also nominated at 10<sup>th</sup> Asia Pacific Screen Awards (for screenplay). In terms of box-office, the film was most successful in France and Spain.



Courtesy: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Talvar\\_\(film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Talvar_(film))

'*Talvar*' is a double-murder mystery inspired from the real events. The entire movie is about this double-murder and its investigation by police and other national agencies. The entire film is set in the city of Noida. Interestingly, there is no hint of any linguistic variation; everyone – including the Nepali compounder and the security guard – speaks standardized variety of Hindi. It is understandable that the South Indian and Punjabi officers of CDI speak Hindi quite fluently as they are trained, but the Nepalis who work in the city also speak fluent and flawless Hindi without any variation of accent; there were five Nepali characters. There are no indigenous metaphors developed which are different from the standardized variety of Hindi. And not a single character uses a single abusive word in the entire movie. Arabic, English, Persian, French, Indonesian, Italian, Spanish, and Vietnamese subtitles are available for this movie. The film was screened at 2015 Toronto International Film Festival, 2015 BFI London Film Festival and Busan International Film Festival.



Courtesy: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guddu\\_Rangeela](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guddu_Rangeela)

“*Guddu Rangeela*” is a revenge drama with a background of caste-ism in the state of Haryana. Almost all the characters use the accented variety of Hindi spoken in the state; but the most conspicuously different variety is used by the antagonist, Billu Pehlwan. The possible explanation could be the identity built-up. Only the outsiders used the ‘standardized’ variety of Hindi. Some expressions are so different that one needs to depend on context or subtitle. Here also, we can see a little difference between the linguistic usage of educated and uneducated characters. For this movie, you can have subtitles in English and Arabic.

There is something unusual in the languages of the subtitles available. One cannot find the subtitles of the movies in Hindi. One can easily find the English subtitles for the English movies, but finding a Hindi subtitles for Hindi movies or even for the movies in many other languages is very difficult, if not impossible. Recently, the Gujarati film ‘*Hellaro*’ (2019) is screened, and the theatres provide the English subtitles even in the state of Gujarat. There are no Gujarati or Hindi subtitles available. Both ‘*Talvar*’ and ‘*Parched*’ are screened at international film festivals and hence one can find subtitles for these movies in many languages. Subtitles are also created considering the possible audience of the movie. In the movie, ‘*Guddu Rangeela*’, the subtitles for all the abusive words are presented with asterisk, not giving the complete word for them, and the proper names like ‘Saddam’ and ‘Obama’ are maintained, but ‘Meena Kumari’ is not maintained in the subtitles. Based on this, it can be said that the subtitles are prepared for

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young Indian audience. Subtitles for the movie ‘Parched’ maintain all the abusive words, in case of unavailability, English abusive words are replaced. At the same time, famous proper names are not maintained, for example Indira Gandhi, Salma Agha, and Ramayana. For the movie ‘Anarkali or Aarah’, again, similar pattern is followed, the cuss words are maintained in English, but some proper nouns are replaced by similar English nouns, for example, *Devdas* is replaced by Romeo, while *Majnu*, by Casanova. For the movie ‘*Talvar*’, no such special tools are needed, there were no abusive words. All these later three films target the international audience and hence their subtitles are made as comprehensible as possible. One advantage of subtitles is that they make the intentions of the characters clear.

## 5. Metaphors and Abusive Words

Languages are full of metaphorical expressions and abusive words. The varieties of Hindi used in the given movies are also rich in such expressions. Here, we are concentrating on the terms which are different from the standardized Hindi, means, unique to the discursive texts of the movies.

### 5.1 *Parched*

In terms of abusive words, there are two categories: first, the abusive words referring to sex and female genitals; and second, the simple words used to question the intelligence of the person, more like a word to insult. In the first category, one can find the same words used by other varieties of Hindi speakers. But, in second category, we can notice the creative and somewhat indigenous usage. The word used for girl is *maal*, which means ‘goods’ or ‘material’; thus, putting the girls in a category of non-humans, an article to be utilized. Some other words used in the movie are:

Table 5.1: Typical words/phrases used in the movie ‘Parched’ with their meaning and subtitles.

Usage	Translation	Subtitle
<i>Muee</i>	Dead (female)	---
<i>Lajjo raani</i>	Lovely queen	“Princess”
<i>saaLaa</i>	Brother-in-law (used as an abusive word)	---
<i>Ghaaghraa-chod</i>	Skirt-fucker	“Skirt-fucker”
<i>Haraami</i>	bastard	---
<i>Aaitam</i>	Item	“Hilarious”
<i>Mungi mar</i>	Die silently	“Duffer, quite !”

Apart from the words/phrases shown in the Table 5.1, some metaphors of animals are used to indicate the stupidity or simplicity. For example,

1. *bilkul gaay he* (Just like a cow), implying “very innocent” person.

2. *bakre kaa bacchaa* (baby goat), implying “idiot”
3. *khunte se bandh diyaa* (to tie to a pole), implying “got someone married”
4. *chikNaa saandh lage se* (handsome like a bull), implying “very handsome”

For them these animals which are their main source of income provide a spectrum of analogies to see the world around them. Both, male and female characters use the same abusive words. The females are married off as if they are some animals tied to some poles whether they like it or not and this fact is reflected in their linguistic practice as well. The females are normally compared with cows, which is a positive comparison meaning ‘innocent’, while the similar comparison for males may mean ‘an idiot’ instead of ‘innocent’.

Some proper and common names are used which are not mentioned in the subtitles. The dialogue runs as, “*padhi likhi ne indiraa gaandhi banane se*” (**literally**, Do you want to become *Indira Gandhi* after all these studies?) which is not subtitled at all. Here, *Indira Gandhi* is a proper name which refers to former Prime Minister of India. Her name is used as a metaphor for power. In another such instance, the proper name, ‘*Salma Agha*’ is subtitled as “Marilyn Monroe”. *Salma Agha* is a Pakistani born British bollywood actress who was active during 1980s and famous for her beauty and singing. Her name is used as a metaphor for beauty, here. Education has been associated with ‘collector’ at couple of times, especially for females, they said sarcastically; “*kolektarni banegi*” (will become collector). And the education is considered harmful for females and family structure; once it is said, “*padhi-likhi ne collector-magistrate bananaa se?*” (**Literally**, “Do you want to become collector or magistrate after all these studies?”) which is subtitled as “Girls who read make bad wives!” The subtitle, here, clears the intentions of the speaker.

## 5.2 *Anaarkali of Aarah*

Abusive words, in this case, are all related with female genitals and gender which is quite understandable as the protagonist, herself, is an adult entertainer and earns by singing and dancing on double meaning erotic songs in public. These abusive words are also quite normal in standardized form of Hindi. But, the interesting part is the words, which are not abusive in nature, are used as abusive words. See for example:

*Table 5.2: Simple words used as abusive words in ‘Anaarkali of Aarah’, with their meaning and subtitle*

Usage	Translation	Subtitle
<i>betaa</i>	Son	“Asshole”
<i>Raani</i>	Queen	“bitch”
<i>Maharani</i>	Great-queen	“drama-queen”

The words in Table 5.2 are used in a normal discourse with their stated dictionary meanings. In the movie, they have been used in a derogatory manner and they were subtitled as direct abuse. I haven't included the other abusive words with sexual connotations as they are same as used in standardized Hindi.

This movie used the metaphors from the domain of food. Even the name *Anaarkali* is shortened to *Anaar* meaning “pomegranate”, which reminds us of the famous Hindi proverb – “*ek anaar, sou bimaar*”, literally, ‘one pomegranate, and hundred patients’, implies that many people are after a single thing or person. This is exactly the position of *Anaarkali*, the protagonist, in the movie. The other terms used for her are mentioned below:

1. *desi tandoor* (Indian tandoor) implying “very hot, chilly and ready to serve” (used for the woman – the protagonist)
2. *anaarkali angaaraa* (*Anaarkali* on-fire) based on the analogy of the popular dish “Chicken-*angaaraa*”
3. *man ghughani aur mizaaz parothaa ho gayaa* (people went berserk with enjoyment), here, *ghughani* is a Bihari food item and *parothaa* is a type of bread used in North India. This is one of the most important dishes for middle-class, lower-middle class people, consumption of which is considered to be one of the best pleasures. Thus, the literal meaning is people's mind and mood turns to consume the delicacies like *ghughani* and *parothaa*. Normally, *mizaaz hariyal honaa* is used, i.e., “mood becomes fresh like green”, but here, to go with the food item, *hariyal* is replaced by the *parothaa*.
4. *lahsuniyaa* type *ki baat* (rubbish talk) “*lahsuniyaa*” refers to ‘garlic’
5. *laal tamaatar* (red, hot chilly) used for *Anaarkali*, it literally means ‘Red tomato’
6. *ab kadhaai aapkaa hai, tel aapkaa hai, ab usme puri chhaanie ke halwaa banaaie aap* (The oil is yours and so is the pan. Isn't it up to you if you want to make a pudding or a pancake?) It is spoken to reiterate the possession of *Anaarkali* and how she can be ‘consumed’ by the antagonist.

Interestingly, all the major metaphors used in the movie are based on edible items and almost all of them are used for the female protagonist. This fact implies that a female who performs in front of the people is more of an item of consumption and hence has to be ‘served’ hot (*angaaraa*) and spicy (*tandoor*). Such metaphors and easy comprehension of such metaphors also imply the societal mentality at large. At the same time, it also implies that the food is one of the most important things to derive the pleasure from, for the lower and lower middles class people. Their ultimate pleasure is associated with their taste buds and hence the food-metaphors have been so successfully used and understood in the movie.

There are some unique nouns mentioned in the movie which are subtitled in a very different way. There is a mention of ‘*sati saavitri*’, a name that has become an epitome of piousness in Indian mythologies. It was a name of a queen who sacrificed herself on the pier of her husband. But, here, this name is translated as ‘Goddess of Purity’; she is made into a Goddess. The name of famous Bollywood actress *Aishwarya Rai* is translated as ‘Beauty Queen’, although she is famous worldwide. The famous tragic character of *Devdaas* is translated as ‘Romeo’ drawing the analogy between two literary protagonists. At the same time, *Majnu* is subtitled as ‘Casanova’. Though the name of *Majnu* is associated with only one female *Lailaa*, the translation of ‘Casanova’ appears perfect in the given context as it is used for the lecherous traits of the character. When talking about the music, the studio owner says, “*Bihaari chalta hai*” in which ‘*Bihaari*’ is used for *Bhojpuri*; the other names are used as *ansaari-fansaari* implying ‘stupid, useless’. There is a dialogue which says, “*yahaan Mahaabhaarat chal rahaa hai, uhaa Raamaayan shuru ho gayaa*”, which mentions the names of two epic poems, the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*. The names of these poems are used to metaphorically indicate the drama in their lives; they were not subtitled. *Lankaa-kaand* term is used for ‘shameful event’ which is yet another reference to the epic. Such references signify the ever-connectedness with the cultural-mythological baggage of the society, which has become part of their day-to-day practices and thinking process.

### 5.3 *Talvar*

This movie is an exceptional case out of four as it doesn’t provide any linguistic variation, no indigenous metaphors or abusive words. The film strictly follows the standardized variety of Hindi.

### 5.4 *Guddu Rangeela*

Many abusive words from standardized Hindi have been used in the movie but most of them are wiped out from subtitles. In case of proper names, in most of the instances, the same name is used in the subtitles. All the major characters are either thieves or underworld-dons and hence we cannot expect a sophisticated language. Let us first look at some unique abusive words used in the movie in the table below:

Table 5.3: Abusive words used in the movie ‘*Guddu-Rangeela*’ with their translation and subtitles provided in the movie

Usage	Translation	Subtitle
<i>Saale</i>	Brother-in-law, used derogatorily	--
<i>Pichhwaadaa</i>	Rear (body part), ass	--
<i>Kathor</i>	Hard (strong hearted man)	--
<i>Tere chiche kaa jalandhar maaru</i>	Harm you in indirect manner	--
<i>Saalaa</i>	Brother-in-law, used derogatorily	“rascal”



<i>Fati padi hai</i>	Scared as fuck	“sc****”
<i>Do kaudi ki laundiya</i>	Woman of no value	“cheap b****”
<i>Maa ki aankh</i>	Eye of the mother (used derogatorily)	“do hell with”

It is noteworthy that the abusive words have been put in subtitles in a very neutral sense, avoiding all the taboo aspects from them. They have also employed the use of asterisk (\*) to hide the complete word, which is normally the feature of social media.

Good number of metaphorical expressions are also used which are typical and different from standardized variety. Some of the usages are given below:

1. *tijori thandi* (safe was cold) implying that ‘safe was empty’.
2. *pichhwaade me dam nahi* (**literally**, no strength in ass), implying that the person was without courage.
3. *meri paarti hai* (this is my party), this is my heist; normally ‘party’ means “customer” in nativized terms, here, “Party” is equal to Heist, the house of heist is considered a customer.
4. *uski kheti* (his farm) here it means, his (God’s) will.
5. *bhaai* (brother) here it is used for Don, Goon.
6. *bajaate jaadaa ho* (play a lot) implying that they make others dance on their tunes.
7. *afim ki pudiyaa* (packet of opium) used for the heroin, implying that she is troublesome and cannot be easily kept hidden.
8. *yo bhi langot pahene* (He also wears underwear) here, ‘underwear’ signifies masculinity, the sentence is a sarcastic remark which means “He is a man too.”
9. *kaun saa nau kaa pahaadaa hai?* (This is not a table of ninth) It is not very difficult to understand.

There is no specific design or area from which the metaphors are taken from but majority of them are not used in standardized variety of Hindi. Apart from this, plenty of proper names are used to mean something else. The protagonist, Rangeela, is described as *Mirpur ke Kumar Sanu* (Kumar Sanu of Mirpur), here, Mirpur is the name of the town and Kumar Sanu is a famous Hindi singer. The names are kept as they are in subtitles. The expression *saabaash mere Bill Gates* (Bravo, my Bill Gates) was not provided any subtitle, but the term Bill Gates is used to imply someone very rich. “*Sholay ke Jai-Veeru hai*” (You two are Jai-Veeru of Sholay), here, “*Sholay*” is the name of a famous Hindi film and Jai-Veeru were the protagonists of the film who were famous for their bravery. The terms are used for the protagonists Guddu and Rangeela. “*Tum to Santa-Banta nikle*” (You turned out to be Santa-Banta), again used for protagonists, Santa-Banta are famous characters from jokes. In subtitles, they have mentioned Sholay, Jai and Veeru; but not Santa-Banta. The Sholay metaphor is extended and called the heroin ‘The

Thakur' from the movie that employs Jai and Veeru to capture the villain. Here, the heroin hires the protagonists to capture Billu. The word *Daku Haseena* (Female bandit) is subtitled as "danger". And the name *Meena Kumari* (She was an Indian film actress and was famous for tragic roles) is subtitled as "Emotional person". The word *Tees Maar Khaa* (The terms is normally used for someone who is very adventurous) is subtitled as 'Superman'. There is a mention of 'Saddam Hussein', which is subtitled as 'Saddam'. An expression, *Gulaab Singh naam hai meraa* is subtitled as "My name is Gulaab Singh and I'm the Boss" where the second part is taken from the attitude with which the first part is spoken.

## 6. Comprehensibility

If we observe Saussure's Speech-circuit (Saussure 2011: 11-13) which says that the communication is a process involving heads; it is elaborated as Speaker A develops a message in his/her mind (psychological) and then utters (physiological) it; listener B listens to the message (physiological) and sends it to the mind to comprehend (psychological). The listener B assumes the role of the speaker and the utterance runs through the same procedure. It assumes that both A and B have the same level of linguistic knowledge. The circuit doesn't account for context of the communication, the relation between A and B, and above all, advocates the fixed code in the minds of A and B, i.e., both A and B have the same concepts for the forms triggered by the communication. As Saussure (2011: 13) puts, "Through the functioning of the receptive and coordinating faculties, impressions that are perceptibly the same for all are made on the minds of the speakers." In integrational linguistics and semiology, such a perception of speech-circuit is labeled as 'Telementational Model' and the fixed one-to-one relationship between the signifier and the signified is termed 'fixed-code' theory. For a detail discussion on Telementational model check Harris (1998), Taylor (1998) and Toolan (1998) and the references cited there and for a discussion on 'fixed-code', one can refer to Love (1998).

The practice of communication doesn't go with Saussure's Speech-circuit or one-to-one relation of signifier and signified. Let us take few examples from the selected movies:

1. *Bakre kaa bacchaa samajaa se?*  
Goat possessive marker child believe auxiliary (Present)  
Am I a billy to you? (**Subtitled:** "You think I'm an idiot.")



*Image 6.1: A frame from the movie 'Parched'*

The words like ‘*bakre*’, ‘*bacchaa*’ and ‘*samajaa*’ are used both in Hindi as well as in Gujarati; ‘*kaa*’, the masculine possessive marker is used in Hindi and “*se*” – auxiliary is used in some varieties of Gujarati, and Rajasthani varieties of Hindi. As a non-native speaker of Hindi, I, like most of the audience, did not find any problem in comprehending the literal and metaphorical meanings of the utterance. But, if we go by Saussure’s Speech-circuit and his belief in the sign system, we would never reach the intended meaning of the utterance. As mentioned above, the movie employs metaphors based on animals; this is one example of such metaphors. The sign ‘*bakre kaa bacchaa*’ (Baby-goat or Billy) stands for “stupidity”, the correlation between the signifier and signified is not a-priori. No dictionary defines this word, the way it is used here.

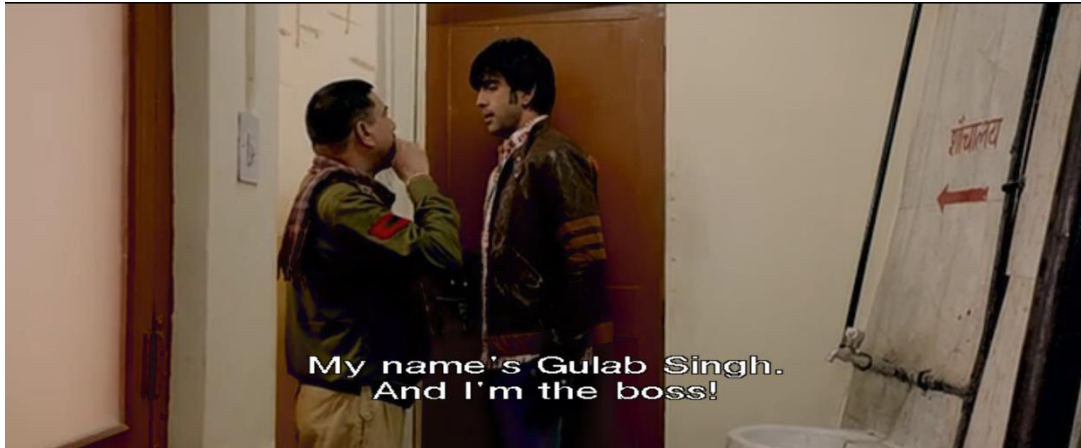
2. *e mahaa-raani, nikal.*  
 hey great-queen, come out.  
 Great queen, come out. (**Subtitled:** Hey, drama queen. Get up, come out.)



Figure 6.2: A frame from the movie 'Anarkali or Aarah'

The dialogue, here, is spoken by the female protagonist's band-master from the movie 'Anarkali of Aarah'. Anarkali is in the prison and her band-master bails her. When the dialogue is spoken, Anarkali is still inside the prison but the door of the prison is open. As per the fixed code approach, it can be 'only' comprehended that the character is talking to the 'great-queen', as the word bears this meaning. For us, the utterance seems inappropriate because the very next word after "queen" is an imperative in Hindi, which contradicts the style of talking with the people of great social status, like the queen in this case. This fact and the context in which it is spoken lead us to interpret the utterance in a different manner. We do not have any problem in interpreting the word "*mahaa-raani*" as a sarcastic remark. The word is subtitled as "drama-queen" which fits the given text and context.

3. *Gulaab Singh naam hai meraa*  
 Gulab Singh name is my  
 My name is Gulab Singh. (**Subtitled:** "My name's Gulab Singh and I am the Boss!")



*Figure 6.3: A frame from the movie 'Guddu-Rangeela'*

According to Telementational Approach, this is an utterance in which Speaker A, i.e. Gulab Singh, makes a statement through which he tells his name to Hearer B, i.e., Audience and another character on screen. The approach does not consider anything more. But, when we actually look at the context of this utterance, we realize that the utterance is redundant. Contextually, it is spoken in the middle of the movie, and it is not an introductory scene for the character. In fact, audience is already aware about the name as well as characteristics of the speaker. Second important point is how it is spoken. It is not spoken as a statement to provide information; it is spoken with a tone of authority: a police officer telling this to a small-time thief. The intention of the utterance is to establish an authority. Considering these three aspects – context, tone, and intention – we come to understand that it is not merely an informative statement. It is intended to convey the authority in the given situation and the other character is supposed to accept the authority of the speaker.

There is no means of knowing whether the utterances and the lexical items containing in those utterances are clearly understood or not. The Saussurean Telementational approach argues that 'speakers and hearers do not possess any ideas other than those given to them by the signs of their language' (Taylor 1998: 200). Our issue, here, is a step ahead because we are talking about various varieties used in the movies, not a single language, hence not a single signifying system. Interestingly, the audience doesn't have any problem in comprehending the varieties of Hindi used in Rajasthan, Haryana and Bihar, which means there is something more to communication than just linguistic codes. Communication is a process in which meaning-making is paramount and hence the signs used by the interlocutors are contextually significant.

## **7. Revisiting Semantic Enclave**

Though all the films mentioned above are considered Hindi, all of them have used written English; on the other hand, written Hindi is not used at all, except for the title. The spoken varieties are altogether a different issue; almost all films use some variety other than

standardized Hindi, albeit in a very limited sense. But, above three films out of four, use variety prominently and the standardized Hindi is on the periphery. The appreciation of this work solely depends on the impact these multi-semiotic systems make on the audience.

For communication to take place, the sign system in which it is encoded needs to be deciphered correctly. The primary goal of any cinematic communication is to appeal to the audience and earn the profit out of it; the message of the movie is, though important, secondary. The strategy of the said appeal is how the message is conveyed, and this ‘how’ is more important than the ‘what’ of the message. Various semiotic systems – visual signs, written linguistic signs, standardized language, varieties, etc. – used, fall in this notion of ‘how’. To be noticed and generating curiosity are very important here, especially from the point of view of the market. Thus, semantic enclave, for the cinema, is not an outcome of some stylistic mode but a necessity.

It is also important to see the scenario from the perspective of the receiver of cinematic communication, i.e. the audience. Cinema-going is a communicative event, and the goal of this event is, primarily, to get enjoyment. The audience is a passive participant here; they cannot reply back to the message of the cinema, they, just, can receive. The ultimate feedback is the emotional acceptance of the message being conveyed. In case of the movies related with regional issues, the case turns out to be little different. The characters are being seen as “exotic others”, somewhat similar to seeing the animals in the zoo. Their complaints and cries are strange and queer as they speak in a different signifying system.

The distribution of standardized language and linguistic variety is not arbitrary. On the first look, we feel that they are distributed between educated and uneducated characters. But, the educated characters also used the regional variety in *Parched* and *Anarkali of Aarah*; and even the uneducated characters also use the standardized variety in *Talvar*. The real segregation is between the urban versus the rural: all the urban characters use standardized variety, while the rural, non-standardized. This fact, unconsciously, helps in pushing the bias that the urban people are well-educated and, in a way better than the people of rural background. Under such situation, cinema itself becomes a meta-sign. These films having a multiplex audience passes the statement that denigrates the rural life. In a way, it conveys the idea that these problems are problems because of the rural life-style and illiteracy. It puts the problem away from the main-stream discourse. The audience sees it “as the exotic ‘otherness’” which is not going to affect them out of the cinema-hall.

## 8. Concluding Remarks

The issues narrated in the films directly question the mainstream narrative of development and equality. The micronarratives of inequality are manifested in linguistic forms as well; the regional and standardized varieties are distributed in terms of rural and urban

characters respectively which are not an authentic distribution. The plight of women, lower class, and exploited class is represented in detail and appropriate vernacular metaphors are also developed. But, due to the exotic nature of the code used by them, their problems are not taken as the problems of the general public by the audience. The semantic enclave of the cinematic text is part of this larger discourse where the codes are for the aesthetic purposes, the basic comprehensibility of the text is primary concern, though. Absence of subtitles in the regional languages, including standardized Hindi, is also a significant aspect.

Indian multilingualism is full of prejudices against ‘the others’; these ‘others’ may be defined in terms of other language families, languages, or linguistic varieties. The three language formula is gradually moving towards ‘English Medium’ formula which makes the things even narrower. The kind of creoles used for the cinematic purposes, gives the impression that the given characters are not competent enough in the standardized languages. It is unable to convince the audience that another code to express the same idea and pain is also valid. As mentioned above, Hindi cinema could be a very important tool for the spread of Hindi language, but this is just about standardized Hindi language. The regional varieties in all their (mis)representations have to succumb to the ‘favored’ forms. With each submission, you will lose a folk-tradition and capacity to express yourself in the dust and jungle of the province.

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## **AN INTRODUCTORY COURSE ON SEMANTICS AND PRAGMATICS**

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Prof. Rajendran Sankaravelayuthan

*AN INTRODUCTORY COURSE ON SEMANTICS AND PRAGMATICS*



### **FOREWORD**

This monograph has been compiled by me for introducing semantics and pragmatics to the students of some correspondence course. It is a compiled work written in the style of a correspondence course. I was planning to expand it with Tamil examples and make it a comprehensive one. But I could not find time to do it. And moreover it was lying in my lap since long. I thought it should see the light. So I am presenting it as such here. If I find time I will elaborate it to suit the Tamil students and scholars and make it a full-fledged version on semantics and pragmatics focusing on Tamil.

RAJENDRAN SANKARAVELAYUTHAN

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## AIM

The aim of the subject of study is to give a brief introduction to semantics and pragmatics. Semantics is the study of meaning. More precisely it is the study of the relation between linguistic expressions and their meanings. Pragmatics is the study of context. More precisely it is the study of the way context can influence our understanding of linguistic utterances.

## UNIT 1

### NATURE AND SCOPE OF SEMANTICS

#### CONTENT

- 1.1. Concept and definition of semantics
  - 1.1.1. Concept of semantics
  - 1.1.2. The definition of semantics
- 1.2. Brief history of semantics
- 1.3. Semantics and other Disciplines
- 1.4 Major Concerns of Semantics
- 1.5. Approaches to the study of semantics
  - 1.5.1 Traditional Semantics
  - 1.5.2 Behavioural Semantics
  - 1.5.3 Structural Semantics
  - 1.5.4 Generative Semantics
- 1.6. Branches of semantics
  - 1.6.1. Lexical semantics
  - 1.6.2. Grammatical semantics
  - 1.6.3. Logical semantics
  - 1.6.4. Linguistics and pragmatics

#### OVERVIEW

The term semantics simply means the study of meanings. The study explores how meaning in language is produced or created. Semantics not only concentrates on how words express meaning but also on how words, phrases and sentences come together to make meaning in language. To start with, you will be motivated to focus on the nature and scope of semantics. Hence, here in this unit, you will be introduced

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to the concept and definition semantics, brief history of semantics, semantics and other disciplines, major concern of semantics, and the different approaches to the study of semantics.

The symbols employed in language must be patterned in a systematic way. You have been already informed that language is organized at four principal levels – sounds (i.e. Phonetics/phonology), words (i.e. Morphology), sentences (i.e. syntax) and meaning (i.e. semantics). Phonology and syntax are concerned with the expressive power of language while semantics studies the meaning of what has been expressed. Knowledge of grammar is an aspect of the innate cognitive ability of human beings. The power of interpretation complements that innate ability. Interpretation is an aspect of semantics. Therefore, language acquisition or learning includes not only the knowledge of the organization of sounds and structures, but also how to associate meaning to the structures. Semantics can, therefore, be characterized as the scientific study of meaning in language.

Semantics has been the subject of discourse for many years for philosophers and other scholars but later was introduced formally in literature in the late 1800's. Hence, we have philosophical semantics and linguistic semantics among other varieties of semantics. Earlier scholars in philosophical semantics were interested in pointing out the relationship between linguistic expressions and identified phenomena in the external world. In the contemporary world, especially in the United States philosophical semantics has led to the development of *semiotics*. In some other parts of the world, and especially, France, the term semiology has been favoured. The reliance on logical calculations in issues of meaning has led to the development of logical semantics. However, for your purpose in this course, emphasis is on linguistic semantics, with our interest on the properties of natural languages. You shall see how this study relates to other disciplines. We shall also examine the real issues in linguistic semantics.

Semantics has been identified as a component of linguistics. In its widest sense, linguistics is the scientific study of language. As a field of study, semantics is related to other disciplines. In semantics, we study the meaning of words and also how the meanings of words in a sentence are put together to form sentential meaning. Linguistic semantics studies meaning in a systematic and objective way. Since meaning as a concept is not static, a great deal of the idea of meaning still depends on the context and participants in the act of communication (discourse). There is a strong connection between meaning and pragmatics. The exchange or relay of information, message, attitude, feelings or values from one person to another contributes to the interpretation of meaning. This is done mainly by the use of language. It is often expressed that language is a system which uses a set of symbols agreed upon by a group to

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communicate their ideas or message or information. These symbols can be spoken or written, expressed as gestures or drawings.

Depending upon the focus of study, semantics can be compartmentalized as lexical semantics, grammatical semantics, logical semantics and semantics in relation to pragmatics.

## **LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

At the completion of this unit, you should be able to:

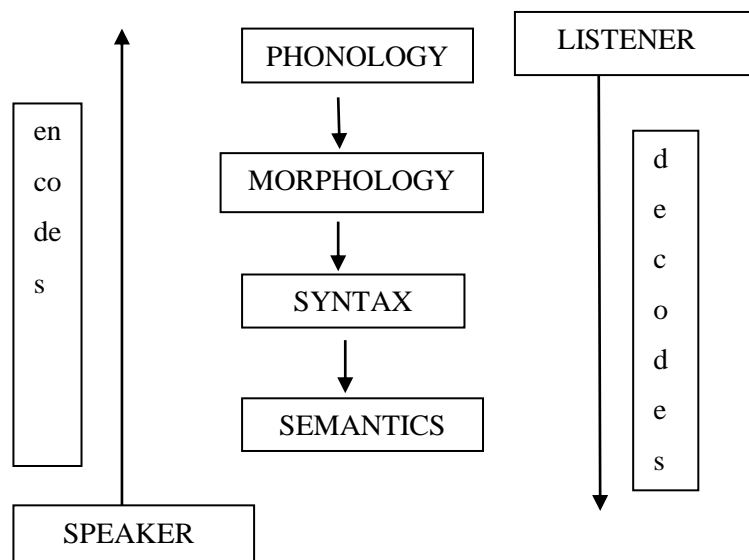
- define and explain the concept and definition of semantics
- trace the beginnings of Linguistic Semantics
- explain how semantics relates to other disciplines; and
- discuss the main areas of focus in semantics
- highlight different approaches to the study of semantics; and
- point out the merits and demerits of each of the approaches and
- discuss the important branches of semantics

### **1.1. The concept and definition of semantics**

#### **1.1.1. The Concept of Semantics**

When you communicate using language, you convert or decode your thought (meaningful expression) into a series of sounds or alphabets and the listener decodes the sounds or alphabets into meaningful expression. It is the grammar which helps you to encode your thought into speech or written signals or decode the encoded speech or written signals into meaningful expression. If you don't know the grammar, the given speech or written text will be simply a series of sounds or alphabets for you. You might have learned from the introduction to linguistics that the grammar has at least four levels of analysis: (1) phonology which decodes sounds or phones into functional sound units or phonemes of the given language, (2) morphology which decodes the series of phonemes into morphemes (the minimal meaningful units of a language) and morphemes into words (3) syntax which decodes the words into phrases, phrases into clauses and clauses into sentences and (3) semantics which decodes syntactic out

put into meaningful representation. You can represent the above information as given in the following diagram (Leech 1981:11).



The word 'semantics' is still a puzzle and has been interpreted and defined in many ways depending on the interest of the scholars who defined it. For example, the logicians, philosophers and linguists have different definitions for the word semantics. Ogden and Richard (1923) and Bloomfield (1933) looked at the science for the clarification of semantic concepts. The problem of Ogden's and Richard's and Bloomfield's approaches to meaning arises mainly from their determination to explain semantics in terms of other scientific disciplines. It is mistaken to try to define meaning by reducing it to the terms of science rather than the science of language. Meaning has to be studied as a linguistic phenomenon in its own right, not as something 'outside language'. As a linguist you are interested in recognizing relations of meaning between sentences, and in recognizing which sentences are meaningful and which are not. You wish to distinguish the 'knowledge of the language' from the 'knowledge of the world' (Leech 1981:21). Here you are concerned with linguistics semantics and so semantics is the way to interpret units of language such as morpheme, word, phrase and sentence. It is the meaning that distinguishes one linguistic unit from another unit.



Study of meaning is one of the major areas of linguistic study. Linguists have approached it in a variety of ways. Members of the school of interpretive semantics study the structures of language independent of their conditions of use. In contrast, the advocates of generative semantics insist that the meaning of sentences is a function of their use. Still another group maintains that semantics will not advance until theorists take into account the psychological questions of how people form concepts and how these relate to word meanings.

### 1.1.2. The Definition of Semantics

Semantics as a term was first formally used by Breal in 1897. Hence, we can deduce that Breal was the first to bring to the fore in a formally acceptable way, the nature of meaning in language. Though the quest for the understanding of meaning has always been of interest to scholars, semantics was not mentioned as a term and did not come up in literature until 1897 when it was first used by Breal. This first attempt to study meanings by philosophers brought about the area of semantics called philosophical semantics which examines the relationship between linguistic expressions and the phenomena they refer to in the external world. Philosophical semantics focuses on examining the conditions under which such linguistic expressions and the phenomena they refer to are true or false. This can be traced to as far back as Plato's and Aristotle's works.

However, contemporary philosophical semantics can be traced to the works of the following authors: Rudolf Carnap [1891 - 1970], Alfred Tarski [Born 1902] and Charles Peirce [1839 - 1914]. According to Peirce, philosophical semantics developed as *Semiotics* in America while with the influence of Saussure in France, the term *Semiology* was used. However, the idea of truth-based semantics was Tarski's major contribution. Linguistic semantics emphasizes the properties of natural languages while pure or logical semantics is the study of the meaning of expressions using logical systems or calculi. Examining semantics in this dimension makes it more mathematically related than linguistic in nature. It is important to note that the discussion of semantics as a branch of linguistics began recently and this shall be our next focus.

You have noted that semantics has its origin in philosophy. Earlier scholars in philosophical semantics were interested in pointing out the relationship between linguistic expressions and identified phenomena in the external world. In the contemporary world, especially in the United States philosophical semantics has led to the development of *semiotics*. In some other parts of the world, and especially, France, the term

*semiology* has been favoured. The reliance on logical calculations in issues of meaning has led to the development of *logical semantics*. However, for our purpose in this course, emphasis is on *linguistic semantics*, with our interest on the properties of natural languages. You shall see how this study relates to other disciplines. We shall also examine the real issues in linguistic semantics.

### LEARNING ACTIVITY 1.1.

- (1) Define semantics.
- (2) Describe the levels of grammar which link sounds with meaning.

### 1.2. Brief History of Semantics

It has often been pointed out, and for obvious reasons, that semantics is the youngest branch of linguistics. Yet, interest in what we call today "problems of semantics" was quite alive already in ancient times. In ancient Greece, philosophers spent much time debating the problem of the way in which words acquired their meaning. The question why is a thing called by a given name, was answered in two different ways.

Some of them believed that the names of things were arrived at naturally, *physei*, that they were somehow conditioned by the natural properties of things themselves. They took great pains to explain for instance that a letter like "rho" seems apt to express motion since the tongue moves rapidly in its production. Hence its occurrence in such words as *rhoein* ("to flow"), while other sounds such as /s, f, ks/, which require greater breath effort in production, are apt for such names as *psychron* ("shivering") or *kseon* ("shaking"), etc. The obvious inadvertencies of such correlations did not discourage philosophers from believing that it is the physical nature of the sounds of a name that can tell us something about its meaning.

Other philosophers held the opposite view, namely that names are given to things arbitrarily through convention, *thesei*. The *physei-thesei* controversy or *physis-nomos* controversy is amply discussed in Plato's dialogue *Cratylus*. In the dialogue, Cratylus appears to be a part of the *physei* theory of name acquisition, while Hermogenes defends the opposite, *nomos* or their point of view. The two positions are then debated by Socrates in his usual manner. In an attempt to mediate between the two discussants he points out first of all that there are two types of names. Some are compound names which are divisible

into smaller constituent element and accordingly, analyzable into the meaning of these constituent elements: *Poseidon* derives his name from *posi* ("for the feet") and *desmos* ("fetter") since it was believed that it was difficult for the sea god to walk in the water.

Socrates points out that the words in themselves, give us no clue as to their "natural" meaning, except for the nature of their sounds. Certain qualities are attributed to certain types of sounds and then the meaning of words is analyzed in terms of the qualities of the sounds they are made of. When faced with abundant examples which run counter the apriori hypothesis: finding a "l" sound ("lambda") "characteristic of liquid movements" in the word *sklerotes* ("hardness") for instance, he concludes, in true Socratic fashion, that "we must admit that both convention and usage contribute to the manifestation of what we have in mind when we speak".

In two other dialogues, *Theatetus* and *Sophists*, Plato dealt with other problems such as the relation between thought language, and the outside world. In fact, Plato opened the way for the analysis of the sentence in terms which are partly linguistic and partly pertaining to logic. He was dealing therefore with matters pertaining to syntactic semantics, the meaning of utterances, rather than the meaning of individual words.

Aristotle's works (*Organon* as well as *Rhetoric* and *Poetics*) represent the next major contribution of antiquity to language study in general and semantics in particular. His general approach to language was that of a logician, in the sense that he was interested in what there is to know how men know it, and how they express it in language and it is through this perspective that his contribution to linguistics should be assessed. In the field of semantics proper, he identified a level of language analysis - the lexical one - the main purpose of which was to study the meaning of words either in isolation or in syntactic constructions. He deepened the discussion of the polysemy, antonymy, synonymy and homonymy and developed a full-fledged theory of metaphor.

The contribution of stoic philosophy to semantics is related to their discussion of the nature of linguistic sign. In fact, as it was pointed out centuries ahead of Ferdinand de Saussure, the theory of the Janus-like nature of the linguistic sign - *semeion* - is an entity resulting from the relationship obtaining between the signifier - *semainon* - (i.e. the sound or graphic aspect of the word), the signified - *semainomenon* (i.e. the notion) and the object thus named - *tynkhanon* -, a very clear distinction, therefore, between reference and

meaning as postulated much later by Ogden and Richards in the famous "triangle" that goes by their name.

Etymology was also much debated in antiquity; but the explanations given to changes in the meaning and form of words were marred on the one hand by their belief that semantic evolution was always unidirectional, from a supposedly "correct" initial meaning, to their corruption, and, on the other hand, by their disregard of phonetic laws.

During the Middle Ages, it is worth mentioning in the field of linguistics and semantics the activity of the "Modistae" the group of philosophers so named because of their writings *On the Modes of Signification*. These writings were highly speculative grammars in which semantic considerations held an important position. The "Modistae" adopted the "thesei" point of view in the "physei-thesei" controversy and their efforts were directed towards pointing out the "modi intelligendi", the ways in which we can know things, and the "modi significandi", the various ways of signifying them.

It may be concluded that throughout antiquity and the Middle Ages, and actually until the 19<sup>th</sup> century almost everything that came to be known about meaning in languages was the result of philosophic speculation and logical reasoning. Philosophy and logic were the two important sciences which left their strong impact on the study of linguistic meaning.

It was only during the 19<sup>th</sup> century that semantics came into being as an independent branch of linguistics as a science in its own right. The first words which confined themselves to the study of semantic problems as we understand them today, date as far back as the beginning of the last century.

In his lectures at Halle University, the German linguist Ch. C. Reisig was the first to formulate the object of study of the new science of meaning which he called *semasiology*. He conceived the new linguistic branch of study as a historical science studying the principles governing the evolution of meaning.

Towards the end of the century (1897), M. Bréal published an important book *Essay de sémantique* which was soon translated into English and found an immediate echo in France as well as in other countries of Europe. In many ways it marks the birthday of semantics as a modern linguistic discipline. Bréal did not only provide the name for the new science, which became general in use, but also circumscribed more clearly its subject-matter.

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The theoretical sources of semantic linguistics outlined by Bréal are, again, classical logic and rethorics, to which the insights of an upcoming science, namely, psychology are added. In following the various changes in the meaning of words, interest is focused on identifying certain general laws governing these changes. Some of these laws are arrived at by the recourse to the categories of logic: extension of meaning, narrowing of meaning, transfer of meaning, while others are due to a psychological approach, degradation of meaning and the reverse process of elevation of meaning.

Alongside these theoretical endeavours to "modernize" semantics as the youngest branch of linguistics, the study of meaning was considerably enhanced by the writing of dictionaries, both monolingual and bilingual. Lexicographic practice found extensive evidence for the categories and principles used in the study of meaning from antiquity to the more modern approaches of this science: polysemy, synonymy, homonymy, antonymy, as well as for the laws of semantic change mentioned above.

The study of language meaning has a long tradition in Romania. Stati mentioned (1971: 184) Dimitrie Cantemir's contribution to the discussion of the difference between categorematic and syncategorematic words so dear to the medieval scholastics.

Lexicography attained remarkably high standards due mainly to B. P. Hasdeu. His *Magnum Etymologicum Romaniae* ranks with the other great lexicographic works of the time.

In 1887, ten years ahead of M. Bréal, Lazar Saineanu published a remarkable book entitled *Incercare asupra semasiologiei limbei romane. Studii istorice despre tranzitiunea sensurilor*. This constitutes one of the first works on semantics to have appeared anywhere. Saineanu makes ample use of the contributions of psychology in his attempts at identifying the semantic associations established among words and the "logical laws and affinities" governing the evolution of words in particular and of language in general.

Although it doesn't contain an explicit theory of semantics, the posthumous publication of Ferdinand de Saussure's *Cours de linguistique générale* 1916, owing to the revolutionary character of the ideas on the study of language it contained, determined an interest for structure in the field of semantics as well.

Within this process of development of the young linguistic discipline, the 1921-1931 decade has a particular significance. It is marked by the publication of three important books: Jost Trier, *Der Deutsche Wortschatz im Sinnbezirk des Verstandes* (1931), G. Stern, *Meaning and Change of Meaning* (1931) and C. K. Ogden and J. A. Richards: *The Meaning of Meaning* (1923).

Jost Trier's book as well as his other studies which are visibly influenced by W. von Humboldt's ideas on language, represent an attempt to approach some of the Saussurean principles to semantics. Analyzing the meaning of a set of lexical elements related to one another by their content, and thus belonging to a semantic "field", Trier reached the conclusion that they were structurally organized within this field, in such a manner that the significative value of each element was determined by the position which it occupied within the respective field. For the first time, therefore, words were no longer approached in isolation, but analyzed in terms of their position within a larger ensemble - the semantic field - which in turn, is integrated, together with other fields, into an ever larger one. The process of subsequent integrations continues until the entire lexicon is covered. The lexicon therefore is envisaged as a huge mosaic with no piece missing.

Gustav Stern's work is an ambitious attempt at examining the component factors of meaning and of determining, on this ground, the causes and directions of changes of meaning. Using scientific advances psychology (particularly Wundt's psychology) Stern postulates several classifications and principles which no linguist could possibly neglect.

As regards Ogden and Richard's book, its very title *The Meaning of Meaning* is suggestive of its content. The book deals for the most part with the different accepted definitions of the word "meaning", not only in linguistics, but in other disciplines as well. It identifies no less than twenty-four such definitions. The overt endeavour of the authors is to confine semantic preoccupations to linguistic problems exclusively. The two authors have the merit of having postulated the triadic relational theory of meaning - graphically represented by the triangle that bears their names.

A short supplement appended to the book: *The Problem of Meaning in Primitive Languages* due to an anthropologist, B. Malinowski, was highly instrumental in the development of a new "contextual" theory of meaning advocated by the British school of linguistics headed by J. R. Firth (1935).

The following decades, more specifically the period 1930-1950 is known as a period of crisis in semantics. Meaning was all but completely ignored in linguistics particularly as an effect of the position adopted by L. Bloomfield, who considered that the study of meaning was outside the scope of linguistics proper. Its study falls rather within the boundaries of other sciences such as chemistry, physics, etc., and more especially psychology, sociology or anthropology. The somewhat more conciliatory positions which, without denying the role of meaning in language nevertheless allotted it but a marginal place within the study of language (Hockett, 1958), was not able to put an end to this period of crisis.

Reference to semantics was only made in extremis, when the various linguistic theories were not able to integrate the complexity of linguistic events within a unitary system. Hence the widespread idea of viewing semantics as a "refuge", as a vast container in which all language facts that were difficult to formalize could be disposed of.

The picture of the development of semantics throughout this period would be incomplete, were it not to comprise the valuable accumulation of data regarding meaning, all due to the pursuing of tradition methods and primarily to lexicographic practice.

If we view the situation from a broader perspective, it becomes evident that the so-called "crisis" of semantics, actually referred to the crisis of this linguistic discipline only from a structuralist standpoint, more specifically from the point of view of American descriptivism. On the other hand, however, it is also salient that the renovating tendencies, as inaugurated by different linguistic schools, did not incorporate the semantic domain until very late. It was only in the last years of the sixties that the organized attacks of the modern linguistic schools of different orientations were launched upon the vast domain of linguistic meaning.

At present meaning has ceased to be an "anathema" for linguistics. Moreover, the various linguistic theories are unanimous in admitting that no language description can be regarded as being complete without including facts of meaning in its analysis.

A specific feature of modern research in linguistics is the ever growing interest in problems of meaning. Judging by the great number of published works, by the extensive number of semantic theories which have been postulated, of which some are complementary, while some other are directly opposed, we are witnessing a period of feverish research, of effervescence, which cannot but lead to progress in semantics.

An important development in the direction of a psycholinguistic approach to meaning is Lakoff's investigation of the metaphorical basis of meaning (Lakoff and Johnson 1980). This approach draws on Elinor Rosch's notion of prototype, and adopts the view opposed to that of Chomsky, that meaning cannot be easily separated from the more general cognitive functions of the mind.

G. Leech considers that the developments which will bring most rewards in the future will be those which bring into a harmonious synthesis the insights provided by the three disciplines which claim the most direct and general interest in meaning: those of linguistics, philosophy and psychology.

### **LEARNING ACTIVITY 1.2.**

- (1) Trace the development of linguistic semantics.
- (2) What are the contributions of philosophers to the development of semantics?

### **1.3. Semantics and other Related Disciplines**

Meaning may be studied as a part of various academic disciplines. There is of course a significant degree of overlap between the disciplines, but characteristically all have something idiosyncratic and unique in their approach.

Semantics is a very broad field, since it involves the elements of the structure and function of language, which is closely related to psychology, philosophy and anthropology, and sociology. Anthropological interest in the field of semantics arises as the analysis of meaning in language can present language user in a practical culture. Philosophy is closely linked to semantics because the meaning of certain issues that can be explained philosophically (the meaning of phrases and proverbs). Psychology is closely related to the semantics for psychology utilizing human psychiatric symptoms displayed verbally and nonverbally. Sociology has an interest in semantics, because a certain phrase or expression can be adequate social group or a particular social identity. Hopefully in this discussion beneficial to us all and add to treasury of knowledge

Linguistic meaning has been a topic of philosophical interest since ancient times. In the first decades of the 20th century, it became one of the central concerns of philosophy in the English-speaking world. This



development can be attributed to an interaction of several trends in various disciplines. From the middle of the 19th century onward, logic, the formal study of reasoning, underwent a period of growth unparalleled since the time of Aristotle (384–322 BCE). Although the main motivation for the renewed interest in logic was a search for the epistemological foundations of mathematics, the chief protagonists of this effort—notably the German mathematician Gottlob Frege and the British philosopher Bertrand Russell—extended their inquiry into the domain of the natural languages, which are the original media of human reasoning. The influence of mathematical thinking, and of mathematical logic in particular, however, left a permanent mark on the subsequent study of semantics.

We recall that philosophy has been linked to the earliest postulation about meaning. There are still other disciplines that are relevant to semantics. A very strong ally of semantics is *logic*, itself, a branch of philosophy. Logical systems are known to exhibit coherent and consistent models for evaluating thought. Thus, logical postulations are the ideal but may not always reflect the real world in matters of language.

Semantics is also related to sociology and anthropology because of the connection between language and culture. The whole essence of cultural relevance in language justified the reliance on context for the meaning of expressions. Of particular interest to semantics is the intricate system of kinship terms and colour expressions.

By relying on the distinction between deep and surface meaning and the power of the human brain to generate many paraphrases of a single structure, semantics is related to psychology. Indeed, the mentalistic approach to meaning and language use, in the tradition of generative grammar, is a psychological issue. Furthermore, the approaches adopted by behavioural semantics in the stimulus – response connection in meaning are a purely psychological affair.

Semantics is also related to communication theory. Information is carried and processed in the communication system passing through the channel and the medium. The minimalisation of noise and the processing of feedback are aspects of the communication system. These are achieved by ensuring logical thinking.

### **LEARNING ACTIVITY 1.3.**

Briefly discuss how semantics is related to other disciplines.

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#### 1.4. Major Concerns of Semantics

Semantics is associated with different issues related to meaning including *naming*, *concept*, *sense* and *reference*. Naming as a semantic process derives from the understanding that words are names or labels for things. The major problem with this naming view of semantics is that it is only nouns and nominal expressions that can be analysed semantically. In addition, abstract nouns like love, hatred, truth will be difficult to explain since they are not living things.

There is a red bull in the park.

This will have meaning, only if there is a red bull in a particular park. Thus, sentences that are lies may not be interpreted.

Concepts mediate between the mind constructs and objects in the real world. Saussure's sign theory and Ogden and Richards, semantic triangle derives from the conceptual approach to semantics. The approach emphasises the power of the mind to make images and to associate these images to objects and ideas. The approach is highly mentalistic, relying on the ability to associate one thing with another. This ability of association may not yield universal understanding. That explains why language experts develop dictionaries to aggregate meaning on a universal basis. Interestingly, the production of dictionaries relies heavily on denotations and connotations, two major angles to the study of meaning.

Reference relates to things, people and events in the world. It is the object or entity to which a linguistic expression relates. Thus, the referent of the word *boy* is a human being called *boy*. If meaning were restricted to reference, many words without obvious referents will be left out. It will be difficult to explain the meaning of *prepositions*, *conjunctions* and other grammatical unit.

Again, several linguistic expressions may relate to single referents. To avoid these limitations, semanticists use the words *denotation* and *connotation* to distinguish between meaning based on ostensiveness (i.e. pointing) or reference and extension.

Another interesting area of concern for semantics is sense. Sense explains the system of linguistic relationships which a lexical item contracts with others. If that relationship is paradigmatic, we have **synonymy**, **antonymy**, *etc.* But if the relationship is syntagmatic, we have **collocation**.

The scope of semantics covers a wide range of issues related to meaning. These issues are discussed in the different segments of this material.

#### **LEARNING ACTIVITY 1.4.**

Briefly discuss about the major concern of semantics.

### **1.5. Approaches to the Study of Semantics**

You have learnt that the study of meaning in language has been of interest to both the linguist and the philosopher. It has also interested the general communicator. The study of semantics has developed from the earliest times to the modern period, giving it a historical view. That way, we can focus on four major approaches – traditional, behavioural, structural and generative perspectives.

#### **1.5.1 Traditional Semantics**

Traditional semantics is associated with the works of such great philosophers as Socrates, Plato and Aristotle as well as many others who came after them. Their main focus was on the nature of human language itself. Based on their views of the nature of human language, these early philosophers were divided into two – the naturalists and the nurturists.

To the naturalists, language was God-given such that there was hardly anything anybody could do to understand language. Man was not expected to make alterations, but should concern himself with merely observing and describing the rules of language. The Greek language was perceived to be the chosen language upon which all other languages should be based. Later, Latin became the focus of philosophical analysis.

The nurturists, on the other hand, viewed language as a social property common to a speech community. Language was therefore perceived to be man's creation for the convenience of communication. Thus, in spite of difference in languages, the uniting point is that they are all for communication.

Traditional semantics was also concerned with the relationship between form and meaning. The meaning of a word was considered as what it refers to. This view has also been shared by Ogden and Richards (1923). There have also been later scholars who believed that the image of a word takes shape in the speaker's or hearer's mind. Another major view of traditional semantics is that the meaning of a word can be decoded from its shape or sound. Words in this category are onomatopoeic. The major ideas in traditional semantics are reference, concepts, truth conditions etc.

### 1.5.2 Behavioural Semantics

The external environment is perceived to be the major stimulus to all human utterances. The stimulus-response scenario is synonymous with the cause and effect connection in most natural situations.

Those who favour the behavioural approach to semantics have argued that by reducing meaning to observable entities, language, as an aspect of human favour can lend itself to examination. They also argue that meaning is influenced by reinforcement. The theory stresses nurture rather than nature. Thus, the physical environment is perceived to contribute to meaning rather than the internal thought processes.

Though behaviourism tends to lend meaning to experimental explanation, it has been criticized for its rejection of introspection, concepts and ideas. It is not everything in language that can be observed physically. The over-reliance on reinforcement tends to present animal and human behaviour as identical.

### 1.5.3 Structural Semantics

The father of structuralism is Ferdinand de Saussure. Structuralism as a linguistic theory considers the structures and systems in language. Emphasis is on the process of segmenting and classifying the features of utterances.

Under structuralism, emphasis is on the analysis of sense relations that connect words and meaning. Sense is an expression of the system of semantic relationships a given word keeps with other expressions in a given language. This relationship is usually paradigmatic in terms of similarity and dissimilarity. The relationship of similarity occurs as synonymy, while the relationship of dissimilarity is referred to as antonymy. Structural processes are useful in lexical relations in the study of words.

### 1.5.4 Generative Semantics

Noam Chomsky is the father of generative grammar. According to the theory of transformational generative grammar, knowledge of language is generated in the mind. A language user has a finite set of rules from which he can generate an infinite number of sentences. This power of generations is facilitated by the power of transformational rules which convert deep structure sentence types into other various forms via transformations. At the beginning of Chomsky's generative grammar, there was the assertion that syntax was autonomous and independent of semantics. It was only later in *Aspects of the theory of Syntax* (1965) that Chomsky pointed out that the semantic component specifies the rules necessary for the interpretation of deep structures. This observation enhanced the semantic representation of sentences. Deep structures specify the original meaning of sentences before the application of transformations.

There was the immediate problem of explaining the meaning of multiple paraphrases from a single deep structure. Thus, generative semantics would be concerned with sentence meaning and interpretation. This will require the interpretation of functional roles in sentences. This interpretation has been explained by the Case theory as propounded by Charles Fillmore, and further elaborated in Chomsky's Case theory and Thematic theory.

The semantic component has been presented as being partially dependent on syntax and at the same time distinct. This produces a composite relationship between grammar and meaning. The deep structure is deemed to determine how sentence parts combine to make meaning for the whole. The syntactic component is the generative source of grammar. Thus, the output of syntax forms the input to the semantic component. The semantic component is perceived to operate on the structural description of sentences to provide a representation of the meaning of sentences. Grammar as used here is the totality of the mechanism and rules of language organization including meaning. As a result of the complexity of this theory, we shall have a more elaborate discussion of its implication in another unit. Perhaps the philosophical postulations of Aristotle provided impetus to critical thinking in semantics. Based on the major areas of concern, there have been traditional semantics, behavioural semantics, structural semantics and generative semantics.

#### LEARNING ACTIVITY 1.5.

(1) Discuss the contributions of the traditionalists to the development of semantics

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(2) Explore how Generative Grammar has featured in the study of semantics.

## 1.6. Branches of semantics

Cruse (2000:15) lists the following as the main broadly distinguishable areas of interest in the study of meaning: lexical semantics, grammatical semantics, logical semantics, and linguistic pragmatics. They are not watertight compartments and they may overlap with one another.

### 1.6.1. Lexical semantics

Lexical semantics studies the meanings of words; the focus is on 'content' words like *lion*, *jasmine*, *selfish* and *persuade*, rather than form/grammatical words like *the*, *of*, *than*, and so on. A non-specialist mostly links the notion of meaning with words rather than any other linguistic units which are lesser than words (such as affixes) or wider than words (such as phrases, sentences). We consider dictionary as the one which deals about words. The branch of semantics which systematically study the meaning words is lexical semantics.

### 1.6.2. Grammatical semantics

Grammatical semantics studies aspects of meaning which have direct relevance to syntax. This has many manifestations. which can only be briefly dealt here. Syntactic categories are one the problems in the interface of syntax and semantics. For instance, consider the problem of assigning category to the word yellow. It can be given the category such as adjective, noun and verb as illustrated below:

She wears a yellow skirt. (adjective)

He painted the room with a glowing yellow. (noun)

The leaves yellows rapidly in the winter.

Another aspect of grammatical semantics is the meaning of grammatical morphemes like the *-ed* of called, the *-er* of stronger, the *re-* of *reshuffle* and *al* of *central*.

You can clearly visualize that this overlaps with lexical semantics due to the fact that some grammatical elements (such as *the* and *of*) are words and also due another fact that some amount of grammatical behavior is determined by the lexical items themselves. The following examples will illustrate this:

I am studying the book - grammatical

I am knowing the book - ungrammatical

### 1.6.3. Logical semantics

Logical semantics studies the relation between natural language and formal logical systems such as the propositional and predicate calculi. Such studies usually aim at modeling natural language as closely as possible using a tightly controlled, maximally strict logical formalism (Cruse, 2000: 15). Sometimes such studies shed more light on the formalism used than on the language being modeled. But valuable insights have cropped up from this approach. Most of such studies till date are concerned with the propositional or sentence level meaning and they rarely stoop down the level of words.

There is always a sense of logic in any language system. This places logic as a component of the meaning processes of natural language. It is this connection that makes logic a point of interest in semantics. It should be noted, however that the emphasis of logic in semantics is on the relations involved in complex sentences, rather than with the abstract mathematical formulations. We shall explore in this unit the structure of the sentence and how this structure contributes to meaning.

### 1.6.4. Linguistics pragmatics

Semantics is the study of meaning, or more precisely, the study of the relation between linguistic expressions and their meanings. Whenever we have a verbal disagreement, we disagree about the semantics of some expression we employed in stating our views. Pragmatics is the study of context, or more precisely, a study of the way context can influence our understanding of linguistic utterances. Whenever we have a contextual disagreement, we take ourselves to be in different contexts and the difference effects what we take ourselves to have done through our respective acts of stating our views. Settling on a shared meaning for the expressions we used may be hard, but settling on a shared take on the context is often harder.

For the present purpose, pragmatics can be taken to be concerned with aspects of information (in the widest sense) conveyed through language which are not encoded by generally accepted convention in the linguistic forms used, but which none the less arise naturally out of and depend on the meanings conventionally encoded in the linguistic forms used, taken in conjunction with the context in which the forms are used. It is by linguistic pragmatics we identify the individual referred by John in the sentence *I saw Raja yesterday*. The co-referential information between *room* and *it* inferred from the example, *Raja entered the room, It was empty* is a matter of linguistic pragmatics.

Pragmatics is usually contrasted with semantics, which deals with conventionalized meaning. The three divisions discussed above belongs to semantics.

### **LEARNING ACTIVITY 1.6.**

Briefly discuss the branches of study of meaning in language.

### **SUMMARY**

Semantics has been found to be related to a wide range of disciplines because of the general interest in meaning. In specific terms, semantics has been formed to be relevant to naming, reference and sense. It is also concerned with the interpretation of sentences.

You have observed the progression in the development of semantic thought. You have noted the positive relationship between semantics and other components of the language system. You can safely conclude that while syntax, for instance provides the basis for the structure of the sentence, it is semantics that holds the key to meaning. This means that semantics is critical to communication.

You have learnt the approaches of the traditionalists, the behaviourists, the structuralists and the generativists to the study of semantics. You have read that the traditionalists were related to the early philosophers, while the behaviourists were more concerned with psychology, with the object of study being what is observed. Structuralists emphasised the sense relations between words while the generativists depended on the deep structures of sentences for meaning. It would be possible to identify the essential ingredients of these approaches to the study of semantics.



You have learnt about the four important branches of semantics: lexical semantics, grammatical semantics, logical semantics, and linguistic pragmatics,

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## **UNIT 2**

### **THE STUDY OF MEANING**

#### **CONTENT**

- 2.1 Schools of Thought in Meaning
- 2.2 Types of meaning
  - 2.2.1 Thematic meaning
  - 2.2.2. Conceptual meaning
  - 2.2.3. Associative meaning

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2.2.3.1. Connotative meaning

2.2.3.2. Collocative meaning

2.2.3.3. Reflected meaning

2.2.3.4. Stylistic meaning

2.3. Theories of Meaning

2.3.1 The Ideational Theory of Meaning

2.3.2. Behaviorist theory of meaning

2.3.3 The Referential theory of Meaning

2.3.4. Possible-world theory of meaning

2.3.5. Fregean theory of meaning

2.3.6. Verificationist theory of meaning

2.3.7. Truth-conditional theory of meaning

2.3.8. Conceptual-role theory of meaning

2.3.9. Gricean theory of meaning

2.3.10. The Usage Theory

2.4. Three perspectives of meaning

2.4.1. Lexical semantics

2.4.2. Compositional semantics

2.4.3. Pragmatics and discourse

## OVERVIEW

You have observed that semantics is the linguistic study of meaning. You have also noted that meaning is central to the process of communication. Interestingly, there is usually the controversy about the nature of meaning. We shall explore in this unit the nature of meaning. Meaning is at the centre of the study of semantics – for both the philosopher and the linguist. However, there are differences in opinion based on approaches and methods. We shall explore meaning from the perspectives of the different schools of thought.

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It will be recalled that language as a system is organised along the structures of sound, words, sentences and meaning. Each of these levels can be studied in some details, following specified formulations or theories. For the purpose of a detailed study of semantics, the theories we shall explore are expected to explain the nature of word and sentence meaning, among several other things. We shall examine the different perspectives to the study of meaning. We shall also discuss the types of meaning. We shall discuss, in the subsequent sections, the nature of semantic theories and explore specific theories.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain different schools of thought in the study of meaning;
- describe the different types of meaning;
- state the functions of semantic theories;
- identify specific theories in semantic, and
- explain the different theories of meaning

### 2.1. Schools of Thought in Meaning

Both linguists and philosophers agree that meaning is central to semantics. However, there is considerable disparity among different scholars on the exact conception of meaning. Based on their understanding of the meaning of meaning and procedures, there are different schools of thought in relation to meaning. These are the **naturalists**, the **conventionalists** and the **contextualists**.

According to the naturalists with Plato as the chief proponent, the meaning of a word is the entity or thing it represents. There is an intrinsic relationship between sound and meaning. The major criticism of this view is that there exist very many words in natural languages without physical entities.

To the conventionalists, words and their meaning do not necessarily have any direct link. Whatever connection existing between a word and meaning is through a concept formed in the minds of the users of the language. Conventionalism is derived from the works of Aristotle.

According to J. Firth and other contextualists, the meaning of a word derives from its usage. Each of these approaches has had a profound impact on the practice of linguistics. Their contributions shall become apparent as the text progresses. Apart from focusing on the three principal approaches to the study of meaning, there are **thematic, conceptual** and **associative** types of meaning.

### LEARNING ACTIVITY 2.1.

Describe the three schools of thoughts in meaning

## 2.2. Types of Meaning

You all know now that semantics is concerned with meaning and that morphemes, words, phrases and sentences have meaning. So semantics can be defined as the study of the meaning of morphemes, words, phrases and sentences. While listening to a spoken text or reading a written text you may feel that there the utterance convey many types of information or meaning. So you need to make certain distinctions in the meaning understood by you. That means you may feel that there are different types of meaning. Now, you may ask what are the types of meaning. Geoffrey Leech (1981) has an answer for you question. Leech in his book, 'Semantic- A Study of meaning' (1981) breaks down meaning into seven types. They are: conceptual or denotative meaning, connotative meaning, social meaning, affective or emotive meaning, reflected meaning, collocative meaning and thematic meaning. He gives primacy to conceptual meaning, Let us examine them one by one.

There are three basic types of meaning and these are **thematic, conceptual** and **associative**. Associative meaning can further be divided into connotative, collocative, affective, reflected and stylistic meanings. We shall for this section concentrate on thematic and conceptual meaning.

### 2.2.1 Thematic Meaning

You may organize or order words or phrases in an utterances to give them focus or emphasis. You may say *raajan teervil tooRRu viTTaan* or *teervil raajan tooRRuviTTaan* both meaning 'Rajan failed in the examination'; in the first case you give importance to *raajan* 'Rajan' and in the second case you give importance to *teervu* 'examination'. In such cases you have thematic meaning. Thematic meaning refers to what is communicated by the way in which a speaker or a writer organizes the message in terms of

ordering focus or emphasis (Leech 1981). Thematic meaning helps us to understand the message and its implications properly. The different parts of the sentence also can be used as subject, object or complement to show prominence. It is done through focus, theme (topic) or emotive emphasis. Thus a sentence in active voice is different from the sentence in passive voice though its conceptual meaning is the same. For example, the following statements in active and passive voice have same conceptual meaning but different communicative values.

Mrs. Smith donated the first prize  
The first prize was donated by Mrs. Smith.

In the first sentence “who gave away the prize “is more important, but in the second sentence “what did Mrs. Smith gave is important”. Thus the change of focus changes the meaning also. The first suggests that we already know Mrs. Smith (perhaps through earlier mention) its known/given information while it’s new information.

Alternative grammatical construction also gives thematic meaning. For example,

I like apples most.  
Apples I like most  
It is the apples I like most.

Like the grammatical structures, stress and intonation also make the message prominent. For example, the contrastive stress on the word *cotton* in the following sentence give prominence to the information.

Kannan likes mango fruit.  
The kind of fruit that Kanna likes is mango.

Thus sentences or pairs of sentences with similar conceptual meaning differ their communicative value. This is due to different grammatical constructions or lexical items or stress and intonations. Therefore they are used in different contents. In the line “Ten thousand saw I at a glance”, Wordsworth inverts the structure to focus on “ten thousand”,

Sometimes thematic contrast i.e. contrasts between given and new information can be conveyed by lexical means.

Kannan owns the biggest shop in Chennai.

The biggest shop in Chennai belongs to Kannan.

The ways we order our message also convey what is important and what not. This is basically thematic meaning.

Thematic meaning derives from the organisation of the message presented in a language. It is the arrangement of the components of communication that determine the point of emphasis. This arrangement may take the form of **passivisation**, **topicalisation** or **focus**. In the sentences that follow, different items have been made more prominent by merely re-ordering them.

- a. Jane bought the house – normal SVO order
- b. It was Jane that bought the house – topicalised
- c. The house was bought by Jane – passivised.
- d. The house, Jane painted – focused

In sentence (a) the sentence is in the normal subject-verb-object order without any special meaning. Sentences (b) and (d) tend to lay emphasis on Jane, the doer of the action being referred to. In sentence (c), the emphasis is on the house which was bought.

Indeed, focused and topicalised elements in a structure are given prominence within an information structure. A component of the bit of information can also be made more prominent by stressing it. Consider further the following:

She **BOUGHT** my newspaper (She did not **STEAL** it)

She bought my **NEWSPAPER** (not my textbook)

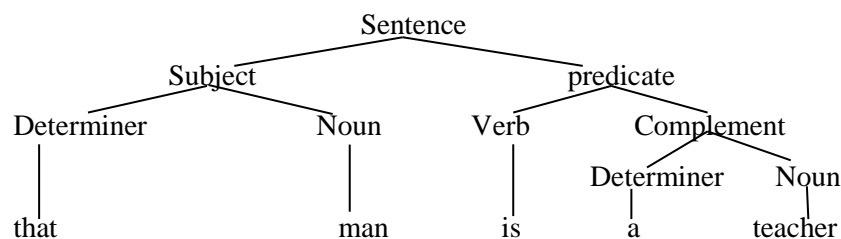
**SHE** bought my newspaper (not any other person)

### 2.2.2 Conceptual Meaning

Conceptual meaning (Leech 1981:9) is synonymous with primary, central, logical, cognitive or denotative meaning of a word. It is the first ordinary meaning listed in dictionaries which is not affected by the context or emotional overtones associated with the act of communication. There is an assumed shared conceptual meaning of every word of a language. There is a universal implication of the conceptual meaning. It is widely assumed to be the central factor in linguistic communication. Conceptual meanings are the essential or core meaning while other six types are the peripheral. They are peripheral in as sense that they are non-essential. Conceptual meaning is also called as primary meaning . It is the meaning suggested by the word when it used alone. It is the first meaning or usage which a word will suggest to most people when the word is said in isolation. It is the meaning learned early in life and likely to have reference to a physical situation. The conceptual meaning of word is its agreed-upon sense - what it refers to, stands for, or designates. The aim of conceptual meaning is to provide an appropriate semantic representation to a sentence or statement. A sentence is made of abstract symbols. Conceptual meaning helps us to distinguish one meaning from the meaning of other sentences. Thus, conceptual meaning is an essential part of language. A language essentially depends on conceptual meaning for communication. The conceptual meaning is the base for all the other types of meaning.

You know that conceptual meaning is given primacy over other meanings. Conceptual meaning deals with the core meaning of expression. It is the denotative or literal meaning. It is essential for the functioning of language. For example, a part of the conceptual meaning of the word *needle* may be “thin”, “sharp” or “instrument”. The organization of conceptual meaning is based on two principles: principle of contrastiveness and the principle of structure. The conceptual meanings can be studied typically in terms of contrastive features. That is, it is possible to express the conceptual meaning of a word using contrastive semantic features. Such features indicate the attributes present and those that are absent. If a feature is present, it is specified as [ + ]; if absent, it is [ - ]. These contrastive features specifying the attributes of the words provide the necessary criteria for the correct use of words. You know already that /b/ is described in phonetics as +bilabial, + voice, + bilabial + stop/plosive and /p/ is described in phonetics as +bilabial, -voice, + bilabial + stop/plosive. It is the contrasting feature +/- VOICE which differentiates /b/ from /p/. Similarly the word *woman* can be represented as + HUMAN, -MALE, + ADULT". On the contrary, the word *boy* can be realized as + HUMAN, + MALE, - ADULT. The contrastive features which distinguishes *woman* from *boy* are +/-MALE and +/- ADULT. This way of representing meaning based on contrastive feature is known as principle of contrastiveness.

You know that not only the units of language are contrastive but also they are arranged sequentially. You can build larger units by combining smaller units and again combining the outcome of the first combination into still larger units and so on. Look at the example given below. You combine *that* and *man* into *that man* and *a* and *teacher* into *a teacher*; you interpret the first phrase *that man* as subject and *a teacher* as complement. You again combine *is* and *a teacher* into a larger unit *is a teacher*; you interpret this as predicate. By combining subject and predicate you construct a sentence. Now you understand that by the principle of structure, larger units of language are built up out of smaller units or you are able to analyze a sentence syntactically into its constituent parts hierarchically till you arrive at the ultimate constituents or smallest syntactic elements. You can represent this information by means of a tree-diagram as given below:



Now you understand that the aim of conceptual meaning is to provide an appropriate semantic representation to a sentence or statement. A sentence is made of abstract symbols. Conceptual meaning helps you to distinguish one meaning from the meaning of other sentences. Thus, conceptual meaning is an essential part of language. A language essentially depends on conceptual meaning for communication. The conceptual meaning is the base for all the other types of meaning.

The conceptual meaning of a word constitutes a major part of the shared system of a language for all speakers. It is a criteria element of human communication since it is a major factor in language. The use of this process, has been described as componential analysis. It is a major process in structural semantics.

### 2.2.3 Associative Meaning

The meaning of a word is affected by the context, background, time and the cultural realities of the users of language. This type of meaning is not static. It is variable and open ended. Certain words, structures and styles are usually employed to arouse some emotional reactions in the hearer. Certain attitudes and forms of behaviour are elicited by the associative meaning of the words used in communication. These



different reactions are derived from the associations which the words create in the minds of language users.

As a result of the great variation in associative meaning, it is not always easy to express that form of meaning in terms of contrastive semantic features. Indeed, associative meaning reflects individual differences. There are individualised intentions and interpretations. There is therefore, the need for all participants in communication to share common reference points, symbols and background for there to be any meaningful interaction.

Most of the problems of communication arise when associative meaning is assumed to be shared by all concerned. There must be a way of ensuring actual sharing of background. For second language learners, this problem is profound. This explains the enormous difficulty second language learners encounter with decoding the meaning of idioms and figurative expressions. They also find it difficult to apply appropriate idioms to diverse situations. Associative meaning can be any of the following:

- Connotative Meaning
- Collocative Meaning
- Reflected Meaning
- Stylistic or Social Meaning

### **2.2.3.1 Connotative Meaning**

When you explore conceptual or denotative meaning, it will land you into connotative meaning. You may feel that the given expression gives you more information than what is encoded in it. That is you may feel that there is connotation apart from denotation. So you have connotative meaning apart from denotative meaning or conceptual meaning. Connotative meaning (Leech 1981:12-13) is the communicative value of an expression over and above its purely conceptual content. It is something that goes beyond mere referent of a word and hints at its attributes in the real world. It is something more than the dictionary meaning. Thus purely conceptual content of *woman* is +HUMAN + FEMALE+ ADULT. But the physical characteristics of woman such as 'biped', 'having a womb', etc , psychological and social attributes of woman such as be 'gregarious', 'having maternal instinct' or typical (rather than invariable) attributes of womanhood such as 'capable of speaking continuously', 'experts in cooking', 'wearing skirt or sari', etc are connotations or connotative meaning. Still further connotative meaning can embrace putative

properties of a referent due to viewpoint adopted by individual, group, and society as a whole. So in the past woman was supposed to have attributes like frail, prone to tears, emotional, irritable, inconstant, cowardly etc. as well as more positive qualities such gentle, sensitive, compassionate, hardworking etc. Connotations vary age to age and society to society.

The boundary between conceptual and connotative seems to be analogous. Connotative meaning is regarded as incidental, comparatively unstable, in determinant, open ended, variable according to age, culture and individual, whereas conceptual meaning is not like that. It can be codified in terms of limited symbols.

Connotative meaning contains elements of the conceptual meaning of a word and the individual's personal interpretation of what is communicated. That interpretation is based on the personal experience of the hearer. This means that connotative meaning varies with the experience of people in communication. It may also vary from society to society.

There are additional semantic features that are associated with connotative meaning. Thus, a great deal of the meaning of idioms and figurative expressions derive from connotation. There are symbols in literature which have different connotations in different cultures. For instance, among the Tamils, the fox or jackal is associated with the cunningness, cawing of crow is associated with the arrival of guest and cat crossing your way is associated with bad omen.

### 2.2.3.2 Collocative Meaning

You might have come across words which occur together mostly in utterances. Such co-occurrence is referred as collation and the outcome of the collocation gives rise to collocative meaning. Collocative meaning is the meaning which a word acquires in the company of certain other words. Words collocate or co-occur with certain words only. For example, *big business* is acceptable and not *large business* or *great business*. Collocative meaning refers to associations of a word because of its usual or habitual co-occurrence with certain types of words. *pretty* and *handsome* indicate 'good looking'. However, they slightly differ from each other because of collocation or co-occurrence. The word *pretty* collocates with *girls, woman, village, gardens, flowers, etc.* On the other hand, the word *handsome* collocates with *boys, men, etc.* So we have *pretty woman* and *handsome man*. Though *handsome woman* and *pretty man* are acceptable, they suggest different kinds of attractiveness because of the collocative associations of the

two adjectives. Hence *handsome woman* may mean attractive woman but in a mannish way. The verbs *wander* and *stroll* are quasi-synonymous; they may have almost the same meaning; but while cows may wander, but may not stroll as *stroll* collocates with human subject only. Similarly one 'trembles with fear' but 'quivers with excitement'. Collocative meanings need to be invoked only when other categories of meaning don't apply. Generalizations can be made in case of other meanings while collocative meaning is simply an idiosyncratic property of individual words. Collocative meaning has its importance and it is a marginal kind of category.

### 2.2.3.3 Affective Meaning

You use language to express your personal feelings, including your attitude to the listener, or your attitude to something you are talking about. Meaning of this type is called as affective or emotive meaning (Leech 1981:14). It is often conveyed through the conceptual or connotative content of the words used. For example, *home* for a sailor/soldier or expatriate and *mother* for a motherless child and a married woman (especially in Indian context) will have special affective, emotive quality. In affective meaning, language is used to express personal feelings or attitude to the listener or to the subject matter of his discourse. For Leech affective meaning refers to what is conveyed about the feeling and attitude of the speaker through use of language (attitude to listener as well as attitude to what he is saying). Affective meaning is often conveyed through conceptual, connotative content of the words used. For example, "you are a vicious tyrant and a villainous reprobation and I hate you" Or "I hate you, you idiot". We are left with a little doubt about the speaker's feelings towards the listener. Here speaker seems to have a very negative attitude towards his listener. This is called affective meaning. But very often we are more discreet (cautious) and convey our attitude indirectly. For example, "I am terribly sorry but if you would be so kind as to lower your voice a little" conveys our irritation in a scaled down manner for the sake of politeness. Intonation and voice quality are also important here. Thus the sentence above can be uttered in biting sarcasm and the impression of politeness maybe reversed while for example, "Will you belt up?" can be turned into a playful remark between intimates if said with the intonation of a request. Words like darling, sweetheart or hooligan, vandal have inherent emotive quality and they can be used neutrally. I.A. Richards argued that emotive meaning distinguishes literature or poetic language from factual meaning of science. Finally it must be noted that affective meaning is largely a parasitic category. It overlaps heavily with style, connotation and conceptual content.

Affective meaning is related to the feelings and attitudes of the speaker towards the subject or the audience. This meaning is achieved by the choice of words. Certain words suggest positive feelings – *love, attraction, happiness, exciting* etc. Some others stir up negative reactions – *disgusting, nauseating, disappointing*, etc. Interjections like *ah!, oh!, uh!, mmm!* often suggest the emotional state of the mind. Other words like *darling, daddy, mummy* etc. give an impression of endearment.

#### 2.2.3.4. Reflected meaning

You know that a word can have more than one conceptual meaning or multiple conceptual meaning. If you interpret one meaning for the other, it is known by the term reflected meaning. In such cases while responding to one sense of the word you partly respond to another sense of the word too. For example in church service *The Comforter* and *The Holy Ghost* refer to the *Third Person of Trinity* (Leech 1981:16). *Comforter* and *Ghost* are religious words. They have both religious and general meaning. But unconsciously even in religious context you may interpret these terms by their non-religious meaning. You may feel *The Comforter* sounds warm and comforting while *The Holy Ghost* sounds ‘awesome’ or even ‘dreadful’. One sense of the word seems to rub off on another especially through relative frequency and familiarity (e.g. a ghost is more frequent and familiar in no religious sense.). In poetry too you have reflected meaning as in the following lines from ‘Futility’:

Are limbs so dear-achieved, are sides,  
Full-nerved still - warm - too hard to stir?

The poet Wilfred Owen uses the word *dear* in the sense 'expensive'. But you may feel in the context of the poem the sense 'beloved' is also alluded. In such cases of multiple meaning, one meaning of the word pushes the other meaning to the background. Then the dominant suggestive power of that word prevails. This may happen because of the relative frequency or familiarity of the dominant meaning. This dominant meaning which pushes the other meaning at the background is called the reflected meaning.

Reflected meaning can be illustrated by words which have taboo meaning. For examples, the terms like *intercourse, ejaculation, and erection* cannot be used without invoking their sexual association. The word *intercourse* immediately reminds us of its association with sex (sexual intercourse). The sexual association of the word drives away its innocent sense, i.e. ‘communication’. The taboo sense of the word is so dominant that its non-taboo sense almost dies out. In some cases, the speaker avoids the taboo words

and uses their alternative word in order to avoid the unwanted reflected meaning. For example, as Bloomfield has pointed out, the speakers avoid using the word *cock* and replace it by the word *rooster*. These words have non-sexual meanings too. (e.g. erection of a building, ejaculate-throw out somebody) but because of their frequency in the lit of the physiology of sex it is becoming difficult to use them in their innocent/nonsexual sense. Thus we can see that reflected meaning has great importance in the study of semantics.

Reflected meaning relates to expressions with multiple meanings. Words with several meanings (i.e. polysemous words), have reflected meaning. There is, however, a dominant meaning among these several meanings. As a particular sense of a word begins to assume prominence, all other senses begin to be de-emphasised and with time, these other senses disappear. *Meat* used to refer to all forms of food and flesh for nourishment. The later meaning seems to have caught on.

### 2.2.3.5 Stylistic (or Social) Meaning

You know language is spoken in a society. So it is quite natural the language gives clue to about the society in which it is being spoken or the social context in which it is spoken. When you hear the utterance *naan neettu aattukkup pokarcca aaRu maNi aayiTucci* 'I was 6 o' clock when I reached home yesterday', you understood that the person who uttered the utterance belongs to Brahmin community. Similarly when you listen to the utterance *naan neettaikki cakka caappiTTeen* 'yesterday I ate jackfruit'. you understand that the person who uttered it belongs to Kanyakumari district of Tamilnadu. The meaning conveyed by the piece of language about the social context of its use is called the social meaning (Leech 1981:14). The decoding of a text is dependent on our knowledge of stylistics and other variations of language. We recognize some words or pronunciation as being dialectical i.e. as telling us something about the regional or social origin of the speaker. Social meaning is related to the social situation in which an utterance is used. It is concerned with the social circumstances of the use of a linguistic expression. For example, some dialectic words inform us about the regional and social background of the speaker. In the same way, some stylistic usages let us know something of the social relationship between the speaker and the hearer. The following socio-stylistic variations are listed by Leech (Leech 1981:14):

Dialect (the language of a geographical region or social class)

Time (the language of eighteenth century, etc)

Province (language of law, of science, of advertising, etc.)

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Status (Polite, colloquial, slang, etc., language)

Modality (language of memoranda, lectures, jokes, etc.)

Singularity (the style of Dickens, of Hemingway, etc.)

For example the utterance *I ain't done nothing* tells you about the speaker and that is the speaker is probably a black American, underprivileged and uneducated. Stylistic variation represents the social variation. This is because styles show the geographical region social class of the speaker. Style helps us to know about the period, field and status of the discourse. Some words are similar to others as far as their conceptual meaning is concerned. But they have different stylistic meaning. For example, *steed*, *horse* and *nag* are synonymous. You know they all mean a kind of animal i.e. horse. But they differ in style and so have different social meaning. *steed* is used in poetry; *horse* is used in general, while *nag* is slang. The word HOME can have many use also like *domicile* (official), *residence* (formal), *abode* (poetic), and *home* (ordinary use). Stylistic variation is also found in sentence as a whole. For example consider the following two sentences (Leech 1981:15).

They chucked the stones at the cops and then did a bunk with the look.

After casting the stones at the police, they abandoned with money.”

The first could be said by two criminals after the event and second could be used by the chief Inspector in making his official report. Thus through the style and form of the utterances you come to know about the social facts, social situation, class, region, and the speaker-listener relation.

You may utter a sentence in a social situation as a request, an apology, a warning or a threat. Such social situations are known by the term illocutionary force. The illocutionary force of an utterance also can have social meaning. For example, the sentence, *I haven't got a knife* has the common meaning in isolation. But the sentence uttered to a waiter mean a request for a knife. Thus we can understand that the social meaning plays a very vital role in the field of semantics and in understanding the utterances and sentences in different contexts.

When a particular pattern of speech, language variety or speech form is associated with a specific social context, stylistic or social meaning is achieved. It is common knowledge that a speaker's choice of words and structures reveals his or her social, regional, geographical or even economic background. The choices can also reveal the level of familiarity between the speaker and the hearer.

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Emphasis is usually on the different stylistic variations open to language users. Based on the level of familiarity, users have the following possibilities in making requests:

I wonder if I could see you later today (indirect question) used for extreme politeness)

May I see you later today (very formal)

Can I see you later today (causal and less formal)

## **LEARNING ACTIVITY 2.2.**

- (1) List the different types of meaning discussed in the unit.
- (3) Write short notes on thematic, conceptual associative, connotative and reflected forms of meaning.

## **2.3 Theories of Meaning**

We have learnt that semantics deals with meaning in language. Just like every other discipline, there are theories to explain in detail the nature of meaning in a principled way. The most enduring semantic theories will be presented in this unit. It will be recalled that language as a system is organised along the structures of sound, words, sentences and meaning. Each of these levels can be studied in some details, following specified formulations or theories. For the purpose of a detailed study of semantics, the theories we shall explore are expected to explain the nature of word and sentence meaning, among several other things. We shall discuss, in the subsequent sections, the nature of semantic theories and explore specific theories.

Semantic theories explain the nature of meaning by utilizing a finite set of rules to explain a variety of semantic phenomena. Any theory of semantics should provide statements that explain meaning relationship – such as ambiguity, anomaly, contradiction, tautology, paraphrase, entailment, synonymy, hyponymy. This means that such a theory should be able to explain the inherent meaning characteristics of words and sentences.

Any reliable theory of semantics should relate meaning to syntax, highlighting the relationship between them. This means that the rules of sentence construction and those of word meaning should relate to explain in full the meaning of the sentence.

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A viable semantic theory should also relate meaning to the contexts and situations of word and sentence usage for appropriate interpretation. There should also be a record of facts of meaning, linguistic reference and truth conditions. These requirements suggest that such a theory should be a part of the general linguistic theory. That means that semantic rules must have universal applications. Such rules must give clues to the nature of semantic features which distinguish lexical items of different languages of the world. Since the theory should account for meaning properties on all languages, it helps to explain the structure of human languages. These expectations have been met at different levels by different theories of meaning. The following theories of meaning are listed by Leopore in his write up on "Semantics: Study of meaning" in Encyclopedia of Britannica:

- The Ideational Theory of meaning
- The behaviorist theory of meaning
- The referential Theory of meaning
- Possible-world theory of meaning
- Fregean theory of meaning
- Verificationist theory of meaning
- Truth-conditional theory of meaning
- Conceptual-role semantics
- Gricean theory of meaning
- The Usage Theory

### 2.3.1 The Ideational Theory of Meaning

The 17th-century British empiricist John Locke held that linguistic meaning is mental: words are used to encode and convey thoughts, or ideas. Successful communication requires that the hearer correctly decode the speaker's words into their associated ideas. So construed, the meaning of an expression, according to Locke, is the idea associated with it in the mind of anyone who knows and understands that expression.

But the ideational account of meaning, as Locke's view is sometimes called, is vulnerable to several objections. Suppose, for example, that a person's idea of grass is associated in his mind with the idea of warm weather. It would follow that part of the meaning of *grass*, for this person, is warm weather. If so,



then the meaning of *grass* or any other word may be different for each person. And in that case, how does anyone fully understand anyone else? Similarly, suppose that a person mistakenly associates the word *beech* with the idea of an elm tree. Would it follow that, for this person, *beech* means elm? If so, how is it possible to say that anyone misunderstands the meaning of a word or uses a word incorrectly?

As these examples show, the ideational account ignores the “public” nature of meaning. Whatever meanings are, they must be things that different speakers can learn from and share with one another.

A further objection concerns compositionality. Suppose that a person associates the complex expression *brown cow* with the idea of fear, though he is not fearful of all brown things or of all cows—only brown cows. Thus, the meaning of *brown cow*, for this person, is not determined by or predictable from the meanings of *brown* and *cow*. Because the example can be generalized (anyone can associate any idea with any complex expression), it follows that the ideational account is unable to explain the compositionality of natural languages.

This theory was developed by the British empiricist philosopher, John Locke. The theory explains that the meaning attached to words can be separated from the word themselves. This means that meaning originates in the mind in the form of ideas. Words are just sensible signs for the convenience of communication. Language is therefore, a mechanism for expressing thoughts and thought is viewed as a succession of conscious ideas. The ideational theory is mentalistic. Thus the meaning of a word is the mental image or idea of the word or the expression generated in the mind of the speaker or hearer.

There is no attempt to define words and expressions using physical associations. Rather, the range of possible meanings ascribed to a given word is that set of available feelings, images, ideas, concepts, thoughts and inferences that can be produced as soon as a word is heard – (Glucksberg 1975:50).

The ideational theory is perceived to be abstract or imprecise because of dependence on mental images for decoding the meaning of words. Ideas may be too vague to comprehend. There are also many words (especially the abstract ones) that do not have specific physical realities, let alone mental manifestations. It is unthinkable that the mind can create an image of what the senses cannot perceive.

The theory may not be able to account for synonymous expressions. It may also be difficult to use the theory to explain the mental image conjured by sentences. Indeed, sentences derive their meaning more from the word order.

### 2.3.2 Behaviourist theory of meaning

In an effort to render linguistic meaning public and the study of linguistic meaning more “scientific,” the American psychologist B.F. Skinner (1904–90) proposed that the correct semantics for a natural language is behaviouristic: the meaning of an expression, as uttered on a particular occasion, is either (1) the behavioral stimulus that produces the utterance, (2) the behavioral response that the utterance produces, or (3) a combination of both. Thus, the meaning of *fire!* as uttered on a particular occasion might include running or calling for help. But even on a single occasion it is possible that not everyone who hears *fire!* will respond by running or calling for help. Suppose, for example, that the hearers of the utterance include a fireman, a pyromaniac, and a person who happens to know that the speaker is a pathological liar. The behaviourist account seems committed to the implausible view that the meaning of *fire!* for these people is different from the meaning of *fire!* for those who run or call for help.

The behaviorist account, like the ideational one, is also vulnerable to the objection based on compositionality. Suppose that a person’s body recoils when he hears *brown cow* but not when he hears either *brown* or *cow* alone. The meaning of *brown cow*, which includes recoiling, is therefore not determined by or predictable from the meanings of *brown* and *cow*.

This approach has been influenced by the works of Watson Bloomfield and Skinner. Idealism or mentalism in traditional semantics looks at meaning as something established in the hearer’s or speaker’s mind. There is usually a non-physical process of thought, concept or feeling generating a mental experience. On the other hand, Behaviourism relies on observables and records of utterances. These observables and records are linked to their relationships with the immediate situations that produce them.

To the behaviourist, there is no belief in such mentalistic constructs as mind, concept and ideas. As a result, there is no room for introspection as a means of obtaining valid information since thoughts and feelings are usually personal. As a result of the highly psychological dimension of this theory, human and animal behaviour is identical. Experiences coming through the senses are the major sources of knowledge. There is determinism in the affairs of the world. There are universal laws governing every situation. As a result of this reliance on determinism, there is no predictability in evaluating human behaviour.

### 2.3.3 The Referential Theory of Meaning

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Reference is an apparent relation between a word and the world. Russell, following the 19th-century British philosopher John Stuart Mill, pursued the intuition that linguistic expressions are signs of something other than themselves. He suggested that the meaning of an expression is whatever that expression applies to, thus removing meaning from the minds of its users and placing it squarely in the world. According to a referential semantics, all that one learns when one learns the meaning of *tomato* is that it applies to tomatoes and to nothing else. One advantage of a referential semantics is that it respects compositionality: the meaning of *red tomato* is a function of the meanings of *red* and *tomato*, because *red tomato* will apply to anything that is both red and a tomato.

But what about expressions that apparently refers to nothing at all, such as *unicorn*? A referential semantics would appear to be committed to the view that expressions such as *unicorn*, *Santa Claus*, and *Sherlock Holmes* are meaningless. Another problem, first pointed out by Frege, is that two expressions may have the same referent without having the same meaning. *The morning star* and *the evening star*, for example, refer to the same object, the planet Venus, but they are not synonymous. As Frege noted, it is possible to believe that the morning star and the evening star are not identical without being irrational (indeed, the identity of the morning star and the evening star was a scientific discovery).

Examples such as these have led some philosophers, including Mill himself and Saul Kripke, to conclude that proper names lack meaning. But the problem also affects common nouns, including definite descriptions. The descriptions *the first president of the United States* and *the husband of Martha Washington* apply to the same individual but are not synonymous. It is possible to understand both without recognizing that they refer to the same person. It follows that meaning cannot be the same as reference.

This theory is associated with Ogden and Richards (1922). According to the Referential theory, the meaning of a word is the object it refers to in the external world. That actual object is the *referent*. The connection between the words or expressions and their referents is through the process of thought. The words or expressions are just *symbols*.

One major criticism of this theory is that there are many words without physical objects they refer to. Such words are *intelligent*, *ugly*, *rich*, *poor* etc. Which do not have the concrete qualities of nouns may not have referents. Again, polysemous words (i.e. words with more than one meaning) may have the additional problem of having more than one referent. Items that belong to groups may not have physical objects that are identical. Every sub-group has specific feature. Individual members of the smallest sub-

groups also have their identities. Therefore, we cannot talk about absolute identification for referents. The referential theory may not have a way to explain the meaning of words in the categories of adjectives, adverbs, prepositions and conjunctions.

#### 2.3.4. Possible-world theory of meaning

Perhaps *unicorn* is meaningful because of what it would apply to in certain circumstances, though in actuality it does not apply to anything. And perhaps the descriptions *the first president of the United States* and *the husband of Martha Washington* are not synonymous because one can imagine circumstances in which the former would apply and the latter would not, and vice versa. George Washington might not have become the first president, or Martha might not have married him. Suppose that the meaning of an expression is determined not only by what it applies to in the actual world but also by what it would apply to in different “possible worlds.” According to possible-world semantics, the meaning of a proper or common noun is a function from possible worlds (including the actual world) to individuals or things: given a possible world as input, the meaning returns as output the individual or thing that the noun applies to in that world. The meaning of *the first president of the United States* determines that that expression applies to George Washington in the actual world but to other individuals in other possible worlds. This refinement of referential semantics does not compromise compositionality, because the meaning of *the first president of the United States* is still a function of the meanings of its constituent expressions in any possible world. The proposal also seems to account for the difference in meaning between descriptions whose referents are the same, and it seems to explain how an expression can fail to refer to anything and still be meaningful.

Yet there are important problems with possible-world semantics. Chief among them is the notion of a possible world itself, which is not well understood. In addition, it turns out that possible-world semantics does not entirely dispose of objections based on coreferential but nonsynonymous expressions and nonreferential but meaningful expressions. The expressions *triangular* and *trilateral*, for example, are not synonymous, but there is no possible world in which they do not apply to exactly the same things. And the expression *round square* appears to be meaningful, but there is no possible world in which it applies to anything at all. Such examples are easy to multiply.

#### 2.3.5. Fregean theory of meaning

According to Frege, the meaning of an expression consists of two elements: a referent and what he called a “sense.” Both the referent and the sense of an expression contribute systematically to the truth or falsehood (the “truth value”) of the sentences in which the expression occurs.

As noted above, Frege pointed out that the substitution of coreferring expressions in a sentence does not always preserve truth value: if Smith does not know that George Washington was the first president of the United States, then *Smith believes that George Washington chopped down a cherry tree* can be true while *Smith believes that the first president of the United States chopped down a cherry tree* is false. Frege’s explanation of this phenomenon was that, in sentences such as these, truth value is determined not only by reference but also by sense. The sense of an expression, roughly speaking, is not the thing the expression refers to but the way in which it refers to that thing. The sense of an expression determines what the expression refers to. Although each sense determines a single referent, a single referent may be determined by more than one sense. Thus, *George Washington* and *the first president of the United States* have the same referent but different senses. The two belief sentences can differ in truth value because, although both are about the same individual, the expressions referring to him pick him out in different ways.

### 2.3.6. Verificationist theory of meaning

Frege did not address the problem of how linguistic expressions come to have the meanings they do. A natural, albeit vague, answer is that expressions mean what they do because of what speakers do with them. An example of this approach is provided by the school of logical positivism, which was developed by members of the Vienna Circle discussion group in the 1920s and ’30s. According to the logical positivists, the meaning of a sentence is given by an account of the experiences on the basis of which the sentence could be verified. Sentences that are unverifiable through any possible experience (including many ethical, religious, and metaphysical sentences) are literally meaningless.

The basic idea underlying verificationism is that meaning results from links between language and experience: some sentences have meaning because they are definable in terms of other sentences, but ultimately there must be certain basic sentences, what the logical positivists called “observation sentences,” whose meaning derives from their direct connection with experience and specifically from the fact that they are reports of experience. The meaning of an expression smaller than a sentence is similarly dependent on experience. Roughly speaking, the meaning of an expression is given by an account of the experiences on the basis of which one could verify that the expression applies to one thing or another.

Although the circumstances in which *triangular* and *trilateral* apply are the same, speakers go about verifying those applications in different ways.

The case against verificationism was most ardently pressed in the 1950s by the American philosopher Willard Van Orman Quine. He argued that experience cannot be used to verify individual observation sentences, because any experience can be taken to verify a given observation sentence provided that sufficient adjustments are made in the truth values of the other sentences that make up the scientific theory in which the sentence is embedded. In the case of word meaning, Quine asked: What experience, or empirical evidence, could determine what a word means? He contended that the only acceptable evidence is behavioral, given the necessity that meanings be public. But behavioral evidence cannot determine whether a person's words mean one thing or another; alternative interpretations, each compatible with all the behavioral evidence, will always be available. (For example, what possible behavioral evidence could determine that by *gavagai* a speaker means "rabbit" rather "undetached rabbit part" or "time-slice of a rabbit"?) From the underdetermination of meaning by empirical evidence, Quine inferred that there is no "fact of the matter" regarding what a word means.

### 2.3.7. Truth-conditional theory of meaning

Confronted with the skepticism of Quine, his student Donald Davidson made a significant effort in the 1960s and '70s to resuscitate meaning. Davidson attempted to account for meaning not in terms of behaviour but on the basis of truth, which by then had become more logically tractable than meaning because of work in the 1930s by the Polish logician Alfred Tarski. Tarski defined truth for formal (logical or mathematical) languages in terms of a relation of "satisfaction" between the constituents of a sentence and sequences of objects. Truth is thereby determined systematically by the satisfaction of sentential constituents. Tarski showed how to derive, from axioms and rules, certain statements that specify the conditions under which any sentence of a given formal language is true.

Davidson's innovation was to employ a Tarskian theory of truth as a theory of meaning. Adopting Tarski's distinction between an "object language" (an ordinary language used to talk about things in the world) and a "metalanguage" (an artificial language used to analyze or describe an object language), Davidson proposed that a semantic theory of a natural language is adequate just in case, for each sentence in the object language, the theory entails a statement of the form '*S* is true just in case *p*', where *S* is a sentence in the object language and *p* is a translation of that sentence in the metalanguage. For the sentence *snow is white*, for example, the theory should entail a statement of the form '*snow is white* is

*true just in case snow is white*. Tarski had already shown how to derive such statements. Davidson's appropriation of Tarski's theory of truth thus rendered substantive the rough but venerable idea that to give the meaning of a sentence is to give its truth conditions.

But how can such a truth-conditional semantics explain the phenomena for which Frege invoked the notion of sense? The sentences *George Washington chopped down a cherry tree* and *the first president of the United States chopped down a cherry tree* share truth conditions: both are true just in case the individual who happens to be picked out by *George Washington* and *the first president of the United States* chopped down a cherry tree. But the sentences are not synonymous. Davidson suggested that the problem could be solved by constructing a semantic theory for the language of any given speaker who uses these sentences. In order to do so, one must observe the constraints of "radical interpretation"—in particular, the "principle of charity," which states that a speaker's sentences should be interpreted in such a way that most of them are counted as truthful. Interpretation proceeds as follows: collect the sentences that a speaker "holds true," then construct a semantic theory that entails for each of those sentences a statement of the circumstances in which the speaker would hold that sentence true. According to Davidson, any such theory will entail '*George Washington chopped down a cherry tree*' is true just in case *George Washington chopped down a cherry tree* and '*the first president of the United States chopped down a cherry tree*' is true just in case *the first president of the United States chopped down a cherry tree* but not '*George Washington chopped down a cherry tree*' is true just in case *the first president of the United States chopped down a cherry tree* or '*the first president of the United States chopped down a cherry tree*' is true just in case *George Washington chopped down a cherry tree*. The fact that the circumstances in which the speaker would hold true *George Washington chopped down a cherry tree* are different from the circumstances in which he would hold true *the first president of the United States chopped down a cherry tree* accounts for their difference in meaning, thus solving Frege's problem.

Although Davidson's program was influential, most philosophers have remained skeptical of the idea that a theory of truth can serve as a theory of meaning, in part because of objections such as the following. Suppose that two speakers, A and B, are identical psychological twins, so that their psychological states are essentially undistinguishable. Each speaker utters the sentence *I am 30 years old*. Although they utter the same sentence, the referent of *I* as uttered by A is different from the referent of *I* as uttered by B. The truth conditions of the two utterances, therefore, will be different. According to the truth-conditional account, the meanings of the two utterances must accordingly be different. It follows that A and B do not

understand, or mentally grasp, the meanings of their utterances. If they did, the fact that the meanings are different would entail that A's psychological state is different from B's. But by hypothesis their psychological states are the same. The advocate of the truth-conditional account thus faces a dilemma: either meaning is not the same as truth conditions, or speakers do not understand their utterances of sentences such as *I am 30 years old*.

### 2.3.8. Conceptual-role theory of meaning

In order to avoid having to distinguish between meaning and character, some philosophers, including Gilbert Harman and Ned Block, have recommended supplementing a theory of truth with what is called a conceptual-role semantics (also known as cognitive-role, computational-role, or inferential-role semantics). According to this approach, the meaning of an expression for a speaker is the same as its conceptual role in the speaker's mental life. Roughly speaking, the conceptual role of an expression is the sum of its contributions to inferences that involve sentences containing that expression. Because the conceptual role played by *I* is the same for both A and B, the meanings of the two utterances of *I am 30 years old* are the same, even though the referent of *I* in each case is distinct. In contrast, the meanings of *George Washington chopped down a cherry tree* and *the first president of the United States chopped down a cherry tree* are different, even though they have the same truth conditions, because the conceptual role of *George Washington* is different from that of *the first president of the United States* for any speaker. Because the meanings of the two sentences are different, the corresponding beliefs are different, and this explains how it is possible for a person to affirm one and deny the other without being irrational.

Although the notion of conceptual role is not new, what exactly a conceptual role is and what form a theory of conceptual roles should take remain far from clear. In addition, some implications of conceptual-role semantics are strongly counterintuitive. For example, in order to explain how the meaning of *tomato* can be the same for two speakers, conceptual-role semantics must claim that the word plays the same conceptual role in the two speakers' mental lives. But this is extremely unlikely (unless the speakers happen to be psychological identical twins). As long as there is the slightest difference between them with respect to the inferences they are prepared to draw using sentences containing *tomato*, the conceptual roles of that word will differ. But then it is difficult to see how any sense could be made of communication. If each speaker assigns a different meaning to *tomato* and presumably to most other words, there is no common meaning to be communicated, and it is a mystery how speakers understand one another. If, on the other hand, the same words have the same meanings, it must follow that the words play the same conceptual roles, in which case there would be no need for communication; each speaker



would understand and believe exactly what every other speaker does. In addition, conceptual-role semantics seems unable to account for compositionality, since the conceptual role of the complex expression *brown cow*, in the speaker who fears brown cows but not all brown things or all cows, is not determined by nor predictable from the conceptual roles of *brown* and *cow*.

### 2.3.9. Gricean theory of meaning

The British philosopher Paul Grice (1913–88) and his followers hoped to explain meaning solely in terms of beliefs and other mental states. Grice's suggestion was that the meaning of a sentence can be understood in terms of a speaker's intention to induce a belief in the hearer by means of the hearer's recognition of that intention.

Grice's analysis is based on the notion of "speaker meaning," which he defines as follows: a speaker S means something by an utterance U just in case S intends U to produce a certain effect in a hearer H by means of H's recognition of this intention. The speaker meaning of U in such a case is the effect that S intends to produce in H by means of H's recognition of that intention. Suppose, for example, that S utters *the sky is falling* to H, and, as a result, H forms the belief that the sky is falling. In such a case, according to Grice, S had several specific intentions: first, he intended to utter *the sky is falling*; second, he intended that H should recognize that he (S) uttered *the sky is falling*; third, he intended that H should recognize his (S's) intention to utter *the sky is falling*; and fourth, he intended that H should recognize that he (S) intended H to form the belief that the sky is falling. In these circumstances, according to Grice, *the sky is falling* has the speaker meaning that the sky is falling. The place of conventional meaning in Grice's conception of language appears to be that it constitutes a feature of words that speakers can exploit in realizing the intentions referred to in his analysis of speaker meaning.

Although Grice's approach is not as popular as it once was, the general goal of reducing meaning to the psychological states of speakers is now widely accepted. In this sense, both Gricean semantics and conceptual-role semantics represent a return to the 17th century's emphasis on inner or mental aspects of meaning over outer or worldly aspects. To what extent semantic properties can be attributed to features of the human mind remains a deep problem for further study.

### 2.3.10. The Usage Theory of Meaning

The German scholar, Wittgenstein (1953), developed this theory. It has been elaborated upon by J. Firth and M.A Haliday. The usage theory is also referred to as the contextual or operational theory of meaning. The major motivation was fear that the meaning of certain classes of words could be lost if meaning were treated as just entities. According to the theory, the meaning of a word or an expression is determined by the context of its use. It is the effect created by a linguistic unit within a given context that expresses its full meaning.

### **LEARNING ACTIVITY 2.3**

- (1) Mention the different schools of thought in the study of meaning
- (2) List any three theories of semantics
- (3) State any three characteristics of semantic theories
- (4) Discuss the nature of theories in semantics
- (5) Provide a critique of the ideational and referential theories of meaning.

### **2.4. Three Perspectives on Meaning**

There are at least three perspectives of meaning. They are 1. Lexical semantics, 2. Compositional semantics or sentential semantics (formal semantics) and 3. Discourse or pragmatics. Lexical semantics is concerned with meanings of individual words. Compositional semantics explains how those meanings combine to make meanings for individual sentences or utterances. Discourse or Pragmatics explains how those meanings combine with each other and with other facts about various kinds of context to make meanings for a text or discourse. Dialog or Conversation is often lumped together with Discourse.

#### **2.4.1. Lexical semantics**

Lexical semantics (also known as lexicosemantics), is a subfield of linguistic semantics. The units of analysis in lexical semantics are lexical units which include not only words but also sub-words or sub-units such as affixes and even compound words and phrases. Lexical units make up the catalogue of words in a language, the lexicon. Lexical semantics looks at how the meaning of the lexical units correlates with the structure of the language or syntax. This is referred to as syntax-semantic interface (Wikipedia).

The study of lexical semantics looks at the classification and decomposition of lexical items, the differences and similarities in lexical semantic structure cross-linguistically and the relationship of lexical meaning to sentence meaning and syntax.

Lexical units, also referred to as syntactic atoms, can stand alone such as in the case of root words or parts of compound words or they necessarily attach to other units such as prefixes and suffixes do. The former are called free morphemes and the latter bound morphemes. They fall into a narrow range of meanings (semantic fields) and can combine with each other to generate new meanings.

#### 2.4.2. Compositional semantics

The principle of compositionality states that the meaning of a sentence is determined by the meaning of its words and by the syntactic structure in which they are combined. It is concerned with the study of how meanings of small units combine to form the meaning of larger units. The following examples show that the whole does not equal the sum of the parts and syntax matters to determining meaning.

*The dog chased the cat ≠ The cat chased the dog.*

*The dog chased the cat = The cat was chased by the dog*

The meaning of a sentence is determined by the meaning of its words in conjunction with the way they are syntactically combined. Anomaly, metaphor and idioms are exceptions to compositionality.

Anomaly: When phrases are well-formed syntactically but not semantically (i.e., they ‘don’t make sense’)

*Colorless green ideas sleep furiously.*

*That bachelor is pregnant.*

Metaphor: The use of an expression to refer to something that it does not literally denote in order to suggest a similarity.

*Time is money.*

*The walls have ears.*

Idioms: Phrases with fixed meanings *not* composed of literal meanings of the words

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*Kick the bucket* = ‘to die’

(\**The bucket was kicked by John.*)

*When pigs fly* = ‘it will never occur’

(\**She suspected pigs might actually fly tomorrow.*)

*Bite off more than you can chew* = ‘to take on too much’

(\**He chewed just as much as he bit off.*)

## LEARNING ACTIVITY 2.4

Briefly discuss the three perspectives of meaning.

## SUMMARY

Meaning has been presented to be at the centre of semantics. Meaning can be thematic, conceptual, associative, connotative, collocative, affective, reflected or stylistic. You have been briefly introduced to these types of meaning. The descriptions paved way for you to demarcate the core of linguistics from peripheral aspect of semantics. There are a number of theories in semantics, each with its own merits and demerits. You have observed that these theories provide a concise framework of analysis in semantics. You have been instructed to different theories of meaning such as the ideational, referential and usage theories of meaning. You have also learned about the three perspectives of meaning.

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## Unit 3

### LEXICAL SEMANTICS I

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AN INTRODUCTORY COURSE ON SEMANTICS AND PRAGMATICS

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## OVERVIEW

Lexical semantics is an academic discipline concerned with the meaning of words. Lexical semanticists are interested in what words mean, why they mean what they mean, how they are represented in speakers' minds and how they are used in text and discourse. Outside linguistics proper, lexical semantics overlaps

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with disciplines such as philosophy, psychology, anthropology, computer science and pedagogy. Within linguistics, it crucially overlaps with what is traditionally referred to as lexicology, which is the overall study of the vocabularies of languages. Here in this unit we are concerned with different approaches to lexical semantics and various types of lexical relations otherwise known as sense relations

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

- know the different approach the lexical semantics;
- explain different types of sense/lexical relations;
- apply sense relations in explaining the meaning of a language.

### 3.1. Approaches to Lexical semantics

There are many approaches to lexical semantics. Some of them are: one level vs. two level approaches, monosemic vs. polysemic approaches, the compositional approach, 'Holist' approach, conceptual approach and formal approach (Cruse, 2000:96-102).

#### 3.1.1. One level vs. two level approaches

The question of whether a distinction has to be drawn between semantics and encyclopedic knowledge is a major dividing line which separates semantists into two groups. The group of semantists who believe that such a division has to be made often compare their position with the distinction between phonetics and phonology. We know that human beings can make and learn to recognize an almost infinitive number of speech sounds. But only a handful of these function distinctively to make utterance different, or enter into systemic relation of any complexity in any particular language. These functional units are the true linguistic elements on the phonological system of the concerned language. In a similar way the variety of 'raw' meanings is virtually infinite, but only a limited number of these are truly linguistic and interact systematically with other aspects of the linguistic system. The vast detailed knowledge of the world, which speakers undoubtedly possess, is according to the dual-level view, a property, not of language elements, but of concepts, which are strictly extralinguistic.

The supporters of single-level view claim that no arbitrary basis for assigning aspects of meaning (or knowledge) to the 'semantic' or 'encyclopedic' side of an alleged dichotomy has been put forward which survives even a cursory scrutiny. Most cognitive linguists would take the view that all meaning is conceptual, and that the 'extra' level of structure proposed by the two-level camp does not actually do any theoretical work. The distinction between grammatical and lexical/encyclopaedic meaning is not necessarily denied, but it is likely to be seen as a continuum, rather than a dichotomy and entirely conceptual in nature.

### 3.1.2. Monosemic vs. polysemic approaches

The distinction between the monosemic and polysemic approach relays on the question how many meanings ought to be attributed to a word. The clear-cut cases of homonymy, like that of *bank* There is beyond any dispute. There is no conceivable way of deriving one meaning from the other in this case. But the dispute lies on the bunch of related senses which a characteristic of polysemy. The monosemic view advocates that as few senses as possible should be given separate identification in the lexicon of a language, and as many as possible have to be derived from them. The understanding is that if one reading of word is in any way a motivated extension of another one, then only one should be recorded, and the other should be left to the operation of lexical rules. The rules in general apply to more than one instance and hence represent systematicity in the lexicon.

The polysemic approach rejects the assumption that a motivated extension of a word sense does not need to be recorded in the lexicon. The basic reason for this is that lexical rules only specify potential extensions of meaning, only some of which become conventionalized and incorporated in the lexicon: others are possible, and may appear as nonce forms, but there is none the less a clear distinction between these and those which are established.

Take the case of *drink*. In many contexts it is clear what is being drunk, but obviously one would not wish to create a different lexical entry for drink corresponding to every possible drinkable liquid. To this extent, the monosemists and the polysemists would agree. However, it is possible for some particular drinkable items to be incorporated into a specific reading for drink. In principle, any class of beverage could be incorporated in this way. But in English, only "alcoholic beverages" can be encoded as follows: *I'm afraid Raja has started drinking again*. Now in principle, this could have happened with fruit juice

instead of alcohol. But English lexicon can account one of these possibilities. The majority view nowadays is probably monosemic, but the polysemic position cannot be negated.

### 3.1.3. The Compositional approach

One of the earliest and still most persistent and widespread ways of approaching word meaning is to think of the meaning of a word as being constructed out of smaller, more elementary, invariant units of meaning. This stand is comparable to the atomic structure of matter. The immediate inspiration for the first proposal of these lines came from phonology. These "semantic atoms" are variously known as semes, semantic features, semantic components, semantic markers, semantic primes. Here the merest outline of the approach is presented; componential semantics is treated in great detail in unit 5.

The componential approach to semantics might have cropped up into modern linguistics at first due to Hjelmslev (1916). He believed as a matter of principle that the meaning side of the linguistics sign should show the same structuring principles of the sound side. For him the notion of reduction was of major importance. The phonological structure of hundreds of thousands of different signs in a language can be analyzed as combinations of syllables drawn from a list of a few hundred, and these, in turn, can be shown to be built out of phonemes belonging to an inventory of fifty or so, thus arriving at the ultimate phonological building blocks, the distinctive features, whose number is of the order of dozen. In the same way, the meaning side of signs should be reducible to combinations drawn from an inventory significantly less numerous than the stock of signs being analysed. Hjelmslev seem to have in mind was the discovery of a set of basic words, out of whose meanings all other word meanings could be constructed. Hjelmslev was the first structural semanticists: the approach was developed considerably by European linguists.

A componential approach developed in America, seemingly independently of the movement in Europe. It first appeared amongst anthropological linguists, and scored significant success in reducing the apparent impenetrable complexity of kinship systems to combination: from a limited set of features. A new version, proposed by Katz and Fodor (1963), appeared in the context of Chomskyan generative grammar. This was much more ambitious than anything which had appeared previously: first it formed an integral part of a complete theory of language; second, it made claims of universality and psychological reality; and third, the features were not confined to the meanings of existing words, but were of an abstract nature.



### 3.1.4. 'Holist' approach

It is a belief of all componentialists that the meaning of a word can, in some useful sense, be finitely specified, in isolation from the meanings of other words in the language. Among philosophers of language, this is known as the localist view. For a localist, contextual variation can be accounted for by rules of interaction with contexts. The contrary position is the holistic view, according to which the meaning of a word cannot be known without taking into account the meanings of all the other words in a language. There are various versions of holism: two will be outlined here.

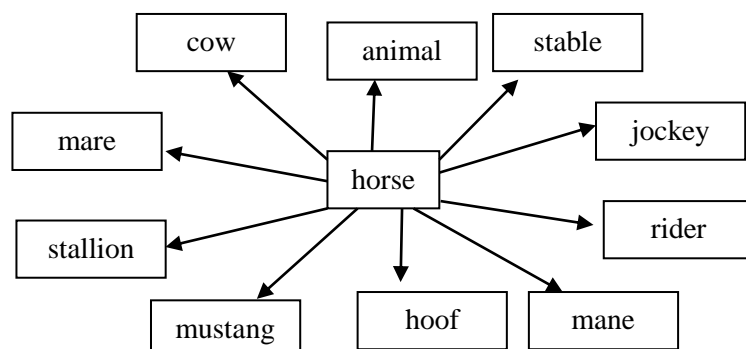
#### Hass

Hass's view of meaning derives from Wittgenstein's 'use' theory of meaning which is encapsulated in the dictum: "Don't look for the meaning - look for the use." Hass is inspired by J.R. Firth's dictum: "Words shall be known by the company they keep". Hass went further than this. He said that the meaning of a word was a semantic field (not the usual semantic field) which had two dimensions: a syntagmatic dimension, in which all possible contexts of the word were arranged in order of normality; and paradigmatic substitutes for the word were arranged in order of normality; and a paradigmatic dimension, in which for each context, the possible paradigmatic substitutes for the word were arranged in order of normality. Relative normality was for Hass a primitive. In principle, 'context' includes extra linguistic context. According to Hass the word's semantic field constitutes its meaning. Notice that every word therefore participate in the meaning of every other word; there is therefore no distinction between word meaning and encyclopedic knowledge. Hass's view was that the semantic field of a word actually constituted the meaning of the word.

#### Lyons

A second variety of holism is represented by Lyons (1977). The essence of this approach is the quintessentially Saussurean belief that meanings are not substantive, but relational, and are constituted by contrasts within the same system. Lyons states that the sense of a lexical item consist of the set of sense relations which the item contrasts with other items which participate in the same field. He insists sense relations are not relations between independently established sense; one should rather say that senses are

constituted out of sense relations. So, for instance the meaning of horse should be portrayed along the lines shown in the following figure:



In this system, the links are specific sorts, such as "is a kind of" (e.g. horse: animal). "is not a kind of" (e.g. horse: cow), "is a part of" (e.g. mane: horse), "is a characteristic noise produced by" (e.g. neigh: horse), "is a dwelling place for" (e.g. stable: horse), and so on. Since the words illustrated also enter into relation with other words than horse, the meaning of horse is a complex work of relations potentially encompassing the whole lexicon.

### 3.1.5. Conceptual approach

Conceptual approaches are single-level approaches and identify the meaning of a word with the concept or concepts it gives access to in the cognitive system. Among cognitive linguists, the prototype model of concept structure holds sway. The origins of the prototype approach can be traced to Wittgenstein. Wittgenstein proposed the notion of family resemblance: the members of a large family typically resemble one another in a variety of ways. Although important in breaking the stronghold of the Aristotelian theory, this notion is not very helpful for semantic analysis.

The notion of non-Aristotelian categories was taken up and further refined by cognitive psychologists, especially Rosch and her co-workers. She established what is known as prototype theory as an account of natural categories. On this account, members of a category are not equal - they vary in how good they are, or how representative, of the category. The very best are the prototypical members, and the category is essentially built round these.

Jackendoff is another linguist who locates word meaning in conceptual structure. Like the cognitive linguists, he sees no need for an intermediate "linguistic semantics". Unlike many cognitive linguists, however, he is strongly componentialist, and believes that intuitively perceived relationships should be accounted for in terms of shared semantic building blocks.

### 3.1.6. Formal approaches

Formal approaches to semantics attempts to express the facts of meaning through a strict formalism, preferably closely related to one of the standard logics.

### LEARNING ACTIVITY 3.1

- (1) What are the different approaches to lexical semantics listed in Cruse (2000).
- (2) Differentiate between monosemic and polysemic approaches.
- (3) Explain how holistic approach to lexical semantics is different from componential analysis.
- (4) Explain the uniqueness of conceptual approach to lexical semantics.

### 3.2. Lexical relations

There are two main modes for exploring word meaning: in relation to other words, and in relation to the world. The traditional method used in dictionaries is to define a word in terms of other words. Ultimately, this strategy is circular, since we must then define the words we use in the definition, and in their definitions, until finally we must either run out of words or re-use one of the words we are trying to define. One strategy is to try to find a small set of **semantic primes**: Wierzbicka identifies on the order of 50 or so concepts (such as GOOD, BAD, BEFORE, AFTER, I, YOU, PART, KIND...) that allegedly suffice to express the meaning of all words (in any language). Whether this research program succeeds or not has important implications for the nature of linguistic conceptualization.

In any case, speakers clearly have intuitions about meaning relations among words. The most familiar relations are **synonymy** and **antonymy**. Two words are synonyms if they mean the same thing, e.g., *filbert* and *hazelnut*, *board* and *plank*, etc. Two words are antonyms if they mean opposite things: *black* and *white*, *rise* and *fall*, *ascent* and *descent*, etc. One reason to think that it is necessary to recognize antonymy as an indispensable component of grammatical descriptions is because at most one member of

each antonymous pair is allowed to occur with measure phrases: *tall* is the opposite of *short*, and we can say *Bill is 6 feet tall*, but not *\*Tom is 5 feet short*. Other major semantic lexical relations include **hyponymy** (names for subclasses: *terrier* is a hyponym of *dog*, since a terrier is a type of dog), and **meronymy** (names for parts: *finger* is a meronym of *hand*). Words whose meanings are sufficiently similar in some respect are often said to constitute a **semantic field**, though this term is rarely if ever given a precise definition. Terms such as *red*, *blue*, *green*, etc., are members of a semantic field having to do with color. Miller and associates have developed a lexical database called WordNet, a kind of multidimensional thesaurus, in which these types of lexical relations are explicitly encoded. Thus WordNet is an attempt to model the way in which a speaker conceptualizes one kind of word meaning.

### 3.2.1. Paradigmatic and syntagmatic relations

From the point of view of structural linguistics, linguistic units can be studied from the point of two axes: syntagmatic and paradigmatic axes. Syntagmatic axis gives you syntagmatic relations between the units. Paradigmatic axis gives you paradigmatic relations between the units. Similarly meaning of linguistic units can be studied by means of these two axes oriented relations. Syntagmatic relation is the relation between words that appear in a sentence. It can be visualized as relation in the horizontal axis. Paradigmatic relation is the relation between words that can replace a word that appear in a sentence. It can be visualized as a relation in the vertical axis.

The boy	beat	a/an	dog
girl	kick		snake
man	hit		cat
human being	hurt		animal

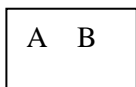
The relation between *boy*, *beat*, and *dog* is syntagmatic relation. The relation between *girl*, *man* and *human being* that can replace one another or between *dog*, *snake*, *cat* and *animal* that can replace one another in a context is paradigmatic relation.

### 3.2.2. Congruence Relations

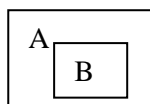
The four basic relations between classes furnish a model not only for establishing fundamental group of sense relations, but also for defining a set of systematic variants applicable to virtually all other

paradigmatic sense relations (Cruse, 1986:86). The basic lexical relations are referred as congruence relations.

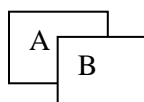
Identity: class A and class B have same members



Inclusion: class B is wholly included in the class A



Overlap: class A and class B have members in common but each has members not found in the other



Disjunction: class A and class B have member in common



Relationships between word meanings

### 3.2.3. Paradigmatic sense relations of identity and inclusion

The paradigmatic sense relations of identity leads to synonymy and the paradigmatic relations of inclusion leads to hyponymy-hypernymy and meronymy-holonymy relations.

#### 3.2.3.1. Synonymy

The lexical items which have the same meaning or which share same componential semantic features are synonyms and the relationship existing between them is synonymy. Synonymy does not necessarily mean that the items concerned should be identical in meaning, i.e. interchangeable in all contexts. Synonymy can be said to occur if lexical items are close enough in their meaning to allow a choice to be made between them in some contexts, without there being any difference in the meaning of the sentence as a whole. Take, for examples, the following words in Tamil, *puttakam* 'book' and *nuul* 'book'. *avan oru puttakam paTittaan* 'he read a book' can entail *avan oru nuul paTittaan* 'he read book'. The relation

existing between *puttakam* and *nuul* is synonymy and *puttakam* and *nuul* are synonyms. Similarly *fiddle* and *violin* are synonyms. For instance *He plays the violin very well* entails and is entailed by *He plays fiddle very well*. The following pairs of words can be considered as synonym pairs: *filbert: hazelnut, couch: sofa, big: large, automobile: car, vomit: throw up, Water: H<sub>2</sub>O*.

Two lexemes are synonyms if they can be successfully substituted for each other in all situations. If so they have the same propositional meaning. Synonymy is a relation between senses rather than words. Consider the words *big* and *large*. You may consider them as synonyms when you come across the following examples:

How **big** is that plane?

Would I be flying on a **large** or small plane?

But you may hesitate to judge them as synonyms when you come across the following examples:

Miss Nelson, for instance, became a kind of **big** sister to Benjamin.

?Miss Nelson, for instance, became a kind of **large** sister to Benjamin.

The reason is *big* has a sense that means being older, or grown up; *large* lacks this sense. But there are few (or no) examples of perfect synonymy. Even if many aspects of meaning are identical, still may not preserve the acceptability based on notions of politeness, slang, register, genre, etc. The synonym pair *water* and *H<sub>2</sub>O* will illustrate the above point.

When reference is made to lexical relation or close relatedness in the meaning of words, we deal with *synonymy*. We can therefore, describe pairs of words that have very close similarities in meaning as synonyms. For example we can have the following pairs of words as synonyms:

friend: ally: boss: master; amiable: friendly

It has often been observed that words may not always have exact substitutes in all contexts. This observation means that we may have absolute, complete and total synonyms when there are exact substitutes as shown by the following examples:

everybody: everyone; bandit: brigand

There are also broad or near synonyms as seen from the following examples:

rich: sumptuous; mature : ripe

Thus we have different kinds of synonyms: absolute synonymy, propositional synonymy and near-synonymy (Cruse: 2000:156-160). Absolute synonymy refers to complete identify of meaning. Propositional synonymy can be defined in terms entailment. If two lexical items are propositional synonyms, they can be substituted in any expression with truth-conditional properties without effect on those properties (Cruse: 2000:158). For example, *Raja brought a violin* entails *Raja bought a fiddle*. So *fiddle* and *violin* are synonyms.

### 3.2.3.2. Hyponymy and Hyperonymy

When the meaning of one form is included in the meaning of another, we have hyponymy. For instance, included in *animals* are *dogs*, *elephants*, *goat*, etc. We can also relate hyponymy to *professions* to include *law*, *medicine*, *teaching*, *banking*, etc. There is always a hierarchical relationship drawing from the general to samples. The general term is usually referred to as **superordinate** term while the terms that indicate inclusion are referred to as **hyponyms**. Simply then, hyponymy is about relations of inclusion.

As such, we can say that *flower* is a superordinate term while *rose*, *hibiscus*, *cauliflower*, *sunflower*, *carnation*, *forget-me-not*, etc. are hyponyms of flower. Co-occurring hyponyms are referred to as **co-hyponyms**. Thus, *table*, *chair*, *cupboard*, *wardrobe*, *bookshelf*, *bedstead* are cohyponyms while their superordinate term is *furniture*. You should find other examples to practice and you will find it very interesting, almost like a game.

Hyponymy is the relationship which exists between specific and general lexical items, such that the former is included in the latter. The set of terms which are hyponyms of same superordinate term are co-hyponyms. Take for example the lexical items *cow* and *animal*. 'this is a cow' and 'this is a *buffalo* unilaterally entail 'this is an *animal*'. The relationship existing between *cow* and *buffalo* with *animal* is hyponymy and *cow* and *buffalo* are co-hyponyms. One sense is a hyponym of another if the first sense is more specific, denoting a subclass of the other.

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*car* is a hyponym of *vehicle*  
*dog* is a hyponym of *animal*  
*mango* is a hyponym of *fruit*

If X is a hyponym of Y, conversely, we can say Y is a hyperonym of X.

*vehicle* is a hyperonym/superordinate of *car*  
*animal* is a hyperonym of *dog*  
*fruit* is a hyperonym of *mango*

Hyperonymy is more formally extensional. The class denoted by the superordinate extensionally includes the class denoted by the hyponym. Hyponymy is frequently discussed by logicians in terms of class inclusion (Lyon, 1977). For example, if X is the class of flowers and Y is roses, then it is in fact the case that X properly includes Y ( $X \subset Y$   $Y \not\subset X$ ) i.e. flowers  $\subset$  roses and roses  $\not\subset$  flowers. But there are problems attaching to the definition of hyponymy in terms of the logic of classes. First of all it is unclear whether we should say that a hyponym is included in superordinate or a superordinate in its hyponym(s). If we consider the extension of lexemes, we would say that a superordinate lexeme is more inclusive; but as for the intension of lexeme is concerned the hyponym is more inclusive (roses have all the defining properties of flowers, and certain additional properties which distinguishes them from tulips, daffodils, etc.).

Hyponymy is definable in terms of unilateral implications. For example, 'She is wearing a rose' implies 'She is wearing a flower', but 'She is wearing a flower' does not implies 'She is wearing a rose'. If hyponyms are unilateral and non-symmetrical, synonyms are bilateral or symmetrical.

Hyponymy is a transitive relation. If X is a hyponym of Y and Y is a hyponym of Z, then X is the hyponym of Z. For example cow is a hyponym of 'mammal' and 'mammal' is a hyponym of 'animal'; therefore 'cow' is the hyponym of 'animal'.

Hyponymy is often defined in terms of entailment between sentences which differ only in respect of the lexical items being tested (Cruse, 2000:151): '*It is an apple*' entails '*It is a fruit*'; but '*It is a fruit*' does not



entails '*It is an apple*'; similarly '*Raja slapped Radha*' entails '*Raja hits Radha*'; but '*Raja hits Radha*' does not entail '*Raja slapped Radha*'.

The concept of hyponymy can be expressed in ordinary language as X is a type/kind/sort of Y. It is interesting that some pairs of words that satisfy the logical definition of hyponymy collocate more acceptably in this frame than others (Cruse, 2000:152):

A horse is a type of animal.

?A kitten is a sort of cat. (A kitten is a young cat)

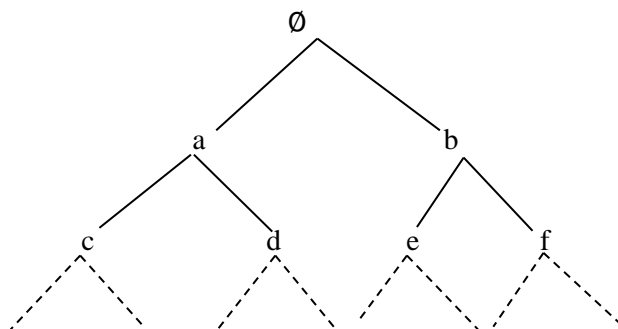
?A stallion is a type of horse. (a stallion is a male horse)

?A queen is a kind of woman. (A queen is a woman)

Cruse (1986) calls the relation between *stallion* and *horse* as taxonymy distinguishing it from the relation between *horse* and *animal*.

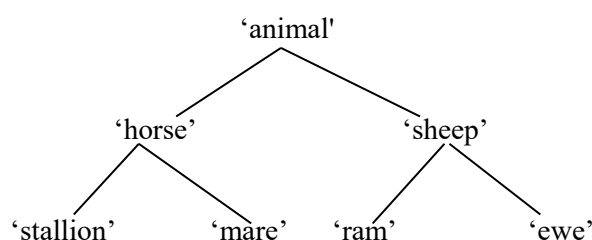
### Hierarchical structure in the vocabulary

The relation of hyponymy imposes hierarchical structure upon the vocabulary and upon particular fields within the vocabulary; and the hierarchical ordering of lexemes can be represented formally as a tree-diagram, as illustrated schematically in figure given below.



In the diagram a, b, c, d, e, f stand for individual lexemes. And the point of origin or root of the tree is labeled zero ( $\emptyset$ ). Two branches are shown issuing from each node. But this is appropriate only for co-hyponyms related by opposition. The broken lines show further branches of the tree. As we have seen,

hyponym is transitive. So any lexeme is a hyponym of any other lexeme that dominates it on the tree. We can say that a immediately dominates c and d. By virtue of this a is the immediate superordinate of c and d, and c and d are immediate hyponyms of a. We can consider the tree diagram as one presented in the figure reflect the structure of the vocabulary or parts of the vocabulary. But this implies many presumptions. For example, 'horse' and 'sheep' are immediate co-hyponyms of 'animal'; 'stallion' and 'mare' immediate hyponyms of 'horse'; 'ram' and 'ewe' are immediate co-hyponyms of 'sheep'. But the principle of differentiation is not kept constant; the relation between 'horse' and 'stallion' and 'mare' is different from the relation between 'sheep' and 'ewe' and 'ram'. So, bring down the entire set of animals in the hierarchical fashion is a difficult job and it needs a lot of compromises.



The fact that lexemes, in most languages at least, fall into a number of distinct parts of speech would of itself preclude the hierarchical ordering of the vocabulary in terms of hyponymy under a single lexeme. For a lexeme belonging to one part of speech cannot be a hyponymy of a lexeme belonging to another part of speech. The vocabulary of a language is structured hierarchically in terms of hyponymy under several different points of origin, each one associated with a particular part of speech or some major subclass of one of the parts of speech is a plausible notion, though not a real possibility. There is no support in the lexical structure of any language for the view that all nouns denoting animate beings are hierarchically ordered, in terms of hyponymy, as a single class. If we include quasi-hyponym with hyponymy as a relation in terms of which vocabularies are structured hierarchically, the hypothesis that the vocabulary in all languages is structured hierarchically under a relatively small set of lexemes of very general sense is rather possible. It is a hypothesis, however, which is difficult to evaluate on the basis of the evidence that is at present available (Lyons, 1977:299) .

### 3.2.3.3. Meronymy and Holonymy

Meronymy-Holonymy relation is otherwise know by the term 'part-whole' relation. It is different from hyponymy-hyperonymy relation discussed above. For example we can say that 'arm' is the meronym of

the holonymy body; similarly, 'wheel' is the meronym of the holonym 'bicycle'. That is, the relation between 'arm' and 'body' is called meronymy; and conversely the relation that holds between 'body' and 'arm' is known as holonymy; similarly the relation that holds between 'wheel' and 'bicycle' is meronymy and the relation between 'bicycle' and 'wheel' is holonymy,

The distinction between meronymy-Holonymy relation and homonymy-hyperonymy relation is clearly distinct in most cases. We cannot say 'arm is a kind of body' or 'wheel is a kind of bicycle'. We have to say 'arm is a part of a body' and 'wheel is a part of a bicycle'.

The part-whole relationship which holds between physically discrete referents is clearly transitive: if something X is a part of something Y which is a part of something Z, then X is always describable as a part of Z. For example, if finger is a part of an arm and arm is the part of a body, then finger is a part of a body.

The fact that one entity may be described as a part of another entity does not imply, however, that there is a part-whole relation holding in the vocabulary between the lexemes used in expressions which refer to these entities. For example we can say 'handle is a part of a door' and 'door is a part of a house'; but it is odd to say 'handle is a part of a house' or 'this is house-handle' or 'this the handle of the house'. We might therefore be inclined to set up a part-whole relationship between 'handle' and 'door' and between 'house' and 'door', but not between 'handle' and 'house'.

An entity could be a meronym of part of different holonyms. For example, a door could be a part of a house as well as a car. Similarly, a wheel could be a part of a bicycle, bus, car, cart etc. In this context one could argue that the part-whole relationship is irrelevant for linguistic semantics. But, there are, however, numerous lexemes in the vocabularies of languages whose meaning cannot be specified independently of some part-whole relation (Lyons, 1977:314).

The difference between hyponymy and part-whole relations is clear enough in cases like 'arm': 'body', 'wheel': 'bicycle'; i.e. when the lexemes in question are nouns denoting discrete physical objects. Most of the discussion of part-whole lexical relations by linguists has been restricted to such cases.

X consists of/is composed of Y is distinguished from hyponymy-hyperonym relation and part-whole relation. The following examples will illustrate this:

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1.a The substance consists of /is composed gold.

1b. This substance is gold.

\*2a. The animal consists of/is composed of a cow.

2b. The animal is a cow.

3a. This body consists of an arm.

\*3b. This body is an arm.

Mention should also be made here about various kinds of collectives such as 'cattle', 'clergy', 'furniture', 'herd', 'flock', 'family', 'library'. Collective nouns are defined, semantically, as lexemes which denote collections or groups of persons or objects. In English, they fall into a number of different grammatical classes. For example, 'cattle' and 'clergy' are treated as plural and 'furniture' as singular. We are concerned herewith the place occupied by collectives in the structure of vocabulary. Many of them serve as superordinates in relation to a set of quasi-hyponyms. For example, 'cattle' is a superordinate to {'cow', 'bull', 'steer', etc} and 'clergy' is superordinate to {'bishop', 'priest', etc.}. There are many such collectives in the vocabulary of English and other languages which are superordinate to sets of lexemes in a hierarchical relationship that is ambivalent with respect to the distinction of hyponymy and the part-whole relation.

#### 3.2.3.4. Compatibility

The lexical items which overlap in terms of meaning and do not show systematic include-included relation and have some semantic traits in common, but differ in respect of traits that do not clash are said to be compatible. Take for example the words *dog* and *pet*. A dog could be a pet, but neither all pets are dogs nor all dogs are pets. The relationship existing between *dog* and *pet* is compatible.

Two varieties of compatibility can be distinguished: strict compatibility and contingent compatibility (Cruse, 1986: 93). X and Y are strict compatible if they have at least one shared hyponymy or hyponymous expression which is independently characterizable. Take the case of *snake* and *poisonous creature*. *It is a snake* neither entails *It is a poisonous creature* nor *It is not a poisonous creature*. Likewise, *It is a poisonous creature* is logically independent of *It is a snake*. *Snake* and *poisonous creature* are strict compatibles because *adder* and *cobra*, for instance, are hyponymous to both. Contingent compatibility is more common. It is exemplified by *dog* and *pet*: every dog is, in principle, a

potential pet. There is no independently characterisable subclass of dogs for which being a pet is a necessary or canonical trait; nor are there distinguishable sub-types of pet which are canonically or necessarily dogs.

### **3.2.4. Paradigmatic sense relations of exclusion and opposition**

#### **3.2.4.1. Incompatibility**

Incompatibility refers to sets of items where the choice of one item excludes the use of all the other items from that set. Take for example the words *cat* and *dog*, '*it is a cat*' can entail '*it is not a dog*'. The relation existing between CAT and DOG is incompatible. Both come under the superordinate term *animal*. Thus the incompatible items can be co-hyponyms of a superordinate item, that is items which are in incompatible can be related to one another by hyponymous relation. There are certain parallels between incompatibility and compatibility. Like 'mere' compatibility, 'mere' incompatibility is relatively little interest. The fact that *affix* and *volcano* are incompatibles is not a special information. However, a special significance attaches to set of incompatibles which fall under superordinate: *animal: cat, dog, lion, elephant*, etc. All kinds of oppositions can be included under incompatibility.

#### **3.2.4.2. Opposition and contrast**

Structural semantics has emphasized the importance of paradigmatic opposition from the very beginning. The standard technical term for oppositeness of meaning between lexemes is antonymy. But antonymy cannot cover all the sense relations dealt under oppositeness. By definition antonymy is a narrow term for encompassing all the aspects to be dealt under oppositeness. Senses that are opposites with respect to one feature of their meaning, otherwise, they are very similar. Antonymy is generally restricted to the pairs of If the opposition is between two lexical items, it is called binary opposition and if the opposition is between many lexical items it is called many-member opposition. Antonymy is generally restricted to the pairs the following: dark: light, short: long, hot: cold, up: down. More formally antonyms can be define as a binary opposition at the opposite ends of a scale (*long: short, fast: slow*).

##### **3.2.4.2.1. Gradable and ungradable opposites**

Grading involves comparison. When we compare two or more objects with respect to their possession of a certain property (typically denoted by adjectives) is usually appropriate to enquire whether they have

this property to the same degree or not. For example, We may say 'X is as hot as Y' or 'X is hotter than Y' or 'X is the hottest of all'. But a lexeme like 'female', on the other hand, is non-gradable. That is we normally don't say 'X is as female as Y' or 'X is more female than Y'. So we can say that hot: and cold are gradable opposites, whereas female and male or non-gradable opposites.

#### **3.2.4.2.2. Complementaries**

Ungradable opposites, when they are employed as predicative expressions, divide the universe-of-discourse into two complementary subsets. For example the opposites male and female are complementaris. 'X is female' implies 'X is not male' and 'X is not female' implies 'X is male'. Of all varieties of opposites, complementary is perhaps the simplest conceptually. The essence of a pair of complementaries is that between them they exhaustively divide some conceptual domain into two mutually exclusive compartments. so that what does not fall into one of the compartments necessarily fall into the other. There is no 'no-man's island', no neutral ground, no possibility of a third term lying between them. Examples of complementaries are: true: false, dead: alive, open: shut, hit: miss, pass: fail, male: female.

#### **3.2.4.2.3. Privative and equipollent antonyms**

Cutting across the distinction between antonyms and complementaries is the distinction that many structural semanticists draw between privative and equipotent opposites. A privative opposition is a contrastive relation between two lexemes, one of which denotes some positive property and the other of which denotes the absence of that property. e.g., 'animate': 'inanimate'. An equipollent opposition is a relation in which each of the contrasting lexemes denotes a positive property: e.g., 'male': 'female'.

#### **3.2.4.2.4. Contradictories and contraries**

With gradable opposites, however, the situation is different. The predication of one implies the predication of the negation of the other: the proposition 'X is hot' implies 'X is not cold'. and 'X is cold' implies 'X is not hot'. But 'X is not hot' does not generally imply 'X is cold'. The distinction between gradable and ungradable opposites can be equated with the traditional logical distinction between contradictories and contraries. The distinction of contradictories and contraries corresponds to the distinction of ungradable and gradable lexemes within the class of lexical opposites in a language.

### 3.2.4.2.5. Distinction between Contrast, opposition, antonymy and complementaries

Contrast will be taken as the most general term, carrying no implication of the number of elements in the set of paradigmatically contrasting elements. Opposition will be restricted to dichotomous or binary contrasts; and antonymy will be restricted still further to gradable opposites such as big: small, high: low, etc. (Lyons, 1977: 279). The ungradable opposites like male and female will be termed complementaries.

### 3.2.4.2.6. Converseness

To be distinguished from antonymy and complementarity is converseness. It can be exemplified by the pairs like 'husband': 'wife'. The statement 'X is the husband of Y' implies 'Y is the wife of X'. The active-passive opposition can be taken under converseness. The statement 'X killed Y' implies 'Y was killed by X'. Converse relation can be extended to two-place predicate relations existing in reciprocal social roles and kinship terms on the one hand and temporal and spatial relations on the other hand.

#### Converse pairs of social roles

e.g., doctor: patient, master/mistress: servant

#### Converse pairs of Kinship terms

e.g., father/mother: 'son'/'daughter

#### Converse pairs of Temporal relations

e.g., before: after, earlier: later

#### Converse pairs of Spatial relations

e.g., in front of : behind, above: below

The relation between 'buy' and 'sell' are more complex. They are three place predicates involving subject, object and indirect object. 'Buy' is a three-place converse of 'sell'. 'X buys Y from Z' implies 'Z sells Y to X'. These expressions can be symbolically represented as 'buy' (X,Y,Z)  $\equiv$  'sell' (Z,Y,X).

### 3.2. 4.2.7. Directional, orthogonal and antipodal opposition

You have been instructed about three kinds of opposition: antonymy, compatibility and converseness. There is yet a fourth type, with various subtypes, which is sufficiently important in language. This is

called directional opposition. Directional opposition hold between word pairs such as 'up': 'down', arrive: depart, and come: go.

Another distinction to be drawn is orthogonal and antipodal opposites (Lyons, 1977: 282). If we consider the oppositions which hold within the set {'north', 'south', 'east', 'west'} we see that they are of two kinds. Each of the four members of the set is opposed orthogonally (i.e. perpendicularly) to others and antipodally (i.e. diametrically) to one another.

**Directional opposites**

e.g., 'up': 'down', 'arrive': 'depart', and 'come': 'go'

**Orthogonal opposites**

e.g. 'north': 'east' and 'west'; 'east': 'south' and 'north'

**Antipodal opposites**

e.g. 'north': 'south'; 'east': 'west'

Antipodal opposition is not confined to location or orientation in physical space, It operates in the areas of colour, kinship, etc.

**3.2.4.2.8. Non-binary contrasts**

There are oppositions in which the contrast exists between more than two entities. For examples the contrast exist between names of week days, months show non-binary contrast as there are more than two elements involved in the set of contrasting terms.

{Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday }

{January, February, March, April, May, June, July, August, September, October, November, December }

{rose, tulip, lotus, jasmine, etc. }

The relationship of sense which hold between lexemes in many member sets such as {Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday } may be described as incompatibility.



Various kinds of ordering are found in many-member sets of incompatibles: by a many member set, in this context, means a set which contains more than one lexemes. Such sets may be serially or cyclically ordered. In a serially ordered set there are two outermost members and all other lexemes in the set are ordered between two others; in a cyclically ordered set every lexeme is ordered between two others. Among serially ordered sets, scales may be distinguished from ranks according to whether the constituent lexemes are gradable or not. The ordering in scales in terms of incompatibility is characteristically less strict than it is in ranks. Ranks exhibit the principle of serial ordering in a stricter form. For example, the examiners adopt a serial ordering of ranks in a stricter form. e.g. {'excellent', 'good', 'average', 'fair', 'poor'}. The set of lexemes used to describe differences of military rank provides another example. Numerals also constitute a rank.

### **Cyclical sets or cycles**

e.g. {'spring', 'summer', 'winter'}; {'January, .... 'December'}; {'Sunday',..., 'Saturday'}

### **Scales**

e.g., {'excellent', 'good', 'fair', 'poor', 'bad', 'atrocious'}; {'hot', 'warm', 'cold'}

### **Ranks**

e.g., {'field marshal', 'general', ... 'corporal', 'private'}; {'one', 'two', ... 'twelve'..., 'hundred', 'thousand', 'million', 'billion'...}

## **LEARNING ACTIVITY 3.2.**

- (1) Describe the paradigmatic relations of identity.
- (2) Explain the paradigmatic relations of inclusion.
- (3) Describe the paradigmatic relations of exclusion and opposition

### **SUMMARY**

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## **UNIT 4**

### **LEXICAL SEMANTICS II**

### **CONTENT**

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*AN INTRODUCTORY COURSE ON SEMANTICS AND PRAGMATICS*

- 4.1. Hierarchies
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    - 4.1.1.1 Hyponymy and incompatibility
    - 4.1.1.2. Taxonymy
    - 4.1.1.3. Characteristics of natural taxonomies
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    - 4.1.2.4. Close relatives of the part-whole relation
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  - 4.2.5. Propositional series or grids
  - 4.2.6. Clusters
  - 4.2.7. Miscellaneous

## OVERVIEW

The vocabulary of a language is not just a collection of words scattered at random throughout the mental landscape. It is at least partly structured, and at various levels. There are various modes of structuring. It is useful, at the outset, to distinguish two major types of structure, the linguistic and psycholinguistic.

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Linguistic structures in the lexicon are defined semantically in terms of meaning relations. Psycholinguistic structures are defined in terms of such properties as associative links, priming characteristics, and patterns of speech errors. These two approaches are complementary to one another.

Linguistic structures in the lexicon may have a phonological, grammatical, or semantic basis. Obvious examples of grammatical structuring are word classes (grouping of words according to their syntactic properties) and word families (set of words derived from a common root). Here we shall be concerned with semantically defined structures, particularly those generated by sense relations, or sets of sense relations.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

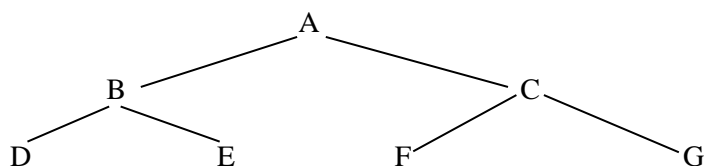
After the completion of this unit you able to understand

- semantic structuring under lexical configurations.
- two types of lexical configurations: hierarchies and propositional series.
- the different types of hierarchies such as taxonomic hierarchies and meronymic hierarchies
- non-branching hierarchies.
- propositional series or grids
- clusters

### 4.1. Hierarchies

A hierarchy, which need not consists of lexical items, is a set of elements related to one another in a characteristic way. Two structural types of hierarchy may be distinguished: those with branch, and those which, because of the nature of their constitutive relations, are not capable of branching. The two possibilities are illustrated diagrammatically in figures below (Cruse, 1986: 112):

Branching hierarchies



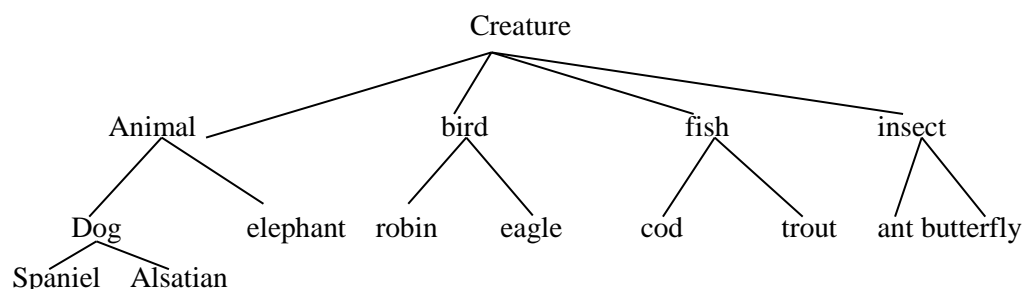
Non-branching hierarchies



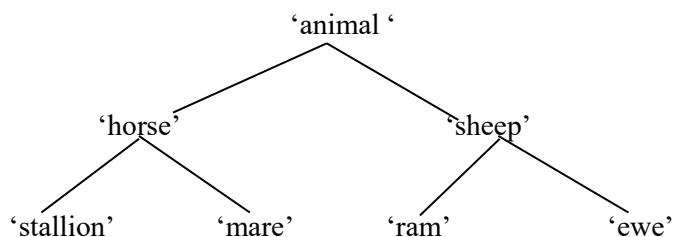
#### 4.1.1. Taxonomic hierarchies

##### 4.1.1.1. Hyponymy and incompatibility

Consider the following fragment of a taxonomic hierarchy (Cruse, 1986: 136):

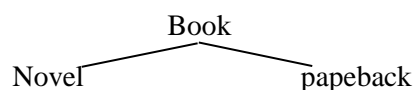


It seems fairly clear intuitively that two sense relations are essential to this configuration: daughter-nodes must be hyponymous of their respective mother nodes. (dog: animal, insect: creature, cod: fish); and sister nodes must be incompatibles (cat: dog, robin: eagle, bird: fish). But the two prosperities (hyponymy and incompatibility) is not enough for a taxonomic hierarchy. Consider the following fragment of hierarchy.



In this, sister-nodes are strict incompatibles, and daughters are strict hyponyms of mothers. Yet it is not well-formed taxonomy. Intuitively one would say that the principle of differentiation has been held constant: the division of animals into sheep and horse is a different sort of division from that of ewe and ram. We must therefore inquire into the nature of the division which gives rise to well-formed taxonomies.

It is worth noting, too, that there is no inherent connection between hyponymy and incompatibility: two hyponyms of the same superordinate need not be incompatibles:



It would be more satisfying if we were able to characterize taxonomy in terms of a relation of dominance and a principle of differentiation which were more intimately related. This will be attempted here.

#### 4.1.1.2. Taxonomy

Key to taxonomic lexical hierarchy is a sense relation which will be called 'taxonomy' (Cruse, 1986: 137). This may be regarded as a sub-species of hyponymy: the taxonomies of a lexical items are a sub-set of its hyponyms. Taxonomy (or more precisely, its converse) is a relation of dominance of a taxonomy: the corresponding horizontal relation - the relation between sister-nodes - will simply be labeled co-taxonomy, to underline the intimate connection between the two. A useful diagnostic frame for taxonomy is: An X is a kind/type of Y. If X is a taxonomy of Y, the result is normal:

- a. A spaniel is a kind of dog.
- b. A rose is a type of flower.
- c. A mango is a type of fruit.

However, not all hyponyms give normal result in this frame:

- a. ? A kitten is a type of cat.
- b. ? A queen is a type of monarch.
- c. ? A spinster is a kind of woman.
- d. ? A waiter is a kind of man.

Unfortunately, the expression *kind of* is not univocal, and it is necessary to be able to recognize those senses which are irrelevant for the diagnosis of taxonymy. The diagnostic frames for co-hyponym which show most clearly the close relationship with taxonymy are:

An X is a kind of Y, and Z is another kind of Y.

An X is a kind of/type of Y, and so is a Z.

Recognizing taxonymy is one thing; describing its essential nature is another and more difficult task. It is not easy to discover invariable semantic properties which differentiate all taxonyms from other hyponyms.

#### 4.1.1.3. Characteristics of natural taxonomies

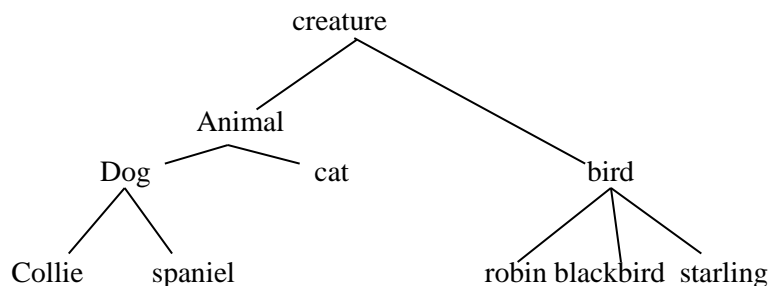
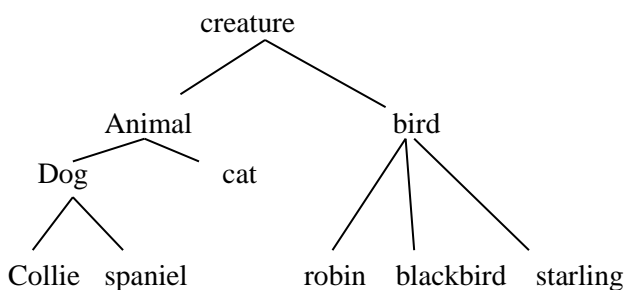
Taxonomic lexical hierarchies (taxonomies) have been extensively studied in a wide range of languages by anthropological linguists and other. The general characteristics of natural taxonomies emerge from these studies. One is that they typically have no more than five levels. The levels are commonly labeled as follows (Cruse, 1986:145)

Unique beginner	(plant)
Life-form	(bush)
Generic	(rose)
Specific	(hybrid tea)
Varietal	(peach)

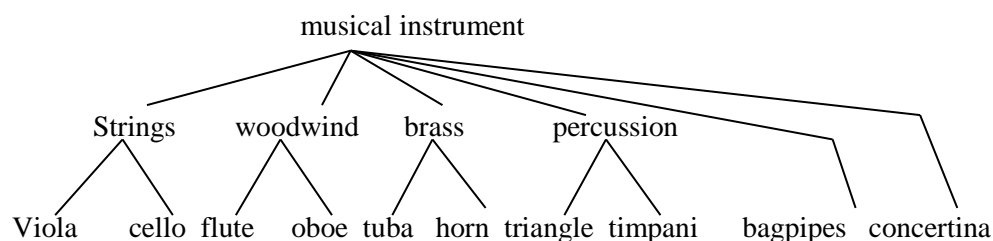
It will be noticed that the labels have a strong biological orientation. This is because ethnolinguists have been mainly interested in the way human communities classify living beings. There is no doubt, however, that lexical taxonomies occur throughout the lexicon. The limitation to a maximum of five levels is a characteristic of 'natural' or folk taxonomies. There also exist various specialist (e.g. technical or scientific) taxonomies. Some of the features of natural taxonomies (e.g. a limited number levels) do not appear to apply to them.

#### 4.1.1.3.1. Lexical gaps and Covert category

The most significant level of a taxonomy from the point of view of the speakers of a language is undoubtedly the generic level. In an ideal hierarchy all branches have nodes at each level; in this respect natural taxonomies often fall short of the ideal. Consider the taxonomic systems of birds. The names of birds like *blackbird*, *robin* and *starling* are at the same level as *collie*, *spaniel* and *alsatin*; there taxonomies can be structured in two ways as given below (Cruse, 1986:146):



Given the psychological importance of the generic level, the most likely structure is the second one. Similar gaps can be found among taxonomies of artifacts. Musical instruments provide one such example (Cruse, 1986:147):



#### 4.1.1.3.2. Proto-typical vs. peripheral member

The categories with no names, but for whose existence there is definite evidence, are called covert categories; they most frequently occur at the higher levels of a hierarchy. Distinction can be made between prototypical member and peripheral member of a category. For example, ostrich is different from the prototypical bird; ostrich is considered as a peripheral member of a bird (Cruse 1986: 148-149).

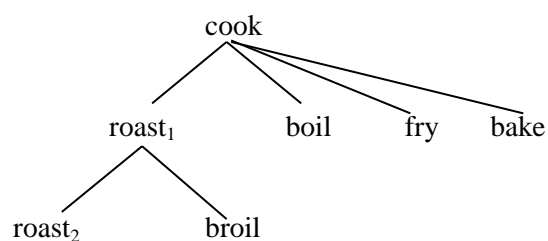
#### 4.1.1.3.3. Quasi-relations

Quasi-relations are relatively common in taxonomic hierarchies. For example, the use of noun colour as quasi-subordinate of the set of colour adjectives (red, green, etc.) and shape as quasi-superordinate of the set of adjectives denoting geometrical shapes (round, triangular, etc.).

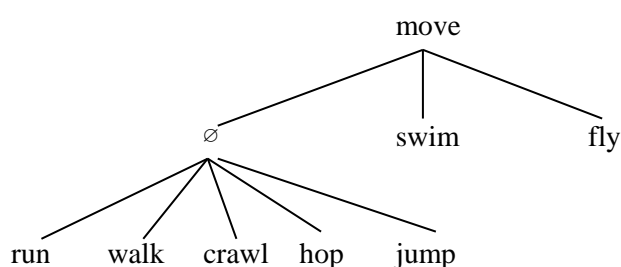
#### 4.1.1.3.4. Overlapping of co-taxonyms

Co-taxonyms are expected to be incompatibles; that is to say, sister taxonomic categories are not expected to overlap. With nouns this is invariably the case, but it is possible to find apparent counter-examples among verbs. The verbs cooking shows such overlapping of co-taxonyms as illustrated below (Cruse 1988: 151)





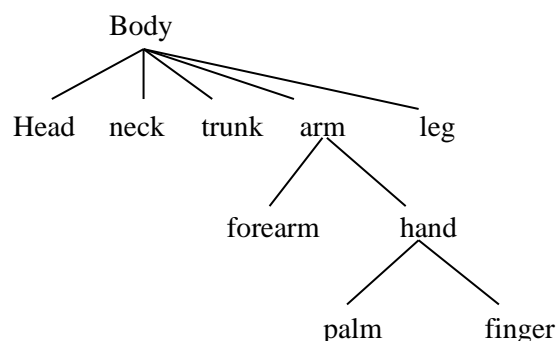
The simultaneous evidence of co-taxonymy and hyponymy strongly suggests that *roast* has two senses, *roast<sub>1</sub>* being superordinate of *roast<sub>2</sub>* and *broil*. Another example of overlapping co-taxonyms is to be found among the verbs of locomotion for living creatures as exemplified below (Cruse 1986: 151):



According to our intuition, there is a covert category in this hierarchy: there is no superordinate term for the verbs denoting locomotion on land.

#### 4.1.2. Meronymic hierarchies

The second major type of branching lexical hierarchy is the part-whole type, which we call meronymies. The division of human body into parts serves as a prototype for all part-whole hierarchies (Cruse, 1986:157):



Nowadays the structural make-up of a complex artifact such as car forms a more significant prototype. The concepts of 'part' and 'whole' are of central importance to fully integrated and cohesive physical objects. The notion of 'piece' is different from that of 'part'. The semantic relation between a lexical item denoting a part and that denoting the corresponding whole is termed meronymy. The name co-meronymy is given to the relation between lexical items designating sister parts.

#### 4.1.2.1. Defining meronymy

Meronymy is subject to a greater number of complicating factors than taxonomic relations are; instead of there being a single clearly distinguished relation, there is in reality a numerous family of more-or-less similar relations. The definition of meronymy, we propose here, is undoubtedly too restrictive, in that it excludes some intuitively clear examples of the part-whole relation; but it characterizes the central variety of the lexical relation: "X is meronymy of Y if only if sentences of the form *A Y has Xs/an X* and *An X is a part of a Y* are normal when the noun phrases *an X, a Y* are interpreted generically." (Cruse, 1986: 160). All word pairs which one would wish to recognize as having meronymic relation will yield normal sentences in the test frame *A Y has Xs/anX*. The following examples will exemplify the definition (Cruse, 1986: 160):

A hand has fingers

A piano has a keyboard

A cars has wheels

A saw has teeth

A book has pages.

Although the two-part test gives a fair guarantee of a meronymic relationship in word pairs which satisfy it, it excludes intuitively clear cases of parts and wholes (Cruse, 1986: 161):

1a. ? A handle is a part of a bag.

1b. ? A bag has a handle.

2a. A sepal is a part of a flower.

2b. ? A flower has sepal.

3a. A root is a part of a word.

3b. The word has a root.

A test frame which does not leak, and which accepts all the above cases, is: The parts of a Y include the X/Xs, the Z/Zs, etc (Cruse, 1986: 161).

The parts of a flower include the sepal, the petal, etc.

The parts of a word include the root...

The part of a door include the handle, the lock,...

Distinction is made between canonical meronym and facultative meronym. *Finger* is the natural or necessary part of hand; whereas handle is not a natural or necessary part of door. So *finger* is the canonical meronym of *hand* and handle is the facultative meronym of *door*.

#### 4.1.2.2. Transitivity in meronymy

Hyponymy is an unproblematic transitive relation. It follows from the fact that a spaniel is necessarily a dog and dog is necessarily an animal. Taxonymy is less clear, but it seems better to treat it as intransitive. Meronymy is more complicated, as in most respects. Consider the following sentences (Cruse, 1986:165):

1a. The jacket has sleeves.

1b. The sleeves have cuffs.

1c. The jacket has cuffs.

2a. The house has a door.

2b. The door has a handle.

2c. ?The house has a handle.

Distinction has to be made between attachments and integral parts. The following examples will exemplify this (Cruse, 1986:167):

A hand is attached to an arm.

The handle is attached to the door.

The ear is attached to the head.

?The palm is attached to the hand.

?The handle is attached to the spoon.

The wholeness of an entity is destroyed if an integral part is missing, but it is not necessarily true if the missing part is an attachment. A part of an attachment does not count as a part of the stock; hence 'finger', for instance does not count as part of arm.

?An arm has fingers.

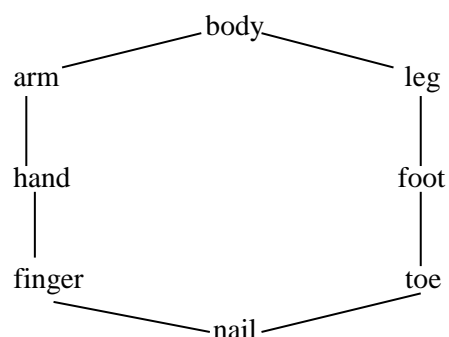
? A finger is a part of an arm.

#### 4.1.2.3. Characteristics of meronymies

A well-formed part-whole hierarchy should consist of elements of the same general type. It is not immediately clear how to articulate this notion precisely, but it is easy to see that some such concept is necessary. If one element in a meronymy denotes a cohesive physical object, for instance, then all the other items in the set must too (for example 'weight' of a 'body' does not figure among its part); if one item denotes a geographical area, so must all the others; if one item is an abstract noun, all the others must be as well - and so on. We have to make a distinction between segmental parts and systemic parts. We have seen well-formed taxonomic hierarchy must preserve a constant principle of differentiation throughout. This feature has a meronymic parallel. If we divide human body, we can divide it either into parts such as *trunk, head, limbs*, etc. or we can divide it in quite another way as *skeleton, muscles, nerves, blood vessels*, etc. Parts of the first type have a greater degree of spatial cohesiveness. They will be called segmental parts. Part of the second type has a greater functional unity, a greater consistency of internal constitution, but they are spatially inter-penetrating, running along the major axes of the body. They will be called systemic parts. A 'house' for instance may be divided into 'living room', 'dining room',

'kitchen', 'hall', bedroom', 'cellar', 'loft' etc.; or 'brickwork', 'joinery', 'plasterwork', 'plumbing', 'wiring', etc.

The relation of meronymy is not an ideal guarantor of a well-formed hierarchy, unlike taxonomy. The trouble arises out of the existence of super and hypo relations (Cruse: 1986:170).



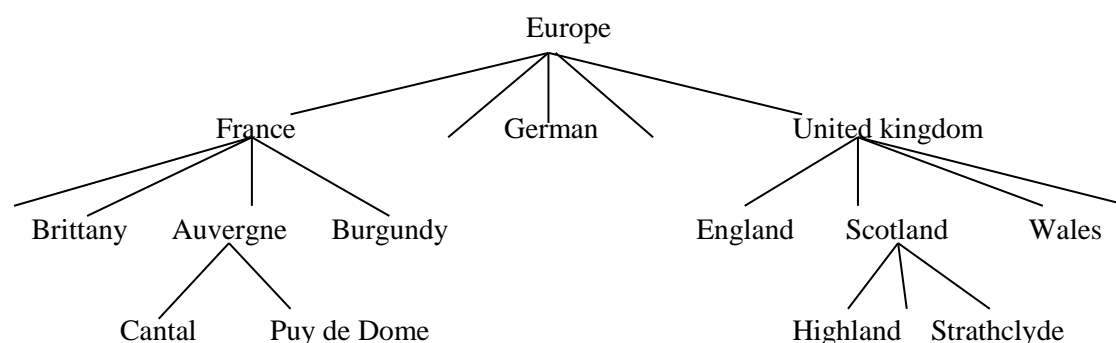
In the corresponding extra-linguistic hierarchy there is, of course, no convergence, because 'finger nail' and 'toe nail' are different parts, but the same lexical item is used to refer them, so the lexical hierarchy does converge. A striking case of this is provided by the male and female human body. It is noteworthy that intersection between part-whole hierarchies is by and large a purely lexical phenomenon: actual sharing of parts between extra-linguistic wholes seems rare.

Meronomies typically have rather weakly developed substantive levels. The existence of gaps (i.e. covert category) was noted for taxonomic hierarchies. In the case of meronomies, the most inclusive term is never covert; there are no meronomies of unnamed wholes. One type of covert part does however occur relatively frequently: there often no separate name for the major, essential functional part, especially of artifacts. Take for example of 'spoon'. A spoon has a 'handle', but what do we the other part, which corresponds to the blade of a knife? Another example is 'fork'. This also has a 'handle', but again there is no name for the rest.

#### 4.1.2.4. Close relatives of the part-whole relation

We have seen so far the central or core instances of part and whole. But there are peripheral instances of part and whole which could be considered as close relatives of the core part-whole relation. A number of dimensions of variation can be identified which correlate with centrally and peripherally in part-like relations. One such dimension is concreteness: bodies, trees, cars and teapots concrete, one may speak of parts of non-concrete entities such as events, actions, processes, states and abstract notions like adolescence and courage. A second dimension of variation is the degree of differentiation amongst parts: the parts of body, or car, are highly differentiated; the parts of a team may or may not be clearly differentiated, but in general will be less so than the parts of a body; the parts of a unit of measure such as hour, metre, or pound are not differentiated at all. A third dimension of variation is structural integration: the members of a team are more integrated than the stones in a heap, or the books in a library, but are less so than part of the body. There are part-like relations where one or both terms are mass nouns: *The car is part of steel* (whole = count, part = mass); *Sand consist of grains* (whole = mass, part = count) ; *milk is an ingredient of custard* (whole = mass, part =mass).

The geographical division of countries shows part-whole like relation, as exemplified below (Cruse, 1986: 173):



They display some of the typical contextual properties of parts:

France is a part of Europe

The parts of Europe are: France, Belgium, Holland, etc.

There are cases which more closely approach the concrete part-whole pattern; the relation between capital and country is an example.

A capital is a part of a country.

A country has a capital.

Verbs give rise to event nouns such as activities, processes, actions and accomplishments, which have a temporal structure, can have systemic parts. The following exemplify this:

The most popular part of the show was dance.

The part of the show are: dance, ...

The show has a dance.

Units of measure and their sub-units constitute a special class of abstract part-whole, one of whose characteristics is a total lack of differentiation.

Entities such as groups, classes and collections stand in relations which resemble meronymy with their constituent elements. We can establish relations such as group-member and class-member and collection-member relations respectively in them (Cruse, 1986: 176).

Group-member relation: e.g. tribe: tribesman, jury: juror/juryman, senate: senator

Class-member relation: e.g. proletariat: worker, clergy: bishop, aristocracy: duke

Collection-member relation: e.g. forest: tree, library: book, heap: stone

There is a family of relations involved with what things are made of, the part-like component being a mass noun denoting a substance or material. In cases where the whole is a mass noun we can speak of constituents or ingredients; the relation substance-constituents/ingredients can be established between them. e.g. *shortening: pastry*. In cases where the whole is a count noun, we have the object-material relation. e.g. *tumbler: glass*.

#### 4.1.2.5. Meronomies and taxonomies

Meronomies and taxonomies show some principal resemblances and differences (Cruse, 1986:177). There is a fundamental difference between the two in the way that they relate to extra-linguistic facts. The terms of both types of hierarchy denote classes of entities. The classes denoted by the terms in taxonomy form a

hierarchy. However, the classes denoted by the elements of meronymy - toes, fingers, legs, heads, etc. - are not hierarchically related; that is the hierarchical structuring of meronymy does not originate in a hierarchy of classes. It is rather the way the individual parts of each individual whole are related which generates the hierarchical structuring that forms the basis of a meronymy. A meronymy thus has closer links with concrete reality than taxonomy.

Meronymy must be considered a less well-defined relation than taxonomy. A Meronymy is less well-structured in that it does not often display clear levels; and it is typically less cohesive due to the frequency of super and hypo relations.

Although there are differences between meronomies and taxonomies, it is perhaps the similarities between them which are the more striking. Both involve a kind of sub-division, a species of inclusion between the entity undergoing division and the results of the division, and a type of exclusion between the results of the division. Any taxonomy can be thought of in part-whole terms: a class can be looked on as a whole whose parts are its sub-classes. Corresponding to each of the common nouns constituting a typical taxonomy, there exists a proper noun labeling the class as an individual. Thus alongside dog and cat we have species Dog and the species Cat. A taxonomy in this way be transformed into a meronymy, demonstrating that there is an intimate connection between the two. Distinctness in classes means unshared attributes; in parts it means unconnectedness. This dual principle works quite well for both meronymy and taxonomy and expresses in a satisfying way the close between the two.

#### **LEARNING ACTIVITIES 4.1.**

- (1) What is meant by semantic structuring under lexical configurations.
- (2) What are the two types of lexical configurations?
- (3) Differentiate taxonomic hierarchies from meronymic hierarchies

#### **4.2. Non-branching hierarches**

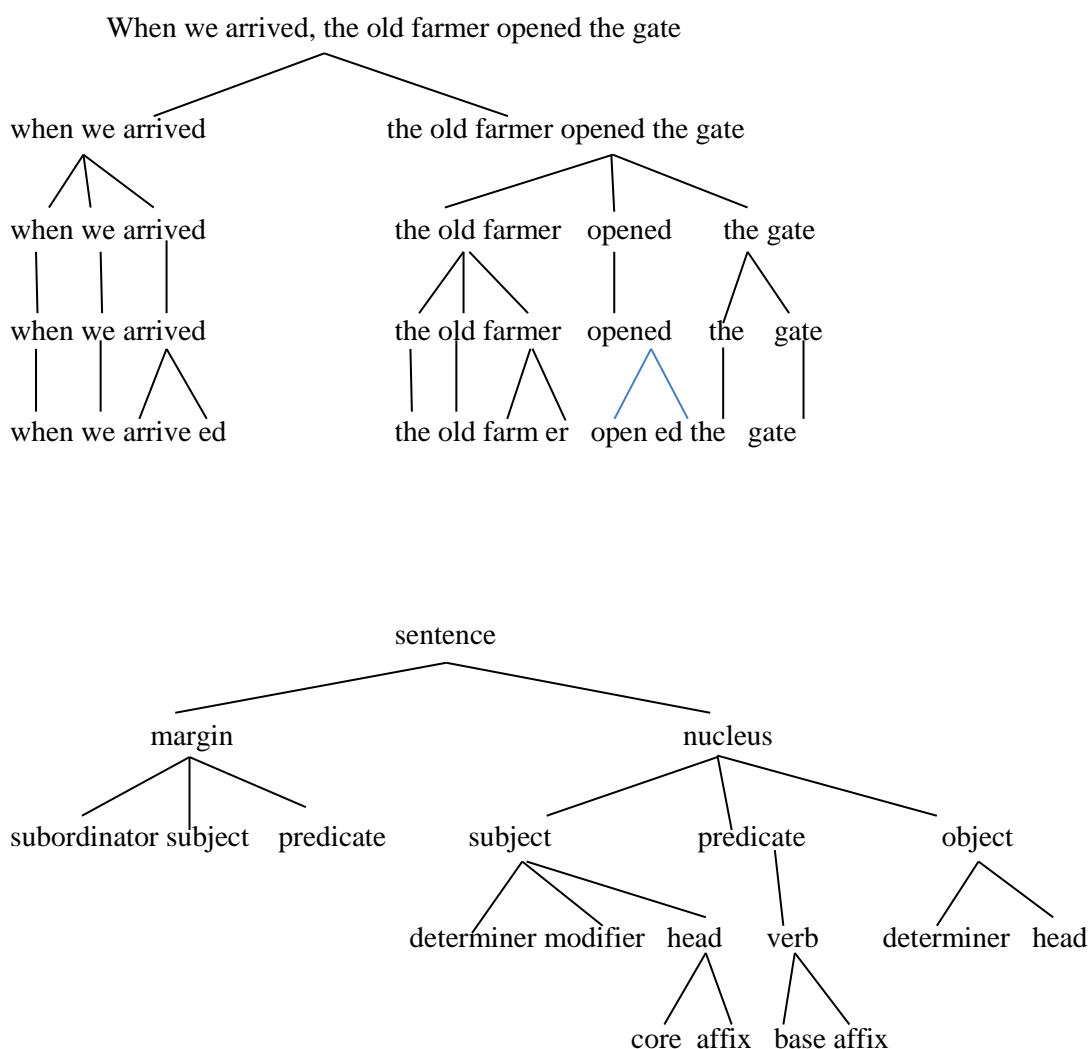
Non-branching fall into two major types (Cruse, 1986:181). First, there are those which are closely bound up with branching hierarchies - they can, in fact regarded as secondary derivations from them. Second, there is a quite a large family of independent non-branching hierarchies, not derived from or



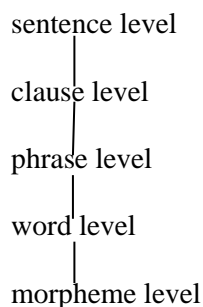
connected in any way with branching hierarchies, which arise from non-differentiable relations of dominance.

#### 4.2.1. From branching to Non-branching

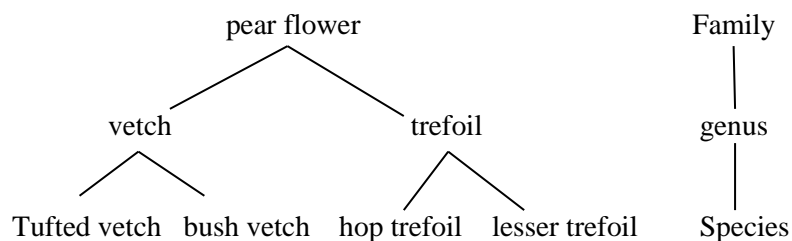
A branching hierarchy can only serve as the basis for a non-branching hierarchy if it has well-defined levels. The following tagmemic analysis (a type of grammatical description) of a given sentence will illustrate all the theoretical assumptions behind the hierarchy (Cruse, 1986: 181-182):



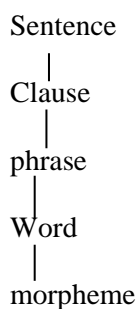
Corresponding to the hierarchies in the above figures is the following non-branching hierarchy (Cruse 1986: 183)



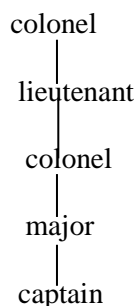
This method of producing a non-branching hierarchy is available for all branching hierarchies with levels. A botanical taxonomy, for instance, yields the following (Cruse 183-184):



Another way of deriving a non-branching hierarchy from a branching one is to suppress differentiation and provide a single superordinate at each level for all the items at that level. Corresponding to the levels in the taxonomic analysis illustrated above, we also have the following series of common nouns:



There is one type of hierarchy for which this method of deriving a non-branching string does not work, and that is a taxonomy. It is possible to derive a non-branching lexical hierarchy from a branching extralinguistic hierarchy, even when no branching lexical hierarchy corresponds to it. The names of military ranks form a non-branching hierarchy:



#### 4.2. 2. Chains, helices and cycles

There are many sets of lexical items which form non-branching hierarchies according to our criteria, but which bear no relation whatsoever to hierarchies of the branching sort. All that is needed for non-branching hierarchy is a principle of ordering which will enable the terms of the set to be arranged in a unique sequential order with a first item and a last item (Cruse, 1986:187). You can distinguish them as **inherently ordered** and **non-inherently ordered**.

- (1) mound, hillock, hill, mountain (inherently ordered)
- (2) mouse, dog, horse, elephant (non-inherently ordered)

There are two important semantic differences between the items in set (1) and set (2). The first is that in set (1) the semantic trait of "relative size" is the criteria for arrangement and in set (2) size is not the ordering criteria. The second difference between the two sets lies in the semantic relations holding between the members. The members of the second set possess common traits being animals and a multi-dimensional contrastive traits which distinguish one from other. Such natural traits are not found in the first set. Their contrasting trait is one-dimensional (size). The item in set do not merely form an ordered sequence; they also represent degrees of a graded property, namely size.

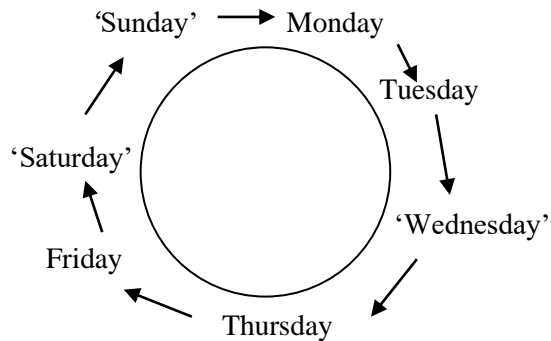
There are two principle modes of organization of such sequence: they may exhibit pure linear ordering in which case they will be called '**chains**' or they may have a hybrid linear/ cyclical ordering which we shall call **helical**. The following are the examples of lexical chains (Cruse 1986: 189).

Shoulder, upper arm, elbow, forearm, waist, hand  
 Source, upper reaches, lower reaches, mouth/estuary  
 Introduction, exposition, development, recapitulation, coda  
 Birth, childhood, adolescence, adulthood, old age, death

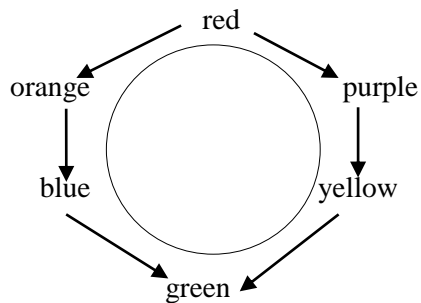
The set of lexical items which will be termed helices are a sub-type of chain. They show the typical characteristics of chains, with first term and a last term, and a unique ordering in between:

Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday

In the sequence of week days the criteria for sequential ordering is with reference to a temporal dimension "comes earlier" vs. "comes later". We can organize these terms into an apparently cyclical structure (Cruse, 1986: 190).

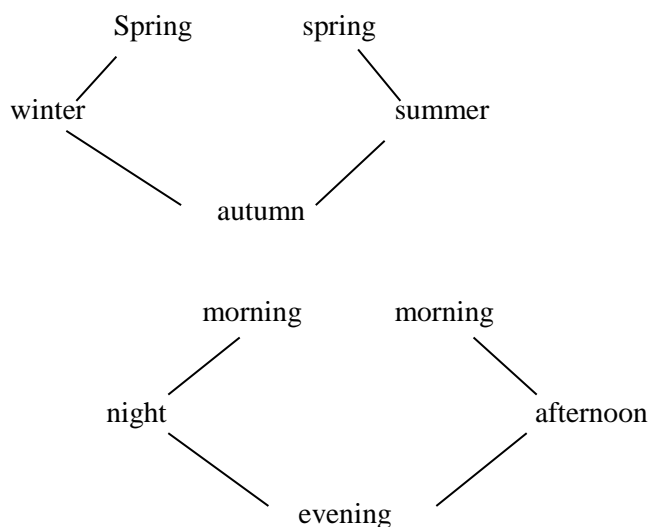


The same relation organizes the colours of a spectrum into a circle, too. But there is a difference. The colour-terms *red*, *orange*, *blue*, *green*, *yellow* and *purple* form what is perhaps the only truly cyclically organized set in the language (Cruse 1986: 190):



This set does not constitute a hierarchy: the structuring relation does not have the necessary directional properties. There is no top, and no bottom; There is no unique item related in the relevant way to all the other items in the set. However the names of the days of a week do not really form a circle. In the sequence *Sunday*, *Monday*, ... *Saturday*, *Sunday*, the first and the last items do not refer to the same day: in the course of each circuit, times moves forward one week. The combination of linearity and cyclicity may be taken as the defining characteristics of a **helix**.

The links of a **helical chain** typically refer to periods of time (Cruse 1986: 190):



The incidence of helical ordering in time expressions is perhaps a reflection of the human propensity for imposing a rhythmical structure on the flow time and arises from the same deep impulse as music and dance. The constituent items of helical chains may have precise boundaries (Monday: Tuesday, June: July) or vague boundaries (afternoon: evening, autumn: winter). None of the segmentation found in helical chains seems to be wholly unmotivated, although the repeat may be: the day, the lunar month and the year are 'natural' periods. Many cases show a combination of naturalness and arbitrariness: the day is a natural period related to the rotation of the earth about its axis, but the location of the point where one day passes into the next is arbitrarily imposed.

#### 4.2.3. Ranks, grades and degrees

In a number of ordered sets the constituent lexical unit relate to different values of some variable underlying property. There are two distinct types of underlying scale: which vary continuously, and those which vary in discrete jumps. The lexical units which operate on a discontinuous scale will be called rank-terms. Terms which operate over a continuous scale may be gradable; the non-gradable ones will be called degree-terms and the gradable ones 'grade-terms'. There are many sets of lexical items which encapsulate numbers, especially units: they are all ranks too (Cruse, 1986: 192):

First, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth

half, third, quarter, fifth, sixth...

Twins, triplets, quadruplets, quntuplets, sextuplets...

Monadic, diadic, triadic, tetradic, pentadic

Triangle, square, pentagon, hexagon

Single, double, treble

It could be argued that some types of measure unit, particularly those of distance and time, have a connection with a branching part-whole hierarchy with no differentiation of parts. But we can relate them to a one-dimensional continuous scale, and categorize them as degree terms. They differ, however, from other types of degree-term. The degrees in a set usually represent a more or less linear progression in terms of values of underlying property, measure terms typically increase geometrically (again, more or less). For example, the terms *one, two, three, four; Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday; fail, pass, credit, distinction; and baby, child adolescent, adult* all represent either equal or roughly equal intervals along their respective scales. But *second, hour, day; millimeter, centimeter, kilometer; ounce, pound, stone, hundred-weight, ton; and hundred, thousand, million, billion* increase geometrically (again roughly).

Grade terms differ from degree-terms in that they are gradable. They are therefore mostly adjectives. The following are examples of sets of grade-terms (Cruse, 1986: 194).

freezing, (cold, cool, warm, (hot), scorching

atrocious, (bad), indifferent, average, fair, (good), excellent

minuscule, tiny, (small), (big), huge, gigantic

#### 4.2.4. Linear structures

Cruse (2000: 189) uses the term **linear structures** in the place of non-branching hierarchies. He makes a three way distinction: **bipoles, bipolar chains** and **monopolar chains**.

##### 4.2.4.1. Bipoles

The bipoles is the simplest kind of linear structure found in a pair of opposites. They are simply oppositions which we have discussed earlier (Cruse, 2000: 189).

#### 4.2.4.2. Bipolar chains

The bipolar chains have implicit superlative terms of opposite polarity at each end of the scale. The following is the example (Cruse, 2000: 189):

minuscule, tiny, small, large, huge, gigantic

#### 4.2.4.3. Monopolar chains

According to Cruse (2000:190), in **monopolar chains**, there is no sense that the terms at the ends of the chain are oriented in opposite directions. Degree, stages, measures, ranks and sequences are dealt under monopolar chains. This system largely follows Cruse (1986).

##### 4.2.4.3.1. Degrees

According to Cruse (2000:190), degrees incorporate as part of their meaning different degrees of some continuously scaled property such as size or intensity, but there is no relation of inclusion. The following are the examples:

fail, pass, distinction

mound, hillock, hill, mountain

##### 4.2.4.3.2. Stages

Stages are points in a lifecycle of something and normally involve the notion of progression Cruse (2000:190). The following are the examples:

primary, secondary, undergraduate, postgraduate

infancy, childhood, adulthood, old age

egg, larva, pupa, butterfly

##### 4.2.4.3.3. Measures



Measures are based on a part-whole relationship, with each whole divided into a number identical parts: there is typically a geometrical relationship between values of the scaled property designated by adjacent terms (Cruse 2000:190):

second, minute, hour, day, week, month (etc)

inch, foot, yard (etc) mile

ounce, pound, stone (etc) ton

#### 4.2.4.3.4. Ranks

In ranks, the underlying property does not vary continuously, but in discrete jumps; there is none the less something that a term has more or less of than its neighbours (Cruse 2000:190):

lecture, senior lecture, reader, professor

private, corporal, sergeant

#### 4.2.4.3.5. Sequences

Sequences are also ordered terms, but there is no property of 'more or less' with regard to the neighbouring terms (Cruse 2000:190).

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday

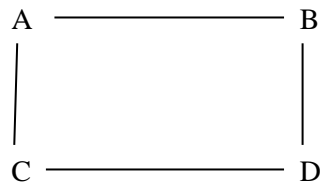
January, February, March, April

Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter

morning, afternoon, evening, night

#### 4.2.5. Propositional series/Grids

The simplest propositional series consists of a single 'cell', which has four elements (Cruse, 1986:118):



The relation between the elements must be such that from any three of the elements the fourth can be uniquely determined. The configuration is thus structured by the following relations of proportionality:

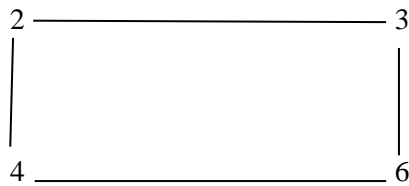
A is to B as C is to D

B is to A as D is to C

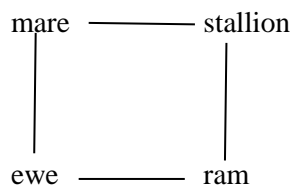
A is to C as B is to D

C is to A as D is to B

The quintessential proportionalities are, of course, numerical:



but lexical analogues of these are common.



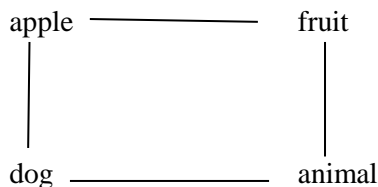
Mare is to stallion as ewe is to ram.

Stallion is to mare as ram is to ewe.

Mare is to ewe as stallion is to ram.

Ewe is to mare as ram is to stallion.

The following configuration does not constitute a proportional series according to the above definition.



Cruse (2000: 191) introduces the term, **grids** instead of proportional series. According to Cruse (2000: 191), grids are generated by recurrent sense relations. The unit of grid is the cell, which consists of four lexical items, any one of which must be uniquely predicable from the remaining three. The following examples are examples of cells.

man: woman	hand: finger	dog: puppy	take: steal
ram: ewe	foot: toe	cat: kitten	kill: murder

According to Cruse (2000: 191) the following is not well formed cell.

flower: tulip  
 animal: cat

#### 4.2.6. Clusters

According to Cruse (2000: 193), clusters are essentially group of synonyms. There are two main types of clusters: the centered clusters and non-centered clusters. In the case of centered clusters there is more-or-less core item.

e.g. die, pass away, pop off, disease, breathe one's last, kick the bucket. die

In the above given example, clearly there is a core member. In non-centered clusters, there is no superordinate item.

e.g. rap, tap, knock, slap, thwack, crack, bang, bump, pop, tick, click, ring, tinkle, clink, clang, jingle, jangle, ping...

In the above given example, there is no core or superordinate item.

#### **4.2.7. Miscellaneous types**

Cruse (2000: 177) makes use of the term word fields to cover the structure of the lexical items discussed under this unit. He also mentions about other important grouping of words, for which the notion of structure seems less appropriate. He talks about two types of examples. The first is so-called word families. There are words derived from a common root like cook (v), cook (n), cookery, cooker, cooking (n), etc. These words can be considered as a group. Second, there are groups of words which can be labelled as register, as in colloquial or formal use, or by field of discourse such as vocabulary appropriate for a religious sermon, a legal document, or a medical textbook,

#### **LEARNING ACTIVITIES 4.2.**

- (1) What are different types of non-branching hierarchies.
- (2) Differentiate between chains, helices and cycles with suitable examples.
- (3) Differentiate bipolar chains from monopolar chains.
- (4) Explain how degrees, ranks and sequences are different from one another.
- (5) What is meant by propositional series?
- (6) Explain how propositional series or grids can be used to structure vocabulary.
- (7) What are the two types of clusters?
- (8) Differentiate the two types of clusters with suitable examples.
- (9) What is meant by register? Explain the different kinds of registers.

#### **SUMMARY**

You have observed that words may not be profitably analysed through their reference or compartments. This observation has favoured the relevance on the sense relations holding among words. In this Unit, you have studied the meaning of words from the perspective of sense relations with emphasis on the following Synonymy, Hyponymy-hyperonymy, meronymy-holonymy, opposition and contrast. You have also

studied each of these concepts with examples. Different types of lexical configuration such as hierarchies, taxonomies, meronomies and non-branching hierarchies have been introduced with suitable illustrations.

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## **Unit 5**

### **COMPONENTIAL ANALYSIS OF MEANING**

#### **CONTENT**

5.1. Componential analysis

5.2. Background to componential analysis

5.3. How does the theory of meaning components work?

5.3.1. Components of meaning

5.3.2 Componential analysis of meaning

5.3.3 Analysing and Distinguishing Meanings

5.4. Procedural steps in the componential analysis of meaning

5.5. Linguistic basis for componential analysis

5.6. Contribution to the study of meaning

5.7. Basic difficulties encountered in the analysis of semantic components

5.8. Applicability and universality

5.9. Apparent advantages of componential analysis of meaning

5.10. Strength and weakness

## **OVERVIEW**

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*AN INTRODUCTORY COURSE ON SEMANTICS AND PRAGMATICS*

There are many different ways to approach the problems of meaning, since meaning is related to many different functions of language. The meanings of words in a language are interrelated and they are defined in part by their relations with other words in the language. Analyzed in the same semantic domain, words can be classified according to shared and differentiating features. Breaking down the sense of a word into its minimal distinctive features, componential analysis of meaning can be a useful approach in the study of meaning, particularly in determining the meaning of a lexeme. Although componential analysis has some difficulties and limitations in its application, it is still used in modern linguistics.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing this Unit, you should be able to:

- understand the principles of componential analysis of meaning.
- apply the theory of componential analysis of meaning for the analysis of your mother tongue.
- understand the difference between the relational semantics (discussed in the previous unit) and the componential analysis of meaning.

### 5.1. Componential analysis

Finegan (2004: 181-182) distinguishes three types of meaning, i.e. linguistic, social, and affective meaning. Linguistic meaning encompasses both sense and reference. One way of defining meaning is to say that the meaning of a word or sentence is the actual person, object, abstract notion, event, or state to which the word or sentence makes reference. Referential meaning may be the easiest kind to recognize, but it is not sufficient to explain how some expressions mean what they mean. For one thing, not all expressions have referents. Social meaning is what we rely on when we identify certain social characteristics of speakers and situations from the character of the language used. Affective meaning is the emotional connotation that is attached to words and utterances.

A word or lexeme presents a complex semantic structure. A lexeme is built up of smaller components of meaning which are combined differently to form a different lexeme. The meaning of a lexeme is a complicated structure where elements of meaning have definite interrelation (Crystal, 1987: 104). All semantic elements in a word are not equally important. One (or some) of them is the dominant semantic

element and it organizes around itself all the other ones, which may be more or less important for the meaning of a lexeme (Lyons J, 1995: 108 and Leech, 1983: 89).

A lexeme can be analyzed and described in terms of its semantic components, which help to define different lexical relations, grammatical and syntactic processes. The semantic structure of a lexeme is treated as a system of meanings. To some extent we can define a lexeme by telling what set it belongs to and how it differs from other members of the same set. Some obvious sets of this sort are sports (*tennis, badminton, soccer, golf, basketball,...*), colors (*red, blue, yellow, green, pink, ...*) and creative writing (*novel, poem, short story, essay, biography,...*). It is not difficult to say what the members of each set have in common. According to Semantic field (or semantic domain) theory, lexemes can be classified according to shared and differentiating features. Here are more examples. *Wasp, hornet, bee* and other items denote ‘flying, stinging insects’; *moth* and *housefly*, among others, denote insects that fly but do not sting; *ant* and *termite* are names of insects neither fly nor sting. The semantic features explain how the members of the set are related to one another and can be used to differentiate them from one another. The determination of such features has been called componential analysis (Kreidler, 2002: 87 and Wardhaugh, 1977:163).

The kind of analysis that uses a list of identified meaning components to define a word is often called componential analysis. This theory or semantic methodology is also called semantic primitives or semantic components. Thus componential analysis can be viewed as a privileged instrument of semantic analysis, or alternatively, as a particular semantic theory. However the theoretical background of componential analysis is also developed in certain respects. Under the view that semantic representation should involve semantic components, there is a group of authors that share the idea that these components are primitive elements which combine to form units at the level of grammar. It is the nature of combination that distinguishes the views adopted by the different authors. Katz and Fodor originally proposed a list of components. Jackendoff proposed a more articulated representation where components are arranged as functions and arguments which can be successively embedded within one another. Still others have held that semantic components help to characterize semantic relations, such as entailment. This idea of componentiality is very important and you will come across it in various parts of the your study.

#### **LEARNING ACTIVITY5.1.**

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What is meant by componential analysis of meaning?

## 5.2. Background to componential analysis

**Componential analysis** (CA) or semantic decomposition has a long history in semantic description with roots in European structuralism (Saussure and Hjelmslev) and American anthropology. One important objective of componential analysis has been to achieve an effective reductive analysis of meaning. The Danish linguist Louis Hjelmslev, a representative of early European structuralism and a disciple of Saussure, applied Saussure's phonological principles to semantic analysis. Hjelmslev was probably the first to apply a componential program to semantic analysis since he believed that the meaning side of the linguistic sign should show the same structuring principles as the sound side. What he seemed to have in mind was the discovery of a set of basic words, out of whose meanings all other word meanings could be constructed. This method, originally used to explain phonemic analysis, was based on commutation. A phonemic difference was said to exist between two different elements of the expression plane when substitution of one for the other entails a change in the content plane. For example, the voiced/voiceless difference between [p] and [b] leads to differences in the meaning of [pin] and [bin] whereas the aspirated bilabial stop in [ph] is not a different phoneme from the unaspirated [p] because a change of meaning is never associated with the choice of one rather than the other. This is exemplified by Cruse (2000: 244) applying the principle of symmetry to semantic analysis. The meaning of [mare] can be separated into components according to the following sequence: [HORSE] and [FEMALE] and if the second element is changed into [MALE] the resulting element in the plane of expression is then stallion.

There are several approaches to a componential view of meaning. They all share the idea that the meaning of a word is constructed out of smaller, more elementary, and invariant units of meaning. According to componential semanticists, the meaning of a word can be specified in isolation from the meanings of other words in a language. This is known as a localist view, which can be accounted for by rules of interaction with context. The opposite position is the holistic view, which holds that meaning cannot be known without taking into account the meanings of other words in a language. In one version of holism, influenced by Hass (1962, 1964) and Wittgenstein (1972), meaning is closely related to use and, furthermore, the meaning of a word is related to the semantic field it belongs to. For Hass, the meaning of a word is its semantic field which, in turn, has two dimensions: a syntagmatic dimension, in which all possible (grammatically well-formed) contexts of the word were arranged in order of normality, and a



paradigmatic dimension, in which for each context, the possible paradigmatic substitutes for the word were arranged in order of normality.

In the same vein, Lyons (1977, 1995) believes that the sense of a lexical item consists of the set of sense relations which the item holds with other items which participate in the same field. In his view, meanings are relational because they are constructed on the basis of contrasts within the same system. Lyons is an inheritor of Jespersen's view that there are notional universals in language which spring from the nature of extra-linguistic reality.

Componential analysis can also be traced back to the work of Katz and Fodor's (1963) who developed these theories apparently independently of the Structuralism in Europe and in close connection with anthropological linguistics' analysis of kinship systems. These authors designed their semantic theory as part of a Chomskyan generative grammar. Theirs was a very ambitious three fold project: first it was part of a complete theory of language; second, it made claims of universality and psychological reality; and third, the features were not confined to the meanings of existing words, but were of an abstract nature.

The projection rules use trees to structure the amalgamation of word meanings into phrase meanings and then phrase meaning into sentence meaning. These rules have certain selectional restrictions designed to reflect some of the contextual effects of word meaning and operate limiting the output. An essential part of the theory is to establish a semantic meta language through the identification of the semantic components. That is to say, it is a highly prototypical decompositional theory. There are three reasons that justify identifying semantic components in componential analysis. The first one is that they allow an economic characterization of lexical relations since a small number of semantic components could be used to define a large number of words and allow comparison across languages. The second is that, according to some linguistic theories, only by recognizing them can we accurately describe a range of syntactic and morphological processes. Finally, there is an ambitious claim that semantic primitives form part of our psychological architecture as they provide us with a unique view of conceptual structure, as pointed out by Jackendoff (1983). Still another reason why componential analysis is important is that central to the conception of an organized lexicon is the understanding of the lexical, semantic, and conceptual unit.

Decomposition has been widely used as a descriptive device but has also been criticized by Lyons (1977, 1995), Allan (1986), and Cruse (1986, 2000), among others. At one extreme there is the position

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advocated by Fodor, who surprisingly claims that no decomposition is possible and that all words are learned and treated as wholes. At the other extreme, we find Wierzbicka's work (1980, 1985, 1992, 1996), who tried to work out a radical decomposition of all words into a number of primitives. In between we have Jackendoff's (1983, 1990, 1996) position. He argues for some kind of decomposition but observes that some conceptual information must be represented in other modalities.

Thus, one extreme version of componential analysis is found in the work of Wierzbicka (1996), who developed her theory in a very original way taking inspiration from Leibnitz. She holds that there is a set of universal semantic atoms in terms of which all conceivable meanings can be expressed. She proposes a list of primitives of a concrete nature that can be spelled out in any natural language. Using different meta languages, both Wierzbicka and Jackendoff select several of the same components, for instance (SOME)THING, PLACE, (BE)CAUSE, HAPPEN, BECOME and UNDER. However they differ in a series of fundamental ways. Wierzbicka assumes and uses English syntax, whereas Jackendoff develops explicit formal rules for mapping syntactic structure onto semantic structures which are consistent with generative grammar. Thus, it is implied that there is some sort of correspondence between universal grammar and Jackendoff's conceptual structures. Wierzbicka, on the other hand, analyzes grammatical meaning with the same methods and concepts that are used when analyzing lexical meaning. In addition, she has focused on cross-linguistic universals and on the possibility of composing concepts and lexemes out of a commonstore of universal primitives. Jackendoff, like many self addressed cognitivists, locates word meaning in conceptual structure. However, in contrast to most of them, he is strongly componentialist. In other words, he believes that intuitively perceived relationships must be accounted for in terms of shared semantic building blocks. The central principle of Jackendoff's conceptual semantics is that describing meaning involves describing mental representations. For him semantic structure is conceptual structure.

This theory is also known as the Mentalist Postulate. It is a strongly rationalist hypothesis, and this holds the idea that our conceptual structure is built up of units such as conceptualized physical objects, events, properties, times, quantities, and intentions. These conceptualized objects are in our minds and determine our perception of the world. Cruse (2000), following Jackendoff, defines conceptual structure by arguing that since the brain is a finite physical object, it cannot store an infinite number of forms mapped onto an infinite number of concepts; thus, just as the formal side of language solves the problem of infinity by providing a set of units with recursive rules of combination, similarly there must be primitives and formation rules.

## LEARNING ACTIVITY 5.2.

Describe briefly the background of componential analysis of meaning.

### 5.3. How does the theory of meaning components work?

We have seen above that the kind of analysis that uses a list of identified meaning components—also called semantic primitives or semantic components—to define a word is often called componential analysis. If we study the lexical relations that seem to be implicit in sets of words like the following:

man-woman-child  
 dog-bitch-puppy  
 stallion-mare-foal  
 ram-ewe-lamb  
 bull-cow-calf  
 hog-sow-piglet

we see that there are a number of features whose presence or absence seem to define each word. As Saeed (2001:231) says, some semanticists have hypothesized that words are not the smallest semantic units but are built up of even smaller components of meaning which are combined differently (or lexicallized) to form different words. Thus, words like *woman*, *bachelor*, *spinster* and *wife* have been viewed as made up of elements such as [adult],[human], [married] etc., as in the following table:

woman [FEMALE] [ADULT] [HUMAN]  
 bachelor [MALE] [ADULT] [HUMAN] [UNMARRIED]  
 spinster [FEMALE] [ADULT] [HUMAN] [UNMARRIED]  
 wife [FEMALE] [ADULT] [HUMAN] [MARRIED]

The elements in square brackets are called semantic components or semantic primitives and they cannot be broken down further. According to Saeed there are three important reasons for studying such components. Firstly, they may allow an economic characterization of lexical relations such as contradiction or entailment. Secondly, by recognizing these relations can we accurately describe a range

of syntactic and morphological processes. And, finally, as some semanticists (Jackendoff) claim, such primitives form part of our psychological architecture and they provide us with a unique view of conceptual structure.

Lexical relations can also be viewed from the perspective of componential analysis, and typical semantic relations such as hyponymy or incompatibility can also be understood as a set of features. Such a set of features can be organized in this format so that automatic processing may be more feasible. Take hyponymy, for example,

woman [FEMALE] [ADULT] [HUMAN]  
 spinster [FEMALE] [ADULT] [HUMAN] [UNMARRIED]

and compare the sets of components. Hyponymy, then, can be defined in the following terms: A lexical item P (spinster) can be defined as a hyponym of Q (woman) if all the features of Q are contained in the feature specification of P. That is, in the same fashion, the words, *bachelor*, *spinster*, and *wife* are incompatible among them because *bachelor*, and *spinster* differ in one feature (male / female) and *spinster*, and *wife* differ in another feature (married / unmarried). Componential analysis can also make use of binary feature specification and of redundancy rules in order to facilitate processing. The previous chart can be specified in the following way:

woman [+FEMALE] [+ADULT] [+HUMAN]  
 bachelor [+MALE] [+ADULT] [+HUMAN] [-MARRIED]  
 spinster [+FEMALE] [+ADULT] [+HUMAN] [-MARRIED]  
 wife [+FEMALE] [+ADULT] [+HUMAN] [+MARRIED]

This allows a characterization of antonyms by a difference of the value plus or minus a feature and so it is a more economical format and better adapted for computer processing. In the same fashion the statement of semantic components is also more economical if we include some redundancy rules which predict the automatic relationship between components. The following list shows an example of this rule:

HUMAN > ANIMATE  
 ADULT > ANIMATE  
 ANIMATE > CONCRETE

MARRIED > ADULT etc.

If we state these rules once for the whole dictionary, we can avoid repeating the component on the right of a rule in each of the entries containing the component on the left: so every time we enter [HUMAN], we don't have to enter [ANIMATE].

### 5.3.1. Components of Meaning

Palmer (1976:85) says that the total meaning of a word can be seen in terms of a number of distinct elements or components of meaning. Components have a distinguishing function and serve to distinguish the meaning of a lexeme from that of semantically related lexemes, or more accurately they serve to distinguish among the meanings of lexemes in the same semantic domain. To determine the meaning of any form contrast must be found, for there is no meaning apart from significant differences. Nida (1975: 31) states "If all the universe were blue, there would be no blueness, since there would be nothing to contrast with blue. The same is true for the meanings of words. They have meaning only in terms of systematic contrasts with other words which share certain features with them but contrast with them in respect to other features".

Jackson in "Words and their meaning" (1996: 83) and Nida in "Componential Analysis of Meaning" (1975: 32) categorize the types of components into two main types, i.e. common component and diagnostic or distinctive component.

- a. Common component: This is the central component which is shared by all the lexemes in the same semantic domain or lexical field.
- b. Diagnostic or distinctive components: They serve to distinguish the meaning from others from the same domain.

A very simple example to explain these two types is provided by the words *man*, *woman*, *boy*, *girl*, and other related words in English (Leech, 1976: 96). These words all belong to the semantic field of 'human race' and the relations between them may be represented by the following matrix.

Table 5.1. Common and Diagnostic Components of the words *man*, *woman*, *boy*, and *girl*:

components	man	woman	boy	girl

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[HUMAN]	+	+	+	+
[ADULT]	+	+	-	-
[Male]	+	-	+	-

In the semantic domain of *man*, *woman*, *boy*, and *girl*, [HUMAN] is the *common component*, and they are distinguished by [ADULT], [MALE], [FEMALE] as the *diagnostic components*. The meanings of the individual items can then be expressed by combinations of these features:

*Man* +[human] +[adult] +[male]

*Woman* +[human] +[adult] -[male]

*Boy* +[human] -[adult] +[male]

*Girl* +[human] -[adult] -[male]

Before going further with the componential approach, it is important to consider possible differences in the roles of diagnostic components (Nida, 1975: 38). The differences can be best designated as (1) implicational, (2) core, and (3) inferential. Implicational components are those implied by a particular meaning, though they do not form an essential part of the core meaning. On the contrary, implicational components remain associated with a meaning, even when other components are negativized by the context. The word *repent* has three diagnostic components: (1) previous wrong behavior, (2) contrition for what has been done, and (3) change of behavior, and the first component is implicational. Whether in a positive or negative context, e.g. *he repented of what he did* or *he didn't repent of what he did*, the implication is that the person in question did something wrong. The negation affects the core components which specify the central aspects of the event, but does not modify the implicational component.

The inferential components of meanings are those which may be inferred from the use of an expression, but which are not regarded as obligatory, core elements. In the expression *the policeman shot the thief*, 'the thief was killed' is the inference, and without further contextual condition assumed to be the case. However, it is possible to deny this inference, e.g. 'the policeman shot the thief but didn't kill him'. At the same time an inferential component may be explicitly stated, e.g. *the policeman shot the thief to death* or *the policeman shot and killed the thief*.

### 5.3.2. Componential Analysis of Meaning

Leech (1983:) defines the analysis of word meaning as " A process of breaking down the sense of a word into its minimal distinctive features , that is into components which contrast with other components." He (Leech, 1974: ) defines the term , componential analysis as "The method of reducing a word's meaning to its ultimate contrastive elements". Within modern linguistics, the componential analysis of meaning was adapted from distinctive feature analysis in morphosyntax. Allan (1986) points out that "Anthropologists had for many years been comparing widely differing kinship systems in culturally distinct societies by interpreting them in terms of universal constituents that we might reasonably equate with semantic components. "

We can express the meaning of individual items by combinations of their features and they are called "componential definitions", such as *woman*: + HUMAN, + ADULT, –MALE. By using such formulate, we can show the synonymy of two items, for example: adult and grown up, can be given the same definitions + HUMAN, + ADULT although they differ in stylistic meaning. We can use such formulate also in polysemy, where one lexical item has more than one meaning or definition. *Man* is defined by the features + HUMAN , + ADULT , + MALE , but also has a wider definition consisting simply of the feature + HUMAN as in the sentence "*man has lived on this planet for over a million years*". (Leech , 1983:) In determining the semantic components of any one meaning, it is essential to compare the related meanings of other words. In treating for example "whistle", we must know the different meanings of this word as in:

He will whistle to us He bought a whistle

And then analyze the two meanings in terms of other words; then one can analyze the ways in which different meanings of one term differ from another (Nida, 1983: )

We can see that components are used in analyzing semantic relationships but a very different approach is analyzing the total meaning of a word in terms of a number of distinct elements or components of meaning. The idea of components, does not introduce a new kind of relation but it offers a theoretical frame work for handling kinds of relationships. (Palmer, 1983:)

A comparatively new way to study lexical meaning is by analyzing lexemes into series of semantic features of components. For example, "man", can be analyzed as ADULT, HUMAN and MALE. This approach was originally devised by anthropologists as a means of comparing vocabulary from different

cultures and has been developed by semanticists as a general framework for the analysis of meaning. Furthermore, the term componential analysis could be explained by considering the example stated below:

Man	woman	child
Bull	cow	calf
Rooster	hen	chicken
Drake	duck	duckling
Stallion	mare	foal
Ram	ewe	lamb

By examining the meaning of those words , we can set up the following proportional equation : man : woman : child , Bull : cow : calf From the semantic point of view , this equation displays the fact that the words man , woman and child on one hand and bull , cow and calf , on the other hand share something in common . In addition, we can see that man and bull have something in common which is not shared by the other two pairs , and woman and cow have also something in common which is not shared by either man and bull or woman and cow. The factor that is shared by these different groups of words, is called a semantic component, also called 'plereme' , 'sememe' , 'semantic marker' , 'semantic category'. Mathews (2007) defines 'plereme' as: "Hjelmslev's term for a unit of content ". He further defines sememe as : " Term used by various scholars for a basic unit of meaning ." He adds that " for Bloomfield a sememe was the meaning of a morpheme". Moreover, the equation mentioned above can be introduced by using numerical proportion: - a : b :: c :d (refer proportional series dealt in Unit 4). This means that where the first element is divided by the second, is equal to the third divided by the fourth. From this proportion , man : woman :: bull : cow , we can get four components of meaning and they are: [MALE] , [FEMALE], [ADULT – HUMAN ] , [ADULT – BOVINE ]. Furthermore, we can extract the components [ADULT] and [non- adult ] . We can factorize other components and eventually we can describe a word as “man” as the product of the components: [MALE] , [ADULT] and [HUMAN] . This componential approach to semantics has a long history in logic, philosophy and linguistics.

There are a number of important assumptions that the componential theories of semantics are based upon. The most important assumption suggests that the semantic components are language – independent or in other words, universal components. In many instances, it has been suggested that the vocabularies of all human languages can be analyzed partially or totally in terms of a limited set of semantic components and



these components, themselves are independent of the particular semantic structure of any given language. According to this point of view, the semantic components might be identified as the same components in analyzing the vocabularies of all languages (Lyons, 1968).

Without regarding the linguistic model which any linguist prefers to use in describing the facts of language, the role of semantic components is almost universally regarded as being fundamental to any analysis of semantic structure. Semantic components are structurally essential if a linguist deals with semantic problems, in terms of domains, also if one prefers to deal with structure in terms of generative "trees" (Nida, 1975).

It is clear that the value of componential analysis in the description of particular language is not affected by the status of the semantic components in universal terms. It must also be realized that componential theories of semantics are not necessarily "conceptual" or "mentalistic". This point should be emphasized because not only Katz and Chomsky, but also many other linguists have defended a componential approach to semantics within a philosophical and psychological framework which takes it for granted that the meaning of the lexical item, is the "concept", associated with this item in the minds of the speakers of a particular language (Lyons, 1968). As an example, Katz presents the notion of semantic component or markers by considering for example the idea, each one thinks as part of the meaning of words "chair", "stone", "man", "building", etc..., but not part of the meaning of words as "truth", "togetherness", "felling", etc...

The idea that we adopt to express what is common to the meaning of words in the first set and that we use to conceptually distinguish them from the words in the second set. The semantic marker (physical object) is introduced to indicate that notion. It has been suggested that the semantic theory should avoid commitment with respect to the philosophical and psychological status of "concepts", "ideas" and "mind". Thus the first set represents things which are related to the acceptability of or unacceptability of sentences or to the relation which holds between the sentences, which can be described by assigning to the words of the first set, a distinctive semantic component which is called "physical object" (Lyons, 1968).

In analyzing kin terms, a comparison is made for instance, between the set of English terms and Spanish terms and we note that in Spanish there is a regular marking for the sex of kin and there is no such marking in English (Allan, 1986).

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Male		Female	
tio	Uncle	tia	aunt
hijo	Son	hija	daughter
abuelo	Grandfather	abuela	grandmother
hermano	Brother	hermana	sister

From this example, we have also obtained a single atom of meaning, male as opposed to female with which we can define the difference between *uncle*, *son*, *grand father* and *brother* as a set opposed to *aunt*, *daughter*, *grand mother* and *sister* as a set. Such descriptions of meaning are done by feature analysis. The starting point is the notion that components can be taken out as a group of defining features providing critical information about the qualities by which such terms are recognized within its field.

The early writers who wrote on componential analysis in morphosyntax and kinship systems had changed contemporary linguistic opinion on semantic analysis by showing that it can be carried out by using structural analysis, such as that method by which we can compare and contrast *father*, *uncle* and *aunt*. These kinship terms have in common that they are [ASENDING GENERATION]. *Father* and *uncle* both have in common, that they are [MALE], whereas *aunt* is [FEMALE], *aunt* and *uncle* are [COLLATERAL], whereas *father* is [LINEAL]. So by the semantic components, we can show the meaning of the relationship between *father*, *uncle* and *aunt* (Allan, 1986 :). Analysis of this kind which is called componential analysis allows us to provide definition for a larger set of words in terms of few components. Such labels as [FEMALE], [MALE], [ADULT] etc., are not available as in the following two sets of words: *come - go*; *bring - take*. We can see that *come* is to *go* as *bring* to *take*, but it is difficult to name these components (Palmer, 1983 :)

Palmer also provides this example to state that "It is unlikely, that components are universal features of language." He adds that we may think perhaps that all the societies differentiate between [MALE] and [FEMALE], and that thus [MALE] and [FEMALE] are universal components of language, but the *come*, *go*, *bring*, *take* examples show that, these components are not related to simple physical features such as sex, and it becomes less reasonable to assume that they are universal (Palmer, 1983:)

If each individual word is seen as having unique dictionary definitions and yet is to be contained within a uniquely restricted lexical field, such definitions will have to be dependent on a sort of componential

analysis, which is breaking down the meaning of words by reference to atoms of meaning. These units were termed as semantic markers by Katz and Fodor, and appear as selectional features in Chomsky's discussion. These markers or semantic features denote a characteristic, shared by an entire group of words and set it off from other set of words which presumably are described by similar defining features. In componential analysis, contrasts of features are usually made in terms of '+' (plus) or '-' (minus) and often drawn in a matrix. In many instances, the componential analysis becomes interesting, as the lexemes become more complex. The example below is a possible matrix for some human motion verbs:

**Table 5.2.** A possible matrix for some human motion verbs

	NATURAL	HURRIED	FORWARD	ONE FOOT ALWAYS ON THE GRPOUND
Walk	+	-	+	+
March	-	+	+	+
Run	-	+	+	+
Limp	-	-	+	+

Sometimes, it is easy to use a system of this kind, in order to see what lexical gaps there are in a language. This matrix suggests that there is no single English lexeme to express the notion of "human using legs to move backwards" (Crystal, 1997 :).

Allan (1986:), summarizes the assumptions implicit in componential analysis as: " a – Componential analysis seeks to analyze the sense of an expression E into a set of semantic component corresponds to a category of which the category labeled by E is a subset. b – Every expression E in a language L should be analyzable into one or more semantic components. c – There is no one to one correlation between morphs and semantic components. d – Expressions that share semantic components reflect the characteristics of prototypical denotation. f – There is a hierarchy of categories; e.g. FELINE, which is a semantic component of cat , entails the semantic component ANIMAL, which is also therefore a component of cat."

Componential analysis (CA) is based on the presumption that the meaning of a word is composed of semantic components. So the essential features that form the meaning are elementary units on semantic level. By componential analysis, it is possible to state the smallest indivisible units of lexis or minimal components (Aitchison, 2003: 92). CA is particularly applicable to distinguishing the meanings of

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lexemes that are semantically related or in the same semantic domain. It is often seen as a process of breaking down the sense of a word into its minimal distinctive features; that is, into components which contrast with other components. It refers to the description of the meaning of words through structured sets of semantic features, which are given as “present”, “absent” or “indifferent with reference to feature”. To describe the presence and absence of a feature binary rules are used. The symbol ‘+’ means the feature is present, while ‘-’ means the feature is absent (Saeed, 2009: 260). Structural semantics and CA were patterned on the phonological methods of the Prague School, which described sounds by determining the absence and presence of features (Jackson, 1996: 80). The method thus departs from the principle of compositionality (Saeed, 2009: 265). The lexical decomposition (or componential) approach to lexical semantics became one of the most influential in the 1960-1970s. In this theory, word meanings were broken down into semantic primitives or semantic features and their specifications.

CA is a method typical of structural semantics which analyzes the structure of a words meaning. Thus, it reveals the culturally important features by which speakers of the language distinguish different words in the domain. This is a highly valuable approach to learning another language and understanding a specific semantic domain of Ethnography. Furthermore, Leech (1976: 98) states “as a distinctive technique, componential analysis first evolved in anthropological linguistics as a means of studying relations between kinship terms, but it has since proved its usefulness in many spheres of meaning”.

The semantic domain where componential analysis was first used with some success was kinship terminology. Kinship terms are conventionally described in relation to a given person, technically termed by the Latin equivalent of the pronoun I:*ego*. There are some components needed to analyze the terms, they are gender and generation (in respect of *ego*). For examples, *brother* and *sister* are the same generation as *ego*. While *father* and *mother* are one generation above (ascending generation) and *son* and *daughter* are one generation below (descending generation). We therefore need two semantic components to distinguish the generation: [ASCENDING] and [DESCENDING]. Gender and generation are not sufficient in distinguishing the meanings, we then need another component to contrast ‘direct’ or ‘lineal’ descent and ‘collateral’ descent. A semantic component of ‘LINEAL’ is then proposed. Below is the matrix which represents unique analysis of each term in the kinship system.

**Table 5.3.** The matrix of kinship terms (Jackson, 1996: 82)

**Kinship terms [MALE] [ASCEND] [DESCEND] [LINEAL]**

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<i>Father</i>	+	+	-	+
<i>Mother</i>	-	+	-	+
<i>Uncle</i>	+	+	-	-
<i>Aunt</i>	-	+	-	-
<i>Brother</i>	+	-	-	+
<i>Sister</i>	-	-	-	+
<i>Son</i>	+	-	+	+
<i>daughter</i>	-	-	+	+
<i>Nephew</i>	+	-	+	-
<i>Niece</i>	-	-	+	-
<i>Cousin</i>	+/-	-	-	-

### 5.3.3. Analysing and Distinguishing Meanings

The fact that semantic relations reveal aspects of meaning is one of the motivations for a componential approach to semantic analysis. Consider a series of hyponyms like piece of furniture – *chair* – *armchair*. It is easy to see that each successive level in such a hyponymy simply adds a further semantic specification (or component) to the previous one. Thus, the level *chair* adds a specification which we could describe as ‘for one person to sit on’ to piece of furniture, and *armchair* adds ‘with arms’ to *chair*. Similarly, we could describe the difference between chair and sofa through a contrast between the feature ‘for one person to sit on’ (*chair*) and ‘for more than one person to sit on’ (*sofa*). Continuing in this way, we could envisage an entire description of the semantic field of words for furniture items based on the presence or absence of a finite number of features, conceived as the ‘conceptual units out of which the meanings of linguistic utterances are built’ (Goodenough 1956: 196). This is illustrated in Table 5.4.

**Table 5.4.** Componential analysis of English furniture terms.

	with back	with legs	for a single person	for sitting	with arms	rigid
chair	+	+	+	+	-	+
armchair	+	+	+	+	+	+
stool	-	+	+	+	-	+
sofa	+	+	-	+	+	+
beanbag	-	-	+	+	-	-

The information contained in componential analyses like this is essentially similar to the information contained in a definition; in principle, anything that can form part of a definition can also be rephrased in terms of semantic components. Its embodiment in binary features (i.e. features with only two possible values, + or –) represents a translation into semantics of the principles of structuralist phonological analysis, which used binary phonological features like [± VOICED], [± LABIAL] [± NASAL], etc. to differentiate the phonemes of a language.

The use of a restricted number of binary features was one of the most successful innovations of the structuralist programme of linguistic analysis developed in the wake of Saussure by early Prague Schools phonologists like Trubetzkoy and Jakobson, and continued in America in the generative tradition by Chomsky and Halle. The componential analysis of meaning like the one sketched in Table 5.1 is precisely analogous to the feature specifications of phonemes advanced in the structuralist tradition. Thus, just as sofa can be described through the use of binary semantic components like [+ WITH BACK], [+ WITH LEGS], [– FOR A SINGLE PERSON], [+ FOR SITTING], [+ WITH ARMS], [+ RIGID], so the phoneme /d/ of English would be described (in the system of Chomsky and Halle 1968) as a constellation of the following distinctive features:

/d/ [+ consonantal, – nasal, – sonorant, + anterior, + coronal, + voiced . . . ]

These distinctive features serve to differentiate /d/ from the other phonemes of the English consonant inventory; /t/, for instance, shares all the feature specifications of /d/, except that it is [– voiced]:

/t/ [+ consonantal, – nasal, – sonorant, + anterior, + coronal, – voiced . . . ]

The use of distinctive binary features as an instrument of phonological analysis proved extremely fruitful and permitted a degree of formalization that many linguists took as a model of successful linguistic theorizing, and it was soon extended to the analysis of morphology. From this, application of features to semantics was a natural development. Whereas a standard dictionary represents the contrast between *chair* and *sofa* through differing definitions, as in, the componential analysis represents the same difference in meaning simply through the presence or absence of a single feature, [for a single person], an analysis which struck many linguists as superior in terms of its concision.

chair ‘a separate seat for one person, of various forms, usually having a back and four legs’ sofa  
 ‘a long upholstered seat with a back and arms for two or more people’ (Concise Oxford 1995)

Some componential analyses went beyond strict feature binarity to include a third value, 0, which indicated that a word was unspecified for a particular feature.

What is important for our purpose is not whether the analysis is accurate, but the conceptual framework to which it belongs. Componential analysis was not simply an innovation with respect to preceding modes of semantic analysis. It also crystallized a number of the implicit characteristics of ordinary lexicographical description, particularly the idea that the definitional metalanguage used to describe meanings should ideally be constituted by a fixed number of elementary terms which, in order to avoid circularity, would not themselves be open to further analysis. It is only a small step from such a conception of definition to the formalizations of componential analyses with their fixed repertoire of features, taken to represent the elementary building blocks of meaning.

Despite the popularity it enjoyed for a time, especially in structuralist circles, componential analysis is confronted with a number of serious problems. One important problem is the rigidity of the binary feature system, according to which the only possible value of a specified semantic feature is + or – (or unspecified). This aspect of the analysis came to be seen as increasingly unsatisfactory from the 1970s onward, largely in light of psychological evidence about human categorization which we will discuss later. This was not the only problem, however. Another serious problem was the fact that it seemed simply not to apply to many areas of the vocabulary.

Componential analysis is particularly suited to restricted semantic fields from which intuitively obvious semantic distinctions can easily be abstracted. The most obvious types of lexeme to which it can be applied are nouns with obvious properties available for conversion into features (‘with legs’, ‘to sit on’, ‘for one person’, etc.). Elsewhere, however, the utility of features is much less clear. Thus, whereas componential analyses were advanced of words for furniture, of dimension words like tall, short, long, thick and, especially, of kinship terms (an area where the binarity of features such as [ $\pm$  FEMALE] [ $\pm$  SAME GENERATION] is particularly justifiable; (cf. Goodenough 1956, Lounsbury 1956), not many other areas of the vocabulary proved open to convincing analysis in this method. As a species of definitional analysis, componential analysis inherited the failings of traditional definitions, and words which are hard to produce definitions for are also hard to analyse componentially.

The domain of colour terminology is exemplary in this respect, since it does not seem possible to distinguish any inherent components within the meanings of the different colour adjectives, any more than it is to propose definitions of them. What features, for example, could we plausibly advance in order to distinguish yellow from red? We could always advance the features [ $\pm$  RED] and [ $\pm$  YELLOW], but this sort of move was not considered legitimate: the features were supposed to analyse the meanings concerned, not simply treat them as unitary elements. Certainly these words do not have any obviously available conceptual components of the sort we could discern in the tables above.

Furthermore, many relational ideas which can easily be expressed in the propositional format of ordinary language definitions are hard to couch in sets of plausible-sounding binary features. The meanings of the verbs *buy*, *swap*, *sell*, *steal*, for example, do not seem to easily submit to description in terms of any distinctive features – or not, at least, to any distinctive features that would be significantly different from a definition. One could always, of course, develop a description through features like [ $\pm$  EXCHANGE] [ $\pm$  PRICE] [ $\pm$  TRANSFER OF POSSESSION] and similar, but the resulting feature decompositions, sketched in Table 5.5, do not seem to gain any explanatory advantage over verbal definitions – in fact, they seem rather less effective in their inability to incorporate the relational ideas which sentential definitions can easily accommodate. For example, the feature [subject receives] seems a clumsy way of capturing the difference between buy and sell, a distinction which emerges quite naturally from the definitions ‘exchange for goods or services’, and ‘exchange goods or services for money’.

**Table 5.5.** Componential analysis of English transfer verbs.

	transfer of possession	voluntary transfer	exchange	price	subject receives
buy	+	+	+	+	+
sell	+	+	+	+	–
steal	+	–	–	–	+
give	+	+	–	–	–
swap	+	+	+	–	+

Note that these features are meant to apply to transitive, active forms of the verbs: otherwise, the feature [subject receives] will not be an accurate description of the difference between the verbs.



We doubt whether we can you formulate a better set of features to describe the meaning of these verbs? What, if any, extra features need to be added in order to account for the verbs *transfer*, *take*, *barter*, *lend* and *hire*? Another problem with componential analysis as a semantic method can be illustrated by a comparison with phonology, the domain in which the technique was first developed. In phonology, features like [ $\pm$  VOICE], [ $\pm$  CORONAL], etc. generally have clear physical definitions: a segment is [+ VOICE] if the vocal folds are vibrating during its production, and [– VOICE] otherwise. Whether a segment should be classified as [+ VOICE] or as [– VOICE] can therefore, at least in principle, be reasonably unambiguously established. In contrast, the definition of semantic features is much less clear.

Consider as an example the case of [+ WITH LEGS] in the analysis of the noun *chair*. Many modern types of chair are supported by continuous metal runners which fulfil the same function as traditional legs. Does this type of chair count as [+ WITH LEGS] or not? We could, of course, simply stipulate, as a matter of definition, that the feature [+ WITH LEGS] applies to this type of chair as well, but if this type of stipulation is necessary too often there is a risk that the features used become arbitrary. Since there are no clear physical or psychological correlates of the semantic features, as there are for the phonological ones, which we could determine experimentally, it is often not obvious how a principled decision is to be reached: we cannot, after all, open up our heads and look inside in order to discover the ‘real’ nature of the concept involved, in the same way that we can determine observationally whether the vocal folds are usually in operation in utterances of a given segment.

In spite of these problems, the use of distinctive features in componential analysis had some subtle consequences for many linguists’ conception of semantics, by making meaning seem something much more concrete and uniform than it had appeared in traditional dictionary definitions. If the definition of *chair* as ‘a separate seat for one person, of various forms, usually having a back and four legs’ provides an intuitively clear pointer to the word’s denotation, it is still thoroughly informal, and open to a large number of different, and equally effective, phrasings. This did not seem to be the case with a componential analysis in terms of features like [+ WITH BACK], [+ WITH LEGS], [+ FOR A SINGLE PERSON], [+ FOR SITTING], [– WITH ARMS], [+ RIGID], which brought two important innovations.

The first was to suggest that semantic features, like phonological ones, have a higher degree of abstraction and technicality than informal dictionary definitions. Phonological features like [ $\pm$  NASAL] or [ $\pm$  CORONAL] refer to postulated abstract properties of segments which do not have any independent

existence: the feature [ $\pm$  NASAL], for instance, never exists on its own, but is only found together with other features such as [+ CONSONANT], and is abstracted as the common element from a whole range of sounds like [m], [n] and [ŋ]. Similarly, the adoption of componential analysis encouraged a view of semantic components as abstract, underlying elements of meaning. Given widespread conceptualist assumptions about meanings, it was easy to identify these abstract elements with the conceptual constituents of language (see Lounsbury 1956:163).

Second, in spite of the fairly small number of words for which successful componential analyses were proposed, componential analysis encouraged the assumption that the same distinctive semantic features would recur again and again in the analysis of a vocabulary; assuming, for example, a feature [ $\pm$  EDIBLE] that distinguishes the nouns *beef* and *cow*, one could then use the same feature to distinguish *plant* and *vegetable*. As a result, the underlying semantic content of language was made to seem highly uniform, with word meanings all cut from the same cloth, and it became possible to identify the underlying conceptual content of a language's vocabulary with the finite list of distinctive semantic features required for its componential analysis, in the same way that the set of phonological distinctive features constituted the raw material out of which individual languages constructed their phonemic systems. And just as, in phonology, this repertoire of distinctive features was assumed to be universal, it was easy to assume that all human languages shared the same set of underlying semantic features – even though this was strenuously denied by certain proponents of the method.

### LEARNING ACTIVITY 5.3.

- (1) Analyze the words *man*, *woman*, *girl* and *boy* using componential theory of meaning.
- (2) What are distinguishing componential features of the following words of furniture: *chair*, *armchair*, *stool*, *sofa* and *beanbag*?
- (3) How will you distinguish the following verbs of transfer: *buy*, *sell*, *steal*, *give* and *swap*.
- (4) List a few important kinship terms in your mother tongue. Explain the way to analyze them using componential analysis of meaning.

### 5.4. Procedural Steps in the Componential Analysis of Meaning

Componential analysis (CA) can only be done within the same semantic domain. There are three basic steps in the procedure for determining the diagnostic features (Nida, 1975: 48), they are:

- a. determining the common features and line up all the apparently relevant differences in form and possibly related functions;
- b. studying the relations of the features to one another, in order to determine the redundancies and dependencies; and
- c. formulating a set of diagnostic features and testing such a set for adequacy.

Furthermore, Nida (1975: 54-61) has developed these three basic steps into six procedural steps which are important for analyzing the components of a related set of meanings.

- a. Conducting a tentative selection of meanings which appear to be closely related, in the sense that they constitute a relatively well-defined semantic domain by virtue of sharing a number of common components: In this case, the meanings of *father*, *mother*, *son*, *daughter*, *brother*, *sister*, *uncle*, *aunt*, *nephew*, *niece* dan *cousin* all share the components of being applicable to human beings and designated persons who are related either by blood or by marriage.
- b. Listing all the specific kinds of referents for each of the meanings belonging to the domain in question: In some special situations one may even be able to list all the referents. For *father* and *mother*, as related to any one ego, there would presumably be only one referent. Expressions such as *father-in-law*, *mother-in-law*, *stepfather*, and *stepmother* are all regarded as separate semantic units and should be treated only as parts of extended domain, since they are clearly secondary in formal as well as semantic structure.
- c. Determining those components which may be true of the meanings of one or more terms, but not of all the terms in question: Obviously some of the meanings, as reflected in the differences between referents, involve the component of female sex, e.g. *mother*, *aunt*, *daughter*, *sister*, *niece*, and *cousin*, while others involve the component of male sex, e.g. *father*, *uncle*, *son*, *brother*, *nephew*, and *cousin*. The term *cousin* is nondistinctive with respect to sex. One must proceed feature by feature to determine those components which do make distinctions, and ultimately the features of sex, generation, and lineality, and consanguinity vs. affinal relations prove to be the distinctive features.
- d. Determining the diagnostic components applicable to each meaning, so that the meaning of *father* may be indicted as possessing the components: male sex, one ascending generation, and direct descent; *mother* as female sex, one ascending generation, and direct descent; *brother* as male sex, same generation as ego, and first degree of laterality; etc.

- e. Cross-checking with the data obtained by the first procedure: On the basis of the diagnostic features, one should be able to apply the correct terms to the referents known to possess such features.
- f. Describing the diagnostic features systematically: It may be done simply by listing the diagnostic features for each meaning (or term) or the arrangement of such data in the form of a tree diagram or matrix.

**Table 5.6.** The diagnostic features of kinship terms

<b>+1 GENERATION</b>	<i>father</i>	<i>Mother</i>	<i>uncle</i>	<i>Aunt</i>	<i>cousin</i>
<b>0 GENERATION</b>	<i>Ego</i>		<i>Brother</i>	<i>Sister</i>	
<b>-1 GENERATION</b>	<i>son</i>	<i>Daughter</i>	<i>Nephew</i>	<i>niece</i>	

#### **LEARNING ACTIVITY 5.4.**

- (1) What are the three basic steps in the procedure for determining the diagnostic feature.
- (2) Describe the six procedural steps which are important for analyzing the components of a related set of meanings.

#### **5.5. Linguistic Basis for Componential Analysis**

The actual linguistic procedures employed in CA consists of four types, they are naming, paraphrasing, defining, and classifying. If elicitation of usage is carefully conducted and if the results of such a procedure are carefully checked against spontaneous utterances, there is every reason to believe that the results of using the four basic processes of naming, paraphrasing, defining, and classifying can be essentially accurate (Nida, 1975: 64-66).

##### **a. naming**

The process of naming is in certain respects similar to reference, though the perspective is somewhat different. Reference is usually described as the relation established between linear unit and a referent, while naming is the specific act of designating a referent.

### **b. paraphrasing**

Paraphrasing is also an important linguistic function and one can spell out the distinctive features of any semantic unit by employing certain types of paraphrases. *Uncle* can be paraphrased into *my father's brother* or *my mother's brother*.

### **c. defining**

The process of defining would seem to be simply another form of paraphrase, but defining is a highly specialized form of paraphrase and is rarely used in actual language situations. It consists essentially in combining all the various specific paraphrases into a single statement based on the diagnostic components of the particular meaning in question. *Uncle* may be defined as *the brother of one's father or mother or the husband of one's aunt*.

### **d. classifying**

It involves a triple procedure: (1) lumping together those units which have certain features in common, (2) separating out those units which are distinct from one another, and (3) determining the basis for such groupings. Classification is never merely a process of putting referents into conceptual files for the basic kinship terms in English, it is essential to establish the features of sex, generation, degree of lineality, and consanguinity-affinal distinction.

## **LEARNING ACTIVITY 5.5.**

Differentiate between the following: naming, paraphrasing, defining, and classifying.

## **5.6. Contributions to the Study of Meaning.**

Componential analysis has a useful part to play in contributing to the description of meanings of lexemes (Jackson, 2009: 91-92). Here are some of the contributions.

- a. Understanding synonymy: A pair of true synonyms will share the same set of semantic components. For example, *adult* and *grown-up* have the same components [+HUMAN] [+ADULT].
- b. Establishing degrees of synonymy: We may talk of looser synonymy where a pair of lexemes have some but not all semantic components in common. For example, *barn* and *shed* would be looser synonyms. They share components [BUILDING], [STORAGE], but *barn* has additional component of [FARM] and perhaps that of [FOR CEREALS], while *shed* has perhaps the additional component [HOUSE].
- c. Understanding antonymy.  
A pair of antonyms usually share all their components except one, e.g. *man* and *woman* share the components [+CONCRETE], [+ANIMATE], [+HUMAN], but they are contrasted by the component [MALE].
- d. Understanding the sense relation of hyponymy: Hyponymy refers to the relation of inclusion of meaning, e.g. the fact that the meaning of *rat* is included in the meaning of *rodent*.
- e. Helping translator to produce accurate translation: CA Determines the essential features of meaning of lexical units, which is very useful in doing translation (Nida, 1975:7).

### LEARNING ACTIVITY 5.6.

Describe briefly the componential analysis has played a useful part in contributing to the description of meanings of lexemes.

### 5.7. Basic Difficulties Encountered in the Analysis of Semantic Components

A number of fundamental difficulties are involved in determining the diagnostic components of the meanings of semantic unit (Nida, 1975:61-64).

- a. The lack of an adequate metalanguage with which to describe some of the diversities. It is difficult enough to speak of distinctions in color, so that a contiguous series such as *violet*, *blue*, *purple*, *green*, *yellow*, *orange*, and *red* can be properly described in terms of diagnostic components. Another obvious example involves the semantic domain of odors: *stink*, *smell*, *stench*, and *malodor*, or the semantic domain of noises seperti *scream*, *screech*, *squeak*, and *squeal*.

b. Meanings which constitute a contiguous set: The meaning of *even* in contexts such as *even John kissed Marry*, *John even kissed Marry*, and *John kissed even Marry* is paralleled to some extent by *only*, e.g. *only John kissed Marry*, *John only kissed Marry*, and *John kissed only Marry*. The related meanings of *even*, *only*, and *just* are contiguous, therefore one must look for other sets of contrast to provide the basis for componential analysis.

c. Some terms which primarily differ only in the degree of intensity: There may be no absolute feature which marks the difference but by only a relative contrast. *Toss* and *hurl* may be regarded as types of throwing, but the major difference is one of intensity, and accordingly one must reckon with a continuum on which there is no fixed boundary between the two. The speed at which a professional baseball player may toss a ball may be much faster than the speed at which some amateur ball players can hurl.

d. The meanings of certain terms exist only in one's passive vocabulary: One may, for example, have a general idea of the meanings of *saunter*, *stroll*, and *meander*, as referring to ways of walking, but the fact that these terms are not in one's active vocabulary tends to make it difficult to determine how and to what extent such meanings differ.

e. The diversity of viewpoints, especially in describing spatial relations: For a *house* one can speak of behind and in front of, since a *house* is regarded as having a back and front. But when one speaks of behind a *tree* and in front of a *tree*, the spatial relation must be relative to a view point character or existing situation. Time involves similar difficulties.

f. The meaning of many abstract terms: It involves a number of complications because of their potential syntagmatic relations to so many events and entities. A word such as *lousy* may occur with a vast number of different semantic heads, e.g. *lousy meal*, *lousy person*, *lousy time*, *lousy deal*, *lousy weather*, *lousy grades*, *lousy book*, *lousy performance*, etc. None of which have anything to do with a louse.

g. A word can have different meanings in different fields: The word *competence* is used in the fields of linguistics, education and psychology, and they define and use it in different ways and contexts.

- h. Deixis terms: The different meanings and use of “*there* and *here*” and “*this* and *that*” depend primarily on space and time.
- i. Distinctions may be based on relations rather than on physical features: Certain aspects of complications have already been noted in the discussions of kinship terms, but meanings reflected in such terms as *friend*, *partner*, *colleague*, and *associate* are even more difficult to analyze.
- j. The componential analysis becomes much more complex when the relations describe logical arrangements, as with *if*, *though*, *because*, *in order to*, etc.

### LEARNING ACTIVITY 5.7

Briefly explain the fundamental difficulties involved in determining the diagnostic components of the meanings of semantic unit.

### 5.8. Applicability and Universality

Is there then a set of semantic components which is universal and from which the meanings of lexemes in all languages are composed? If there is, we do not have yet the knowledge or the metalanguage to specify what such a set might be. Some words are also culture-bound, which means the meaning distinctions that are relevant to one culture may not fit another culture at all. For example, all cultures have kinship systems, but they are often organized in a quite different way (Jackson, 1991:91).

Componential analysis is also limited in its range of applicability as it does not apply easily to all areas of the vocabulary. Semantic components, when they can be identified, have a discriminatory function and they add to our understanding of the meaning of a lexeme by providing points of contrast with semantically related lexemes. The meaning of a lexeme must also involve a number of perspectives, e.g. denotation, sense relations, and collocation.

Another problem of its application which shows its limitation is the fact that componential analysis (among other types of meaning) only focuses on referential meaning. In other words, it is only concerned



with the relation between the lexical unit and the referent, and the meanings of lexemes which refer to objects. It is important to consider that not all words have referents (Nida, 1975:25).

Some linguists also believe that componential analysis account naturally for overlaps, since one can point to components which are apparently shared by overlapping words. *Cow, princess and tigrees* overlap because they share the component [FEMALE]. It is also somewhat inaccurate to speak of the meaning of words as being composed out of a heap of separate components. At best, these so-called components form only a small part of the overall meaning of the word in question, and the whole approach wrongly suggests that if we look a little more carefully, we may be able to sort out all of them. The words 'components' and 'componential analysis' have therefore faded out of fashion. Nowadays, people tend to talk of words having semantic properties, which are somewhat more satisfactory, since it does not imply that these properties are building blocks which need to be assembled.

It works best with taxonomies (systems of classification, e.g. kinship) or sets of concrete objects. It is of more doubtful value in describing the meanings of more abstract lexemes, not least because we lack an adequate metalanguage. Consider the set of lexemes: *annoy, irritate, vex, displease, and provoke*. They all refer to the ways of causing someone to be angry or to feel angry, any member of the set is frequently defined in terms of one or more of the members. We may conclude therefore that there is no universal set of semantic components from which the meanings of lexemes are composed.

### **LEARNING ACTIVITY 5.8.**

- (1) Describe the applicability of componential analysis of meaning.
- (2) Describe the universality of componential analysis of meaning.

### **5.9. Apparent Advantages of The Componential Approach**

The most important advantage of the componential approach to semantics is that in terms of the same set of components, we can answer two different questions: the first is about the semantic acceptability or unacceptability of syntagmatic combinations of words or phrases, the second question is "what is the meaning" of a given or particular combination of lexical items?

It has been suggested that the significance of any grammatically well-formed sentence is traditionally accounted for in terms of specific general principles of compatibility between the meanings of their constituent lexical items. If we take the word (pregnant) and assume that it contains a component which restricts it to the modification of nouns which contains the component (female), according to this rule (a pregnant woman) or (a pregnant mare) would be significant but the phrase (the pregnant man) or (a pregnant stallion), would be meaningless or uninterpretable (Lyons , 1977:327).

Componential analysis made considerable contribution to the development of semantics. The most significant thing is that it brought together both the formalization of syntax and the formulization of semantics closer together and linguists are seriously concerned with the relations between syntax and semantics ( Lyons , 1977: 318) . Semantic components represent the conceptual constituents of senses in the same phrase markers represent the syntactic constituents of sentences. They represent not only the atomic constituents of meaning (the simplest concept), but also the complex ones ( Katz, 1972) .

Attempts have also been made to explain the relatedness of meaning in terms of componential analysis of the senses of lexemes. This approach is also used in the analysis of meaning for the vocabulary as a whole and shows how it can be used not only in relatively clear-cut examples but also in complex ones. (Lyons , 1977: ).

Ethno linguistic investigations use this device of componential analysis successfully although limit its use to relatively restricted areas of cultural experience like kinship relations or colour categorization. Here we have to mention that componential analysis does not handle all semantic relations with the same affectivity for on one hand, it is difficult to reduce the relational opposites to components as in parent / child. We could treat this as having the same components but in different direction, that they are relational and not atomic components. On the other hand, the componential analysis cannot remove the hierarchical characteristic of hyponymy. (Palmer, 1976 :)

A further way to the study of meaning is done by the process of the componential analysis, which is breaking down the meaning of a word into its components which can be contrasted with other components. This method is first used by anthropologists who compared differing kinship systems in different societies. This device also has a long history in logic, philosophy and linguistics. The componential analysis has many advantages and that is why it becomes essential for the linguist to use such approach in dealing with different problems of semantics. The idea of componential analysis does

not introduce a new type of relation , but presents a theoretical frame work for dealing with such relations .

Its contribution in morphosyntax and kinship systems has changed contemporary linguistic opinion on semantic analysis by showing that it can be carried out easily by using structural analysis. Such analysis provide us with an economical way to treat a set of words in terms of few components. On one hand , this componential analysis is also beneficial in defining what lexical gaps are there in a given language , and on the other hand is good in handling not only the atomic constituents of meaning but the complex ones also. Its clear effect in bringing closer both the framework of syntax with the framework of semantics, is considered to be a big step towards the development of semantics in the last few decades. In the present time, it is widely suggested that semantic components are language -independent or universal, shared by vocabularies of all the languages , thus it gained a great deal of importance .

### **LEARING ACTIVITY 5.9.**

- (1) Describe the contribution of componential analysis to syntax.
- (2) Describe the contribution for componential analysis in morphosyntax and kinship systems.

### **5.10. Strengths and weaknesses of componential analysis**

#### **Strength**

- Componential analysis is effective when it comes to representing similarities and differences among words with related meanings.
- It allows us to group entities into natural classes (similar to phonology); e.g. man and woman care in a class defined by the features [+HUMAN, +ADULT]
- We can now define certain sense relations more precisely by making use of semantic features:

synonymy: two words have exactly the same features

oppositeness: two words W1 and W2 share the same features except for one feature of W1 being [+] and the same feature of W2 being [-].

Hyponymy: W1 is a hyponym of W2 if the meaning of W1 contains all the features of W2 but not vice versa.

## Weaknesses

- Circularity: it is argued that semantic features are abstractions that underlie the actual words of a language, but in fact the features ARE words of the language.
- No one has yet determined a complete list of features which are needed to analyse all the words of a language, let alone the words of all languages.
- In any particular use of a word, only some of the postulated features may be relevant.
- Semantic features are binary, but binary features are not always the best way of analyzing a semantic field. • There is no evidence that semantic features have any psychological reality
- There are fuzzy concepts (How much does one have to be worth to be called rich? Consider also old, tall, grey-haired, genius, clean)
- Membership in a category can be graded: A robin is a “better” bird than a penguin. In the classical model of componential analysis all members are equal.

## LEARNING ACTIVITY 5.10.

- (1) What the strength of componential analysis.
- (2) Discuss the weakness of componential analysis.

## SUMMARY

Components serve to distinguish among the meanings of semantically related lexemes in the same semantic domain. Analysis in terms of components, when the total meaning of a lexeme is seen in terms of a number of distinct elements or components of meanings, is not sufficient but can help to define the meaning of a lexeme formed by a number of semantic signs. Through six careful procedural steps of analysis which are simplified into four basic processes of naming, paraphrasing, defining, and classifying, componential analysis has been a useful approach to determine the meaning of a lexeme.

Since the meaning of a lexeme involves a number of perspectives, knowledge on the dimensions of meanings and metalanguage is very essential to make this analysis work. Despite its usefulness in the analysis of meaning, we may encounter difficulties and limitations in applying the theory. It can not be applied easily to all areas of the vocabulary, due to in part metalanguage and cultural problems. In terms

of its universality, it can be concluded that there is no universal set of semantic components from which the meanings of lexemes are composed.

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## UNIT 6

### DYNAMICS OF WORD MEANING AND LEXICON

#### CONTENT

- 6.1 Dynamics of word meaning
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#### OVERVIEW

World is full of things and concepts. Language has only limited number of words to express those things and concepts. Language resort to many mechanisms to overcome this difficulty. It does fundamentally two things to cope up this difficulty; one is by coining new words and another is expanding the range of the meaning of a word. The second mechanism leads to polysemy. Most of words are polysemous. It is difficult to find out a monosemous word. Polysemy can be attributed to contextual variability of word meaning or extension of meaning due to context. A lexicon focuses on the poysemy which culminates into contextual variability of meaning. At one dimension, the information about words constitutes the lexicon. Interestingly, when the lexicon has been externalised and organised, we have the dictionary. Indeed, the richer and the more comprehensive the dictionary of a language, the more it has the capacity to express meaning. Recently worNets have built a full-fledged on-line lexical resource. The theory of generative lexicon tries to find ways to cope up with the enormous proliferation of meaning due to meaning extension and meaning change which culminates into polysemy.

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*AN INTRODUCTORY COURSE ON SEMANTICS AND PRAGMATICS*

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completion of this unit, you should be able to know:

- (1) the contextual variability of word meaning
- (2) polysemy
- (3) extensions of meaning
- (4) semantic change
- (5) about the conventional dictionaries
- (6) semantic lexicon such as wordNet
- (7) theory of generative lexicon

### 6.1. Dynamics of meaning

Meaning is not static. It is dynamic and propagates into different senses due to its use in different contexts. A fundamental problem lexicologists are concerned with is the fact that the number of words at our disposition is limited but that human imagination is virtually unlimited and that the number of things, beings, processes and ideas that can be referred to is endless. There are mainly two strategies to cope with this disproportion: first, we match the concrete referent with a lexicalized meaning of a word and actualize this meaning in the concrete context; second, if the first strategy cannot be applied or risks to fail because there is no lexicalized meaning to cover the actual referent, we must create a lexical innovation as, e.g., a semantic innovation, a new word-formation or idiom or introduce a loan word.

In the first case, the actual context meaning is located inside of the range of an existing semantic invariant: a learned semantic rule is applied to a given context. We can define the criteria for this contextual variation (or “vagueness”) and to distinguish it from different senses of one word, i.e. polysemy, and from different words showing an identical signifier, i.e. homonymy. When we decide to use a word although we leave the traditional range of its semantic invariants, we create a semantic innovation. If this innovation is successful, it becomes, in turn, lexicalized as a new invariant of the word in question. The types of polysemy resulting from this diachronic process and the possible semantic relations linking them in synchrony are worth investigating.

### 6.1.1. Contextual variability of word meaning

When we try to correlate word with meaning, we enter into lot of problems. Let us look at the following examples. The interpretation we give to a particular word form can vary greatly from context to context (Cruse, 2000:104).

1. I went to the bank. (ambiguous because of the two readings for the *bank*: one 'bank of a water body' or 'financial bank')
- 2.a. The firm built this school. (a building)
- 2.b. The school won the award last year. (people)
- 3.a. He was coming down the path to meet me. (perspective)
- 3.b. I followed a winding path through the woods.
- 4.a. The child can walk already and she's only 11 months old. (contrasted with standing up unaided, talking, etc.)
- 4.b. I usually walk to work. (contrasted with driving, going by train, etc.)
- Mary's speech was inaudible.
- 4.b. Mary's speech was interesting.
- 5.a. Please put this book back on the shelf. (facets)
- 5.b. I find this book unreadable.
- 6.a. John planted five roses.
- 6.b. John picked five roses.
- 7.a. John ordered a ham sandwich.
- 7.b. The ham sandwich wants his coffee now. (metonymy)

We raise the following questions in our mind:

1. Do words typically have multiple meanings?
2. How do we decide what constitutes 'a meaning'?
3. Is there a finite number of meanings?
4. How are meanings related to one another?

The answers for these questions are difficult to arrive at. We shall begin by identifying two properties of variant readings of a word which are relevant to the answers to the above questions. We can first of all



ask whether there is a sharp semantic boundary between the two readings; a second question is whether they are mutually exclusive. Both these will be taken as distinctness of two readings.

### 6.1.2. Polysemy

A situation of polysemy arises when one form of a word has multiple meanings which are related by extension. Words that are polysemous have single entries in the dictionary. However, there are numbers that suggest the list of possible meanings – as shown below: Foot 1 – of a person, 2 – of a bed, 3 – of a mountain

#### 6.1.2.1. Varieties of polysemy

There is by definition a motivated relationship between polysemous senses. There are various ways of classifying the sorts of relation that can hold between polysemous senses. We can distinguish between two types of polysemy: linear and non-linear polysemy (Crues, 2000: ).

##### 6.1.2.1.1. Linear polysemy

Autohyponymy, automeronymy, autosuperordination and autoholonymy are the different types of linear polysemy.

###### (1) Autohyponymy

Autohyponymy occurs when a word has a default general sense, and a contextually restricted sense which is more specific in that it denotes a subvariety of the general sense. For example, dog has a general sense, "member of canine race" as in *Dog and cat owners must register their pets*, and a more specific reading as in *That's not a dog, it's a bitch*.

###### (2) Automeronymy

Automeronymy occurs in a parallel way to autohyponymy, except that the more specific reading denotes subpart rather than a subtype. For example, in the sentence *he painted the window*, *window* means the whole of window including its frame, the wooden plank, bars, hinges, etc , whereas in the sentence *he came through the window*, *window* means only the hole like structure of window. Similarly in the sentence *she showed her body*, *body* denotes the whole of the body, whereas, in the sentence *he hurts her body*, *body* denotes a part of the body.

###### (3). Autosuperordination

An example of autosuperordination is the use of *man* to refer to human race.

#### (4) Autoholonymy

Discriminating automeronymy from autoholonymy is not easy, because often there seem to have different default readings according to the context. For example, in the sentence, *she scratched her body*, *body* denotes only part of the body, whereas in the sentence, *she show her body*, *body* denotes the whole of the body. Similarly, in the sentence *she scratched her hand*, *hand* denotes only part of the arm, whereas in the sentence, *she lost her arm in an accident*, *arm* denotes the whole of arm.

#### 6.1.2.1.2. Non-linear polysemy

Metaphor and metonymy comes under non-linear polysemy.

##### 6.1.2.1.2.1. Metaphor

Many polysemous senses are clearly related metaphorically. A metaphor is a figure of speech that refers, for rhetorical effect, to one thing by mentioning another thing. It may provide clarity or identify hidden similarities between two ideas. Where a simile compares two items, a metaphor directly equates them, and does not use "like" or "as" as does a simile. Metaphors are sometimes constructed through our common language. They are called conventional metaphors. Calling a person a “night owl” or an “early bird” or saying “life is a journey” are common conventional metaphor examples commonly heard and understood by most of us. Below are some more conventional metaphors we often hear in our daily life:

My brother was **boiling mad**. (This implies he was too angry.)

The assignment was **a breeze**. (This implies that the assignment was not difficult.)

It is going to be **clear skies** from now on. (This implies that clear skies are not a threat and life is going to be without hardships)

The skies of his future began to **darken**. (Darkness is a threat; therefore, this implies that the coming times are going to be hard for him.)

Her voice is **music to his ears**. (This implies that her voice makes him feel happy)

##### 6.1.2.1.2.2. Metonymy

Another rich source of polysemous variation is metonymy. Metonymy is a figure of speech in which something is called by a new name that is related in meaning to the original thing or concept. For example, it's common practice to refer to celebrity life and culture in the United States as "Hollywood," as in "Hollywood is obsessed with this new diet." The meaning of this statement is not that the place itself has any obsession, of course, but instead refers to the celebrities and wannabe celebrities who reside there. As noted above, "Hollywood" can act as a metonym for celebrity culture. There are many other place names that act metonymically in the same way, such as "Wall Street" for the financial sector and "Washington" for the United States government. However, there are many more words in common usage that are metonyms. Metonymy can be characterized as figurative use based on association. Here are different types of metonymy based on different types of associations (Pustejovsky, 1995:31). Pustejovsky, (1995:31) calls them as complementary polysemy:

1. Count-mass metonymy

The **lamb** is running in the field.

John ate **lamb** for breakfast.

2. Container-containee metonymy

Mary broke the **bottle**.

The baby finished the **bottle**.

3. Figure-ground metonymy

The widow is rotting.

Mary crawled through the **widow**.

4. Product-produced metonymy

The **newspaper** fired its editor.

John spilled coffee on the **newspaper**.

5. Plant-food metonymy

May ate a **fig** for lunch.

Mary watered the **figs** in the garden.

#### 6. Process-result metonymy

The company's **merger** with Honda will begin next fall.

The **merger** will produce cars.

#### 7. Place-people metonymy

John travelled to **New York**.

**New York** kicked the mayor out of office.

### 6.1.2.1.2.3. Difference between Metonymy and Synecdoche

Metonymy and synecdoche are very similar figures of speech, and some consider synecdoche to be a specific type of metonymy. Synecdoche occurs when the name of a part is used to refer to the whole, such as in “There are hungry mouths to feed.” The mouths stand in for the hungry people. The definition of metonymy is more expansive, including concepts that are merely associated in meaning and not necessarily parts of the original thing or concept.

Metaphor (drawing a similarity between two things) and metonymy (drawing a contiguity between two things) are two fundamental opposite poles along which a discourse with human language is developed. It has been argued that the two poles of similarity and contiguity are fundamental ones along which the human brain is structured; in the study of human language the two poles have been called metaphor and metonymy, while in the study of the unconscious they have been called condensation and displacement. In linguistics, they are connected to the paradigmatic and syntagmatic poles.

### 6.1.3. Extensions of meaning

Cruse (2000:201-202) under the title extensions of meaning talks about three distinct types of extensions: naturalized, established and nonce extensions.

#### 6.1.3.1. Naturalized extensions

What is historically no doubt an extended meaning may be so entrenched and familiar a part of a language that its speakers no longer feels that a figure of speech is involved at all: such readings of a word (or extension) is said to be naturalized (Cruse, 2000: 201).

He is in love.

It is hard to put into words.

The kettle is boiling.

### 6.1.3.2. Established extensions

There are readings which are well established and presumably have entries in the mental lexicon, but are none the less felt to be figures of speech:

John's a parasite/a lounge lizard/couch potato.

She **shallow** the story.

There are too many mouths to feed

### 6.1.3.3. Nonce readings

Nonce readings are ones for which there are no entries in the mental lexicon; therefore cannot be 'looked up', but have to be generated and interpreted using strategies of meaning extension such as metaphor and metonymy. The following are the few examples:

West gave him a look that was heat-seeking, like a missile.

He had never told her his fantasies about being overpowered by her.

Her heart rolled forward at such a pitch, he could not catch up with it.

### 6.1.4. Semantic change

Semantic change deals with change in meaning. It is understood to be a change in the concepts associated with a word, and has nothing to do with change in the phonetic form of the word form of the word. Semantic change is very difficult to describe and explain. It is unlikely that scholars will ever be able to predict the directions in which particular words will change their meanings. The development of new material and social conditions may cause words to become unnecessary. For example, wimple 'a medieval head-covering' is not used anymore, because there is no need for it. On the other hand a shift of attitudes may render some words socially unacceptable (e.g. frog, Jap, girlie...), while others become highly fashionable or socially relevant (e.g. cool, ecology...). Nonetheless, by looking at a wide range of

examples of semantic changes that have happened in the history of the English language, one can begin to develop a certain sense of what kinds of change are likely. Information about the original meaning of the morphemes and the intuition developed from observing various morphemes and the intuition developed from observing various patterns of semantic change will help us make better-informed guesses about the meanings of unfamiliar words that contain familiar morphemes. For example, if we see the word *infomercial* for the first time, what can we say about it? Well, the 1st part is *information* and the 2nd part is *commercial*, so we can at least partially understand its meaning. And what is it actually? It is 'a television programme that is an extended advertisement often including a discussion or demonstration' demonstration.

We shall focus first, on the mechanisms of change-what forces in our society, or what forces in our thinking, typically have brought about semantic change? Then we will turn to a classification of the results of semantic change, or to put it in other words, how do these changes affect the lexicon?

#### **6.1.4.1. Mechanisms of semantic change**

##### **6.1.4.1.1. Technology and current relevance**

When new technology changes the way we conduct our daily life the words which refer to it change also. Consider, for example, the word *compute* and its derivatives - *computer*, *computation*. It used to mean 'to count, to reckon, to calculate'. Indeed the word *count* is a direct descendant (through French) of the Latin verb *computare* 'to count'. The computer, however, is no longer a 'counter': it has given its name to a new branch of science, computer science; we talk of computer addiction, computer-aided design, computer ethics, computer literacy, computer viruses, and even compuser. Computers deal with text, graphics, images, symbols, music; the original meaning of 'counting' in computer language has been completely supplanted by the new associations of 'computing'. As computers became common, many words changed their meanings because they could conveniently be used to refer to aspects of computing. For example, you can customize your commands, where customize refers to your setting up specialized function keys. The word custom already has many meanings outside this range of computers, e.g. characteristic behaviour of a society, special tax on importing goods, and customer as one who shops at a store.

The word *command* in customizing our commands is a specialized sense of a word that once meant 'an order given to a person of higher rank to a person of lower rank' – now it means 'to give a signal to the programme by pushing a certain key or clicking the mouse on the right icon'. In defining *command* we have introduced mouse on the right icon. In defining *command*, we have introduced two new meanings: mouse and icon. Until the computer age, icon most commonly referred to pictorial representations of sacred personages in the Eastern Orthodox Church. The lively mouse is an input device, it can be mechanical or optical, it is connected through a mouseport, and it can cause mouse elbow. The computer revolution has given rise to new meanings for ordinary words. You can open two windows on your screen select computing can open two windows on your screen, select computing operations from a menu, use hyphenation tools from your tools menu, select a hyperlink, paste a section from one document into another, look something called a clipboard, which is neither clipped, nor a board, you find the bug in your program, you surf the net, and so on.

The computer-related examples are numerous and striking, but the process they illustrate is neither new nor isolated. The word *shuttle*, whose original meaning is 'a device used in weaving', is more frequently used today in its later, extended figurative meaning of anything that goes back and forth: a shuttle bus, a shuttle flight, the space shuttle, and in politics, shuttle diplomacy. For some less-dramatic examples, think of nineteenth-century meaning of station-wagon, a 'horse-drawn covered carriage'. Another example comes from astrology, and it is the word *disaster*. Originally, *disaster* meant 'a bad, unfavorable, star or planet'. It came from astrology, in which the future is supposed to be predicted by configurations of stars. Our faith in such predictions was shuttered long ago, but the word maintains its meaning in a changed society.

*Doctor* meant 'teacher', from Latin *docere* 'to teach', and in that meaning it survives as an occasional title for professors. The medical sense, now the norm, was acquired gradually from the association with higher education that was characteristic of physicians. *Elegant* originally meant 'one who selects out', based on Latin *elegans*, from the verb *eligere*, 'to choose'. (ELECTION – ELEGANT, from the same root). Therefore, 'one who picks wisely'. An elegant person, for example, is taken to be elegant because he or she selects clothes and accessories wisely. *Adore*: It means literally, to speak to. At some point in history, kind of speaking came to be the speech of prayer, speaking to God. Eventually the association went even further: looking toward heaven, imploringly, would now be described as adoration. The point is the root which meant *speak* has come to refer to silent worship, a change brought about by association with prayer.

The connection between *amble* and *ambulance* is an accident of war: ambulance comes from a longer phrase, hospital ambulant, a 'moveable hospital', one which could be present on the battlefield to tend to the wounded. It was battlefield to tend to the wounded. It was merely shortened to the second part of the phrase giving us *ambulance*.

One thing we have to mention here is metonymy. Metonymy is an association of a particular type, usually accidental association in space or time. The real referent and the transferred referent The real referent and the transferred referent are associated by virtue of being in the same place, as when we speak of the White House and we are in fact referring to the current President of the United States and his staff. This association is of both place and time, because The White House can only refer to the present President. Metonymy can be extended to cover changes resulting from other associations such as part and whole - *drink the whole bottle, give me a hand, live by the sword...*

#### 6.1.4.1.2. Analogy

The association covered by the notion of metonymy is due to a more general cause: analogy. Analogy involves the perception of similarity between some concrete the perception of similarity between some concrete object or process and some abstract concept or process. The basic meaning of a word is related to another meaning in such a way that by analogy there can be a transfer or extension of meaning from one to the other. For example, if someone is the head of a department, the relationship of the head to the body –the literal sense –is being used in an extended or figurative sense, in which there is an analogical ratio set up: head is to body as head (=leader) is to department. It can be seen as an equation can be seen as an equation.

Thus if we say that 'The population is mushrooming all over the world', we are comparing the rapid grow of population to the unmanageable fecundity of a mush room. If we speak of a 'traffic bottleneck', we are comparing some narrowing of traffic flow with the neck of a bottle where the contents flow more slowly. Virtually any perceived similarity can be the basis of analogical change and the source of a new meaning The analogy can be quite remote and even unlikely but if it catches new meaning. The analogy can be uite remote and even unlikely, but if it catches someone's fancy it may easily stick in the language.

e.g.



culminate – reach the top of the hill → to reach a decisive point, after struggling as if climbing.  
 dependent – hanging from something → supported by virtue of someone else's money or power.  
 educate – to lead forth, to bring up → to make competent, to raise to a higher social or cultural level  
 progress – to step forward → to improve, to move toward a better existence  
 provoke – to call forth → to incite with anger or desire, to irritate  
 understand – be located beneath → to grasp concept

Analogy is the most frequent and most important source of semantic enrichment of the language. This process could equally be called over-generalization, but loss of specificity has the slight advantage of reflecting a common human failing. All of us are prone to generalizing, prone to failures of specificity. One of the techniques we study when we are learning to write acceptable texts is how to be more specific, how to provide details and examples, how to find the right word for the meaning we have in mind. In every day speech and casual writing, we often choose the more general meaning. This tendency shows up historically when words acquire broader and more general meanings. For example, Guy Fawkes' infamous first name lost its specificity with the proliferation of November 5th effigies of the criminal; then guys began to be used of males of strange appearance then it was broadened to refer to any males appearance, then it was broadened to refer to any males, and now it is generalized (especially in the plural) to any group of people, including groups of females.

#### 6.1.4.2. Consequence of semantic change

We turn now from the mechanisms of change to the consequences of change. What is the status of a word? Has its reference gone up, or down in its social status and content? One classic example of a word that has risen in status is *knight*, which used to mean, quite simply boy, manservant. *Pretty* came from OE *praetig* “crafty, sly”. Rising in status is called amelioration / elevation (from Latin *melior*– 'better'). A development of the meaning in the opposite direction, which is perhaps more frequent, is called *pejoration* (from Latin *pejor* 'worse'). Another type of status is semantic bleaching, where the original meaning of the word has been eroded away and generalized by heavy usage, as in words like *very* (originally *true*), *terrible* (able to cause *terror*).

#### 6.1.4.3. Types of semantic change

We can observe the process of semantic change from two aspects. First, we can observe the changes from the point of view of logic, or, in this sense, we observe the results of semantic change. Here, the results can be studied in the denotative and the connotative meaning.

#### **6.1.4.3.1. Widening or generalization or extension**

A semantic change may lead to the widening of the meaning of a word or lexeme (this is usually observable diachronically). For example, *rubbish* in Old English only meant broken stones; present-day expression is wider and covers all kinds of unwanted or left-over property; *camp* had only the meaning of the military camp. *Office* originally meant 'a service', but today it refers also to a place where someone works. *Novice* originally meant 'a person admitted to a probationary membership in a religious community', but today it refers generally to 'a beginner'. *Dog* originally appeared with the more specific meaning of 'a specific powerful breed of dog', which generalised to include all breeds or races of dogs. *Salary* from Latin *salarium* was a soldier's allotment of salt (Latin *sal*=salt), which then came to mean a soldier's wages in general, and then finally wages in general not just soldier'.

#### **6.1.4.3.2. Narrowing or specialization**

The semantic change may lead to the narrowing or specialization of the meaning a word or lexeme; the word or lexeme acquires a more specialized meaning. For example, *actor* originally meant someone who does something, but it has changed its meaning into 'one who has a role in a dramatic production'. *Ammunition* originally considered to be military supplies of all kinds, but now it refers to bullets, rockets, that is military supplies that explode. *Meat* originally meant "food" in general and later narrowed its meaning to "food of flesh". *Deer* originally referred to "an animal" (OE *dēor*-animal). *Girl* originally meant a child or a young person of either sex" in ME period, but in Modern English it narrowed its meaning to a female child. *Starve* originally meant to die (OE *steorfan*-to die), but today it means to suffer or perish from hunger.

#### **6.1.4.3.3. Branching**

In this process the lexeme becomes polysemous; the newly developed sememes coexist, e.g. *head* – mind and mental abilities, part of the body, life (*it cost him his head*), individual person, leader, something

resembling the head of the body (*head of cabbage, head of nail*), culmination, the top or the beginning of a page or letter, front or prominent part...

#### 6.1.4.3.4. Degeneration / Pejoration

Semantic change results in degeneration or pejoration in which a sense of a word takes on a less positive, more negative evaluation in the minds of the users. e.g. *knave* 'a rogue' < OE: *cnafa* 'a youth, a child' > 'servant'; *spinster* 'unmarried woman' < 'one who spins'; *silly* 'foolish, stupid' < ME *sely* 'happy, innocent' < OE *sælig* 'blessed, blissful'; *disease* 'illness' < 'discomfort' (cf. *dis+ease*)

#### 6.1.4.3.5. Elevation /Amelioration

Semantic change results in elevation or amelioration in which there is a shift in the sense of a word in the direction towards a more positive value in the minds of the users. e.g. *pretty* < OE: *prættig* 'crafty, sly'; *knight* 'mounted warrior serving a king' 'lesser nobility' < OE *cnihht* 'boy, servant' >'servant' > 'military servant'.

#### 6.1.4.3.6. Metaphor

Metaphor is a semantic change based on the association of similarity between referents; the meaning is transferred on the basis of the fact that the two referents resemble one another. The basic structure of the metaphor is very simple. There is a thing we are talking about and that to which we are comparing it. Nevertheless, the similarity may involve different types: similarity of shape (*head of a cabbage*), similarity of position or location (foot of a page/mountain), similarity of form and position (the neck of a bottle), similarity of form and function (teeth of a saw, an arm of a robot), similarity of function (*head of department*), similarity in behaviour (*bookworm, wirepuller, fox*), similarity of colour. Consider the following types of similarities: *mouth – mouth of the bottle; hand – hand of the chair; ear – ear of corn; eye – eye of the coconut*. All metaphoric semantic change involves relationship of perceived similarity. e.g. *\*root* (of plant) => > root of plant, root of word, root in algebra, source; *\*stud* => 'good-looking sexy man '(of slang origin) derived from *stud* 'a male animal used for breeding; *\*chill* => 'relax, calm down' of slang origin, original 'to cool'.

#### 6.1.4.3.7. Metonymy

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In the case of metonymy (contiguity of meaning), the name of an attribute of a thing is used instead of the thing itself. Metonymic semantic change involves inclusion of additional senses which were originally not present but which are closely associated with word's original meaning. e.g. *tea* => 'drink' => 'evening meal accompanied by drinking tea'; *cheek* 'fleshy side of the face below the eye' < OE: *cēace* 'jaw, jawbone'. Proper names as metonymy can be illustrated by: *read Shakespeare*; *listen to Mozart*; *it was a Waterloo*.

#### 6.1.4.3.8. Synecdoche

It is a kind of metonymy which involves part-to-whole relationship. Here a part is used to mean the whole, e.g. *have several mouths to feed* – "mouth" instead of a whole "person"; Leeds defeated Manchester in football - names of the teams are replaced by the name names of the cities. *hand* 'hired hand, employed worker'; *tongue* 'language'.

#### 6.1.4.3.9. Others

Other types of meaning transfer are:

**Eponymy** (functional change) – common words are derived from proper nouns, e.g.: *sandwich*, *china*, *bikini*, *rugby*, *White House* (American government).

**Personification** – assigning human qualities to things, e.g.: *the paper says...*

**Euphemisms** – the need for a less expressive word, substitution of words which can be harmful for words with milder connotations, e.g.: *restroom* (toilet), *pass away* (die), *sleep with ...* (have a sexual intercourse with...)

#### **Taboo replacement and avoidance of obscenity**

In order to avoid obscenity, a taboo word is replaced by a non-taboo word. e.g. *ass* 'long-eared animal related to a horse' => *donkey*; *cock* 'adult male chicken' => *rooster*, *bloody nose* => *blood nose/bleeding nose*; *toilet* : *WC, bathroom, lavatory, restroom, loo, john*

**Hyperbol:** Hyperbole is a shift in meaning due to exaggeration by overstatement. The exaggeration of meaning in the statement need not be taken literally. E.g. *wait for ages*, *weight a ton*; *I'll kill him when I see him...* Litotes – the opposite of hyperbole, the understatement which can be often ironical or moderating, e.g.: *It wasn't bad* (in the sense of *It was good*), *She's not stupid* (*She's rather smart*); using *terribly*, *horribly*, *awfully* to mean 'very'.

## **Litotes**

Litotes is an exaggeration by understatement. Litotes is opposite of hyperbole, the understatement which can be often ironical or moderating. e.g. *It wasn't bad* (in the sense of *It was good*), *She's not stupid* (*She's rather smart*).

### **6.1.4.4. Causes of meaning change**

The phenomenon of semantic change must have its cause, the motivating factor that propels the change to happen. In the study of the lexicon we distinguish two main causes:

#### **6.1.4.4.1. Linguistic causes**

English has its general tendencies and development patterns, which cause certain semantic changes. The tendency of language economy is apparent in ellipsis: a phrase is made of two words, but the meaning of one of the words is gradually transferred to its partner, so one word can stand for the whole phrase, e.g. *to be expecting* (*to be expecting a baby*), *to propose* (*to propose to marry*). Language economy is also responsible for the tendency of differentiating of synonymy – *time* and *tide* used to be synonymous, today they differ considerably. Analogy: when one member of a synonymic set acquires a new meaning, the other members acquire it, too: when the word *catch* acquired the meaning of understand, its synonyms *get*, *grasp* acquired the new meaning as well. Today all three words also mean 'to understand'.

#### **6.1.4.4.2. Extra-linguistic causes**

Change of lexicon is most strongly pushed by the changes in the society, the speech community, the culture. The changes can be political, social, and economic. Institutions are being established and abolished, objects appear and disappear, and phenomena come and go. In most cases the words denoting the disappearing objects or events stay in the language, but their meaning is shifted, e.g.: car originally named today it is auto; *atom* originally (in Greek) meant invisible, today it's *atóm*, small matter particle.

The following semantic changes need to be taken into consideration:

Semantically related words often undergo parallel semantic shifts. For example, various words which meant 'rapidly' in Old English and Middle English shifted their meaning to 'immediately'.

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Spatial/locative words may develop temporal senses: *before, after, behind*. Also, spatial terms often develop from body-part terms, as in *ahead of, in the back of, at the foot of*.

Word having to do with the sense of touch may typically develop meanings involving the sense of taste: *sharp, crisp*.

Words involving the sense of taste may develop extended senses involving emotions in general: *bitter, sour, sweet*.

*see* > understand, know.

*hear* > understand, obey.

*body* > person..

### **LEARNING ACTIVITY 6.1.**

- (1) Explain the contextual variability of word meaning
- (2) Explain the phenomenon of polysemy.
- (3) Describe the varieties of polysemy.
- (4) Describe extensions of meaning.
- (5) Describe the mechanisms of semantic change.
- (6) Describe the results of semantic change.
- (7) Describe the types of semantic change.
- (8) Describe the causes of semantic change.

## **6.2. Lexicon**

Semantics is a branch of linguistics studying the meaning of words while lexicon is a dictionary that includes or focuses on lexemes. Semantics is a branch of linguistics studying the meaning of words while lexicon is the vocabulary of a language.

### **6.2.1. Dictionary and thesaurus**

#### **6.2.1.1. Dictionary**

A dictionary is a collection of words on one or more specific languages, often alphabetically (or by radical and stroke for ideographic languages), with usage of information, definitions, etymologies, phonetics, pronunciations, translation, and other information; or a book of words in one language with

their equivalents in another, also known as a lexicon. It is a lexicographical product designed for utility and function, curated with selected data, presented in a way that shows inter-relationship among the data. A broad distinction is made between general and specialized dictionaries. Specialized dictionaries do not contain information about words that are used in language for general purposes—words used by ordinary people in everyday situations. Lexical items that describe concepts in specific fields are usually called terms instead of words, although there is no consensus whether lexicology and terminology are two different fields of study. In theory, general dictionaries are supposed to be semasiological, mapping word to definition, while specialized dictionaries are supposed to be onomasiological, first identifying concepts and then establishing the terms used to designate them. In practice, the two approaches are used for both types. There are other types of dictionaries that don't fit neatly in the above distinction, for instance bilingual (translation) dictionaries, dictionaries of synonyms (thesauri), or rhyming dictionaries. The word dictionary (unqualified) is usually understood to refer to a monolingual dictionary of general-purpose.

A different dimension on which dictionaries (usually just general-purpose ones) are sometimes distinguished is whether they are *prescriptive* or *descriptive*, the latter being in theory largely based on linguistic corpus studies—this is the case of most modern dictionaries. However, this distinction cannot be upheld in the strictest sense. The choice of headwords is considered itself of prescriptive nature; for instance, dictionaries avoid having too many taboo words in that position. Stylistic indications (e.g. ‘informal’ or ‘vulgar’) present in many modern dictionaries is considered less than objectively descriptive as well. Although the first recorded dictionaries date back to Sumerian times (these were bilingual dictionaries), the systematic study of dictionaries as objects of scientific interest themselves is a 20th-century enterprise, called lexicography, and largely initiated by Ladislav Zgusta. The birth of the new discipline was not without controversy, the practical dictionary-makers being sometimes accused by others of "astonishing" lack of method and critical-self-reflection.

The lexicon presents an ordered mental list of words available to a language user. As we have observed earlier, when the lexicon is externalised and generalised, it becomes the dictionary. The information provided in the lexicon or the dictionary covers the phonological, morphological, syntactic and semantic characteristics of the lexical items.

Phonological information guides us in pronunciation; morphological information refers to the formation of the word while syntactic information focuses on the categorical features as well as the distributional possibilities of the word. Semantic information relates to the meaning of the word.

When we focus on the features of words, we deal on the specific groups such as nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, pronouns, conjunctions, prepositions etc. It is possible to classify words as content and form words. Content words have independent meaning, even in isolation. Content words have an open class system as they can accept new entries. For instance, in the age of Information and Communication Technology, such new words as *laptop*, *face book*, *disc drive* have been added to the dictionary of English. Form words also called function or grammatical words do not have independent meaning when they occur in isolation. Such words are used to signal syntactic or grammatical relationship within larger structures. Form words belong to a closed system because they cannot be expanded. They are also very few in number. They include-pronouns, auxiliaries, conjunctions, prepositions, determines and particles.

Another way to classify words is to describe them as transparent or opaque. The meaning of transparent words can be deduced from the meaning of their constituent parts.

e.g

Prefix	Stem	Suffix
un -	god -	liness
dis - satisfy(y) action		

The meaning of opaque words cannot be determined from their constituent parts. Most opaque words are also structural, grammatical or form words.

### 6.2.1.2. Thesaurus

In general usage, a thesaurus is a reference work that lists words grouped together according to similarity of meaning (containing synonyms and sometimes antonyms), in contrast to a dictionary, which provides definitions for words, and generally lists them in alphabetical order. The main purpose of such reference works is to help the user "to find the word, or words, by which [an] idea may be most fitly and aptly expressed" – to quote Peter Mark Roget, architect of the best known thesaurus in the English language. Although including synonyms, a thesaurus should not be taken as a complete list of all the synonyms for a particular word. The entries are also designed for drawing distinctions between similar words and assisting in choosing exactly the right word. Unlike a dictionary, a thesaurus entry does not give the definition of words. In library science and information science, thesauri have been widely used to specify



domain models. Recently, thesauri have been implemented with Simple Knowledge Organization System (SKOS).

## **Dictionary**

A dictionary is a collection of words along with their meaning, definition and description of usage. A thesaurus presents words as "word families," listing their synonyms without explaining their meanings or usage. Thesauri may list words alphabetically or conceptually. A dictionary is used to look up the meaning of a particular word, say when want to know what a word means, or the various contexts in which it may be used differently, what part or parts of speech it is, etc. A dictionary gives thorough details on the meaning, definition, usage and etymology of a word. A thesaurus usually does not contain all the words of the language. It provides several similar alternative words (synonyms), as well as contrasting words (antonyms). A thesaurus is also a useful resource when you know the meaning of the word but not the word itself.

### **6.2.2. Semantic lexicon**

A semantic lexicon is a dictionary of words labeled with semantic classes so associations can be drawn between words that have not previously been encountered: it is a dictionary with a semantic network. WordNet is a example for semantic lexicon.

#### **6.2.2.1. WordNet**

WordNet is a lexical database for the English language. It groups words into sets of synonyms called synsets, provides short definitions and usage examples, and records a number of relations among these synonym sets or their members. WordNet can thus be seen as a combination of dictionary and thesaurus. While it is accessible to human users via a web browser, its primary use is in automatic text analysis and artificial intelligence applications. The database and software tools have been released under a BSD style license and are freely available for download from the WordNet website. Both the lexicographic data (lexicographer files) and the compiler (called grind) for producing the distributed database are available.

##### **6.2.2.1.1. Computers and the Lexicon**

Until recently only dictionaries in printed book format represented the lexicon of a language. These are meant to show the lexicon's structure; rather, they facilitate the looking up of words and enable the user to find information about spelling, meaning, and use. Access to particular word is through their spelling, so dictionaries and lexicons must fulfill their purpose via an organization based on orthographic principles. On the other hand, WordNet is a semantic dictionary that is designed as a network, partly because representing words and concepts as an interrelated system seems to be consistent with evidence for the way speakers organize their mental lexicons. The first lexical reference book that took meaning as its organizing principle was Roget's thesaurus. Thesauruses are built around concepts and are designed to help users find the "right" word when they have a concept in mind. By contrast, dictionaries are books designed to give users information about words and to help them understand the concepts behind unfamiliar words they have encountered. WordNet is neither a traditional dictionary nor a thesaurus but combines features of both types of lexical reference resources.

#### **6.2.2.1.2. WordNet as a thesaurus**

WordNet's design resembles that of a thesaurus in that its building block is a synset consisting of all the words that express a given concept. Thus, the user of a WordNet who has a given concept in mind can find, by calling up one of the words expressing this concept, other words that lexicalize the same concept. But WordNet does much more than lists concepts in the form of synsets. The synsets are linked by means of a number of relations, including hyponymy, meronymy, and entailment. Different kinds of semantic oppositions lumped together in the antonymy relation link words only, rather than concepts. WordNet thus clearly separates the conceptual and the lexical levels, and this distinction is reflected in the one between semantic-conceptual and lexical relations that hold among synsets and words, respectively. Unlike thesaurus, the relations between concepts and words in WordNet are made explicit and labeled; users select the relation that guides them from one concept to the next and choose the direction of their navigation in conceptual space. Words express concepts, and the lexicon is constrained by the kinds of concepts that are available to us by virtue of our perception of, and interaction with, the world around us. WordNet differs from thesauruses, where only lexicalized concepts are accounted for.

#### **6.2.2.1.3. WordNet as a dictionary**

In some respects, WordNet resembles a traditional dictionary. For example, WordNet gives definitions and sample sentences for most of its synsets. WordNet also contains information about morphologically related words. WordNet's goals differ little from those of a good standard college-level dictionary, and

the semantics of WordNet is based on the notion of sense that lexicographers have traditionally used in writing dictionaries. It is in the organization of that information that WordNet aspires to innovation (Miller, 1998). WordNet does not give pronunciation, derivation morphology, etymology, usage notes, or pictorial illustrations. WordNet does however, try to make the semantic relation between word senses more explicit and easier to use.

#### 6.2.2.1.4. Relations in wordnet

WordNet makes the commonly accepted distinction between conceptual-semantic relations, which link concepts, and lexical relations, which link individual words. The mental lexicon tends to build semantic networks with conceptual-semantic relations, whereas workers focusing on lexical aspects use primarily lexical, word-word relations. WordNet is organized by semantic relations. Since a semantic relation is a relation between meanings, and since meanings can be represented by synsets, it is natural to think of semantic relations as pointers between synsets. It is characteristic of semantic relations as pointers between synsets. WordNet does not contain syntagmatic relations linking words from different syntactic categories. The four major syntactic categories (Noun, Verb, Adjective, Adverb) are treated separately. Nouns are organized in lexical memory as topical hierarchies, verbs are organized by a variety of entailment relations, and adjectives and adverbs are organized as N-dimensional hyperspaces.

WordNet includes the lexical categories nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs but ignores prepositions, determiners and other function words. Words from the same lexical category that are roughly synonymous are grouped into synsets. Synsets include simplex words as well as collocations like "eat out" and "car pool." The different senses of a polysemous word form are assigned to different synsets. The meaning of a synset is further clarified with a short defining *gloss* and one or more usage examples. An example adjective synset is: good, right, ripe – (most suitable or right for a particular purpose; "a good time to plant tomatoes"; "the right time to act"; "the time is ripe for great sociological changes"). All synsets are connected to other synsets by means of semantic relations. These relations, which are not all shared by all lexical categories, include:

#### Nouns

*hypernyms*: *Y* is a hypernym of *X* if every *X* is a (kind of) *Y* (*canine* is a hypernym of *dog*)

*hyponyms*: *Y* is a hyponym of *X* if every *Y* is a (kind of) *X* (*dog* is a hyponym of *canine*)

*coordinate terms*: *Y* is a coordinate term of *X* if *X* and *Y* share a hypernym (*wolf* is a coordinate term of *dog*, and *dog* is a coordinate term of *wolf*)

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*meronym*: *Y* is a meronym of *X* if *Y* is a part of *X* (*window* is a meronym of *building*)

*holonym*: *Y* is a holonym of *X* if *X* is a part of *Y* (*building* is a holonym of *window*)

### Verbs

*hypernym*: the verb *Y* is a hypernym of the verb *X* if the activity *X* is a (kind of) *Y* (*to perceive* is a hypernym of *to listen*)

*troponym*: the verb *Y* is a troponym of the verb *X* if the activity *Y* is doing *X* in some manner (*to lisp* is a troponym of *to talk*)

*entailment*: the verb *Y* is entailed by *X* if by doing *X* you must be doing *Y* (*to sleep* is entailed by *to snore*)

*coordinate terms*: those verbs sharing a common hypernym (*to lisp* and *to yell*)

These semantic relations hold among all members of the linked synsets. Individual synset members (words) can also be connected with lexical relations. For example, (one sense of) the noun "director" is linked to (one sense of) the verb "direct" from which it is derived via a "morphosemantic" link.

The morphology functions of the software distributed with the database try to deduce the lemma or stem form of a word from the user's input. Irregular forms are stored in a list, and looking up "ate" will return "eat," for example.

#### 6.2.2.1.5. Knowledge structure

Both nouns and verbs are organized into hierarchies, defined by hypernym or *IS A* relationships. For instance, one sense of the word *dog* is found following hypernym hierarchy; the words at the same level represent synset members. Each set of synonyms has a unique index.

dog, domestic dog, *Canis familiaris*

=> canine, canid

=> carnivore

=> placental, placental mammal, eutherian, eutherian mammal

=> mammal

=> vertebrate, craniate

=> chordate

=> animal, animate being, beast, brute, creature, fauna

=> ...

At the top level, these hierarchies are organized into 25 beginner "trees" for nouns and 15 for verbs (called *lexicographic files* at a maintenance level). All are linked to a unique beginner synset, "entity."

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Noun hierarchies are far deeper than verb hierarchies. Adjectives are not organized into hierarchical trees. Instead, two "central" antonyms such as "hot" and "cold" form binary poles, while 'satellite' synonyms such as "steaming" and "chilly" connect to their respective poles via a "similarity" relations. The adjectives can be visualized in this way as "dumbbells" rather than as "trees."

#### 6.2.2.1.6. Lexical hierarchy

Information about hyponymic relations between nouns is given in the definitional phrases of conventional dictionaries.

robin – a migratory bird that has a clear melodious song and a reddish breast with gray or black upper plumage.

bird – a warm-blooded egg-laying animal having feathers and forelimbs modified as wings.

animal – an organism capable of voluntary movement and possessing sense organs and cells with noncellulose walls.

organism - a living entity

Each hypernym leads on to a more generic hypernym. Hypernym cannot be represented as a simple relation between word forms. Hypernymy is a relation between lexicalized concepts, a relation that is represented in Wordnet by a pointer between the appropriate synsets. A lexical hierarchy can be reconstructed by following the trail of hypernymically related synsets.

{robin, redbreast} @□ {bird} @□ {animal, animate\_being} @□ {organism, life\_from, living\_thing}

For each hypernymic relation we can add a corresponding hyponymic relation that points in the opposite direction. What emerges from this manner of representing hyponymy and hypernymy is a lexical hierarchy. Hierarchies of these sorts are widely used by computer scientist as a means of representing knowledge. The nouns in WordNet form a lexical inheritance system; a systematic effort has been made to connect hyponyms with their hypernyms (and vice versa). WordNet presupposes a linguistic knowledge of anaphoric relations; an anaphor can be a hypernym of its antecedent.

I thought it was robin but the bird flew away before I could get close enough to be sure.

More generally, a hypernym can replace a more specific term whenever the context ensures that the substitution will not produce confusion.

#### 6.2.2.1.7. Psycholinguistic aspects of WordNet

The initial goal of the WordNet project was to build a lexical database that would be consistent with theories of human semantic memory developed in the late 1960s. Psychological experiments indicated that speakers organized their knowledge of concepts in an economic, hierarchical fashion. Retrieval time required to access conceptual knowledge seemed to be directly related to the number of hierarchies the speaker needed to "traverse" to access the knowledge. Thus, speakers could more quickly verify that *canaries can sing* because a canary is a songbird ("sing" is a property stored on the same level as "canary"), but required slightly more time to verify that *canaries can fly* (where they had to access the concept "bird" on the superordinate level) and even more time to verify *canaries have skin* (requiring look-up across multiple levels of hyponymy, up to "animal"). While such experiments and the underlying theories have been subject to criticism, some of WordNet's organization is consistent with experimental evidence. For example, anomia selectively affects speakers' ability to produce words from a specific semantic category, a WordNet hierarchy. Antonymous adjectives (WordNet's central adjectives in the dumbbell structure) are found to co-occur far more frequently than chance, a fact that has been found to hold for many languages.

#### 6.2.2.1.8. WordNet as a lexical ontology

WordNet is sometimes called an ontology, a persistent claim that its creators do not make. The hypernym/hyponym relationships among the noun synsets can be interpreted as specialization relations among conceptual categories. In other words, WordNet can be interpreted and used as a lexical ontology in the computer science sense. However, such an ontology should normally be corrected before being used since it contains hundreds of basic semantic inconsistencies such as (i) the existence of common specializations for exclusive categories and (ii) redundancies in the specialization hierarchy. Furthermore, transforming WordNet into a lexical ontology usable for knowledge representation should normally also involve (i) distinguishing the specialization relations into *subTypeOf* and *instanceOf* relations, and (ii) associating intuitive unique identifiers to each category. Although such corrections and transformations have been performed and documented as part of the integration of WordNet 1.7 into the cooperatively

updatable knowledge base of WebKB-2, most projects claiming to re-use WordNet for knowledge-based applications (typically, knowledge-oriented information retrieval) simply re-use it directly.

WordNet has also been converted to a formal specification, by means of a hybrid bottom-up top-down methodology to automatically extract association relations from WordNet, and interpret these associations in terms of a set of conceptual relations, formally defined in the DOLCE foundational ontology. In most works that claim to have integrated WordNet into ontologies, the content of WordNet has not simply been corrected when it seemed necessary; instead, WordNet has been heavily re-interpreted and updated whenever suitable. This was the case when, for example, the top-level ontology of WordNet was re-structured according to the OntoClean based approach or when WordNet was used as a primary source for constructing the lower classes of the SENSUS ontology.

#### **6.2.2.1.9. Limitations**

WordNet does not include information about the etymology or the pronunciation of words and it contains only limited information about usage. WordNet aims to cover most of everyday English and does not include much domain-specific terminology. WordNet is the most commonly used computational lexicon of English for word sense disambiguation (WSD), a task aimed to assigning the context-appropriate meanings (i.e. synset members) to words in a text.[9] However, it has been argued that WordNet encodes sense distinctions that are too fine-grained. This issue prevents WSD systems from achieving a level of performance comparable to that of humans, who do not always agree when confronted with the task of selecting a sense from a dictionary that matches a word in a context. The granularity issue has been tackled by proposing clustering methods that automatically group together similar senses of the same word.

#### **6.2.3. Generative Lexicon**

The generative lexicon (shortly GL) presents a novel and exciting theory of lexical semantics that addresses the problem of the “multiplicity of word meaning”- that is, how we are able to give an infinite number of senses to words with finite means. As the first formally elaborated theory of generative approach to word meaning, it lays the foundation for an implemented computational treatment of word meaning that connects explicitly to a compositional semantics. In contrast to static view of word meaning (where each is word is characterized by a predetermined number of word senses) that imposes a tremendous bottleneck on the performance capability of any natural language processing, Pustejovsky

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proposes that the lexicon becomes an active and central component in the linguistic description. The essence of his theory is that the lexicon functions generatively, first by providing a rich and expressive vocabulary for characterizing lexical information; then by developing a framework for manipulating fine-grained distinctions in word descriptions; and finally, by formalizing a set of mechanisms for specialized composition of aspects of such description of words, as they occur in context, extended and novel senses are generated.

According to Pustejovsky (1995:5) the most pressing problem in lexical semantics are the following:

- Explaining the polymorphic nature of language
- Characterizing the semanticity of natural language utterances
- Capturing the creative use of words in novel contexts
- Developing a richer, co-compositional semantic representation

Pustejovsky (2001:56) characterizes a generative lexicon as a computational system involving at least the following levels of representation:

- ARGUMENT STRUCTURE: Specification of number and type of logical arguments
- EVENT STRUCTURE: Definition of the event type of an expression and its subeventual structure
- QUALIA STRUCTURE: A structural differentiation of the predicative force for a lexical item
- LEXICAL INHERITANCE STRUCTURE: Identification of how a lexical structure is related to other structures in this type of lattice

Pustejovsky (2001:56) assumes that word meaning is structured on the basis of four generative factors, or qualia roles, that capture how humans understand objects and relations in the world and provide the minimal explanation for the linguistic behaviour of lexical items.

- CONSTITUTIVE: the relation between an object and its constituent parts
- FORMAL: the basic category that distinguishes the object within a larger domain
- TELIC: the object's purpose and function
- AGENTIVE: factors involved in the object's origin or "coming into being."



The qualia structure is the core of the generative properties of the lexicon, because it provides a general strategy for creating increasingly specific concepts with conjunctive properties. A simple schematic description of a lexical item,  $\alpha$ , using this representation is shown below:

$$\begin{array}{l} \alpha \\ \text{ARGSTR} = \text{ARG1} = x \\ \dots \\ \text{QUALIA} = \begin{array}{l} \text{CONST} = \text{what } x \text{ is made of} \\ \text{FORMAL} = \text{what } x \text{ is} \\ \text{TELIC} = \text{function of } x \\ \text{AGENTIVE} = \text{how } x \text{ come into being} \end{array} \end{array}$$

The lexical structure for *book* as an object can then be represented as follows:

$$\begin{array}{l} \text{book} \\ \text{ARG1} = y:\text{information} \\ \text{ARGSTR} = \text{ARG2} = x:\text{phys\_obj} \\ \quad \text{information.phy\_obj} \\ \text{FORM} = \text{holds } (x,y) \\ \text{QUALIA} = \text{TELIC} = \text{read } (e,w,x,y) \\ \quad \text{AGENT} = \text{write } (e', v, x, y) \end{array}$$

Pustejovsky defines the semantics of a lexical item as a structure involving different components. One of these is qualia structure, which is rich and structured representation of the rational force of a lexical item. What is peculiar about GL is that qualia permit a much richer description of meaning than either a simple decompositional view or a purely relational approach to word meaning allow. That is, it expresses different/orthogonal aspects of word meaning instead of a one-dimensional inheritance (even multiple), which can only capture standard hyponymy/hypernymy relations. The adequacy of qualia relations for capturing key aspect of word meaning becomes apparent when consulting dictionary definitions. The elements of meaning easily map on dimension(s) expressed via qualia roles. Furthermore, these relations become particularly crucial for those sense definitions which have an underspecified genus term. Not all dimension of meaning are always explicitly expressed in the definition of a lexical item. Some of them are inherited by virtue of its membership to a semantic type. Although qualia relations easily emerge from dictionary definition, the formal expression of a specific value for a quale is sometimes quite problematic.

## LEARNING ACTIVITY 6.2

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- (i) Explain the contextual variability of word meaning
- (ii) What is meant by polysemy? Explain.
- (iii) Discuss about the dynamics of semantic change.
- (iv) Differentiate the lexicon from semantic lexicon
- (v) Describe the need for the theory of generative lexicon.

## **SUMMARY**

Under dynamics of word meaning you have learnt about contextual variability of word meaning, polysemy, extensions of meaning and semantic change. Under lexicon you have learnt about know about the conventional dictionaries, semantic lexicon such as wordNet and theory of generative lexicon

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## **Unit 7**

### **GRAMMATICAL SEMANTICS AND SENTENTIAL SEMANTICS**

#### **CONTENT**

- 7.1. Grammatical semantics
  - 7.1.1. Lexical meaning and Grammatical meaning
  - 7.1.2. The meaning of major grammatical categories
  - 7.1.3. Grammatical meaning associated with nouns and noun phrases
  - 7.1.4. Grammatical meaning associated with the verb
  - 7.1.5. Adjectives and properties
  - 7.1.6. Quantification
- 7.2. Sentential Meaning
  - 7.2.1 Paraphrase
  - 7.2.2 Ambiguity

- 7.2.3 Vagueness
- 7.2.4 Tautology
- 7.2.5 Presupposition
- 7.2.6 Entailment
- 7.2.7 Anomaly
- 7.2.8 Contradiction
- 7.2.9 Analyticity

## OVERVIEW

The exploration of meaning in human languages has traditionally focused on the relation between linguistic forms and what they refer to in the world. Most approaches to formal semantics have been driven by this preoccupation. Recent years, however, have seen the growth of a parallel preoccupation, that of exploring the relation between patterns of meaning and grammatical structure, leading to the search for a restricted subset of meanings that interact with the grammatical system of human languages. Grammatical semantics addresses the meaning of major grammatical categories, grammatical meaning associated with nouns and noun phrases, the grammatical meaning associated with verbs, adjectives and properties and semantics of quantification. We do not communicate with isolated words. Indeed, knowledge of language and the art of communication depend on our ability to combine words in a systematic way. When words are confined, we achieve sentential meaning. The study of semantics is also expected to explore meaning at this level.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- (i) know the meaning of major grammatical categories
- (ii) know the grammatical meaning associated with nouns and noun phrases
- (iii) know the grammatical meaning associated with verbs
- (iv) know the adjectives and properties
- (v) know the semantics of quantification
- (i) identify different issues related to the meaning of the sentence;
- (ii) explain major concepts in the meaning of sentences; and
- (iii) demonstrate the ability to apply these concepts in real language situation.

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*AN INTRODUCTORY COURSE ON SEMANTICS AND PRAGMATICS*

## 7.1. Grammatical semantics

### 7.1.1. Lexical meaning and Grammatical meaning

The sentence *A dog barked* above is a meaningful sentence which is composed of smaller meaningful parts. One of the smaller parts is the phrase *a dog* which refers to a certain animal. We call this phrase a referring expression. A referring expression is a piece of language that is used as if it is linked to something outside language, some living or dead entity or concept or group of entities or concepts. The entity to which the referring expression is linked is its referent. Another meaningful part is the verb *bark*, which is also linked to something outside of language, an activity associated, here, with the referring expression *a dog*. We call this meaningful part a predicate. The use of language generally involves naming or referring to some entity and saying, or predicating, something about that entity. The sentence also has several kinds of grammatical meanings. Every language has a grammatical system and different languages have somewhat different grammatical systems. We can best explain what grammatical meanings are by showing how the sentence *A dog barked* differs from other sentences that have the same, or a similar, referring expression and the same predicate.

Grammatical meanings, then, are expressed in various ways: the arrangement of words (referring expression before the predicate, for instance), by grammatical affixes like the *-s* attached to the noun *dog* and the *-ed* attached to the verb *bark*, and by grammatical words, or function words, like the ones illustrated in these sentences: *do* (in the form *did*), *not*, *a*, *some*, and *the*. Now let's return to *dog* and *bark*. Their meanings are not grammatical but lexical, with associations outside language. They are lexemes. A lexeme is a minimal unit that can take part in referring or predicating. All the lexemes of a language constitute the lexicon of the language, and all the lexemes that you know make up your personal lexicon. The term 'lexeme' was proposed by Lyons (1977:18–25) to avoid complexities associated with the vague word 'word.'

- (a) *go*, *going*, *went*, *gone*
- (b) *put up with*, *kick the bucket*, *dog in the manger*

How many words are there in group (a)? Four or one? There are four forms and the forms have four different meanings, but they have a shared meaning, which is lexical, and other meanings of a

grammatical nature added to the lexical meaning. We say that these four forms constitute one lexeme which, for convenience we designate as *go*. Group (b) presents a different sort of problem. The expression *put up with* combines the forms of *put* and *up* and *with*, but its meaning is not the combination of their separate meanings. Therefore *put up with*, in the sense of ‘endure,’ ‘tolerate,’ is a single lexeme. The same must be true of *kick the bucket* meaning ‘die’ and *dog in the manger* when it refers to a person who will not let others share what he has, even though he does not use it himself.

We do not communicate with isolated words. Indeed, knowledge of language and the art of communication depend on our ability to combine words in a systematic way. When words are confined, we achieve sentential meaning. The study of semantics is also expected to explore meaning at this level. This is the purpose of this unit. Sense or lexical relations are concerned with the meaning of individual words. However, as we observed in the unit on semantic theories, the function of theories of meaning includes the explication of sentences. A great deal of the problems of communication derives from the confusion at the level of sentences. It is, therefore, important that students of language should explore sources of these problems.

We studied lexical meaning as the meaning of word without paying attention to the way that is used or to the words that occur with it. Grammatical meaning refers to that part of meaning which indicates grammatical relationship or functions, such as tense meaning, singular meaning, etc. Grammatical meaning consists of word class, for example, modern (adjective), modernize (verb) and modernization (noun). and inflectional paradigm, for example, grammatical meaning of plurality (e.g. desks, data). Lexical meaning is dominant in content word, whereas grammatical meaning is dominant in function words, but in neither grammatical absent. Take for example *love*, *laugh*, *take* and *work*; they are different from the point of view of lexical meaning, whereas they are same from the point of view of grammatical meaning (i.e. all are verbs). Similarly, *boy* and *boys* are same from the point of view of lexical meaning, but are different from the point of view of grammatical meaning (i.e. *boys* contain plural marker). Lexical meaning is studied in lexicon whereas grammatical meaning is studied in grammar. But grammar and lexicon are interrelated. Grammar reflects the ways in which lexicon operates as means of communication and as instruments of thought. Part of the meaning of the lexicon is encoded in the grammatical structure of languages. The grammatical system makes possible the expression of meaning like the following:

#### 1. Statement vs. Question

A dog barked vs. Did a dog barked?

2. Affirmative vs. negative

A dog barked. A dog did not bark. No dog barked.

3. Past vs. present

A dog barked vs. A dog barks

4. Singular vs. plural

A dog barked vs. Some dogs barked.

5. The indefinite vs. definite

A dog barked vs. The dog barked.

### 7.1.2. The meaning of major grammatical categories

Traditionally, syntactic categories are defined semantically: nouns are defined as words referring to "persons, places or things", verbs are "doing words", that is, they refer to actions, whereas adjectives are "describing words" (Cruse, 2000: 267). In early structuralist linguistics such definitions were shown to be seriously flawed: *punch* refer to an action, but is a noun; *seem* is a verb, but does not refer to an action; in *John shouted*, *shouted* describes what John did, but is not an adjective, and so on. It was recommended that syntactic categories should be defined on syntactic criteria: for instance, nouns are inflected for number, gender and case and take articles as modifiers; verbs are inflected for tense and aspects, etc. Connections with semantics were held to be non-systematic. More recently, the question of the semantic basis of categories has been raised once again.

### 7.1.3. Grammatical meaning associated with nouns and noun phrases

Certain types of meaning are typically carried by grammatical elements - inflections, clitics, or markers - associated with nouns or noun phrases. The most important of these are: definiteness, number, animacy, gender and functional roles (Cruse 2000: 269).

#### 7.1.3.1. Definiteness

In linguistics, definiteness is a semantic feature of noun phrases (NPs), distinguishing between referents/entities that are identifiable in a given context (definite noun phrases) and entities which are not (indefinite noun phrases). In English, for example, definite noun phrases preclude asking "which one?". There is considerable variation in the expression of definiteness across languages and some languages do

not express it at all. For example, in English definiteness is usually marked by the selection of determiner. Certain determiners, such as *a/an*, *many*, *any*, *either*, and some typically mark an NP as indefinite. Others, including *the*, *this*, *every*, and *both* mark the NP as definite. In some other languages, the marker is a clitic that attaches phonologically to the noun (and often to modifying adjectives), e.g. the Hebrew definite article *ha-* or the Arabic definite article *al-*. In yet other languages, definiteness is indicated by affixes on the noun or on modifying adjectives, much like the expression of grammatical number and grammatical case. In these languages, the inflections indicating definiteness may be quite complex. In the Germanic languages and Balto-Slavic languages, for example (as still in modern German and Lithuanian), there are two paradigms for adjectives, one used in definite noun phrases and the other used in indefinite noun phrases. In some languages, e.g. Hungarian, definiteness is marked on the verb.

### 7.1.3.2. Number

Number is an inflectional category of nouns or noun phrases, which is not found in all languages. Semantically, number systems are concerned, one way or another, with how many there are of some item. Number systems are not to be confused with numerical systems, which are linguistic devices for counting (one, two, forty-three, one hundred and ninety, etc.); obviously numerals are syntactically and semantically distinct from number markers.

The number system in English has only two terms: singular and plural. A majority of languages have three-term number systems including dual, used for just two things. A very small minority have four-term systems, in which the fourth term is either a trial (for three things) or a paucal (for a few things).

### 7.1.3.3. Count nouns and mass nouns

In linguistics, a mass noun, uncountable noun, or non-count noun is a noun with the syntactic property that any quantity of it is treated as an undifferentiated unit, rather than as something with discrete subsets. Non-count nouns are distinguished from count nouns. Given that different languages have different grammatical features, the actual test for which nouns are mass nouns may vary between languages. In English, mass nouns are characterized by the fact that they cannot be directly modified by a numeral without specifying a unit of measurement, and that they cannot combine with an indefinite article (*a* or *an*). Thus, the mass noun "water" is quantified as "20 liters of water" while the count noun "chair" is quantified as "20 chairs". However, both mass and count nouns can be quantified in relative terms without

unit specification (e.g., "so much water," "so many chairs"). Some mass nouns can be used in English in the plural to mean "more than one instance (or example) of a certain sort of entity"—for example, "Many cleaning agents today are technically not soaps, but detergents." In such cases they no longer play the role of mass nouns, but (syntactically) they are treated as count nouns. Some nouns have both a mass sense and a count sense (for example, paper).

In English (and in many other languages), there is a tendency for nouns referring to liquids (water, juice), powders (sugar, sand), or substances (metal, wood) to be used in mass syntax, and for nouns referring to objects or people to be count nouns. This is not a hard-and-fast rule, however; mass nouns such as furniture and cutlery, which represent more easily quantified objects, show that the mass/count distinction should be thought of as a property of the terms themselves, rather than as a property of their referents. For example, the same set of chairs can be referred to as "seven chairs" and as "furniture"; although both chair and furniture are referring to the same thing, the former is a count noun and the latter a mass noun. The Middle English mass noun *peas* has become the count noun *pea* by morphological reanalysis.

For another illustration of the principle that the count/non-count distinction lies not in an object but rather in the expression that refers to it, consider the English words "fruit" and "vegetables". The objects that these words describe are, objectively speaking, similar (that is, they're all edible plant parts); yet the word "fruit" is (usually) non-count, whereas "vegetables" is a plural count form. One can see that the difference is in the language, not in the reality of the objects. Meanwhile, German has a general word for "vegetables" that, like English "fruit", is (usually) non-count: *das Gemüse*. British English has a slang word for "vegetables" that acts the same way: "veg" [rhymes with "edge"].

Many English nouns can be used in either mass or count syntax, and in these cases, they take on cumulative reference when used as mass nouns. For example, one may say that "there's apple in this sauce," and then *apple* has cumulative reference, and, hence, is used as a mass noun. The names of animals, such as "chicken", "fox" or "lamb" are count when referring to the animals themselves, but are mass when referring to their meat, fur, or other substances produced by them. (e.g., "I'm cooking chicken tonight" or "This coat is made of fox.") Conversely, "fire" is frequently used as a mass noun, but "a fire" refers to a discrete entity. Substance terms like "water" which are frequently used as mass nouns, can be used as count nouns to denote arbitrary units of a substance ("Two waters please") or of several types/varieties ("waters of the world"). One may say that mass nouns that are used as count nouns are "countified" and that count ones that are used as mass nouns are "massified". However, this may confuse



syntax and semantics, by presupposing that words which denote substances are mass nouns by default. According to many accounts, nouns do not have a lexical specification for mass-count status, and instead are specified as such only when used in a sentence. Nouns differ in the extent to which they can be used flexibly, depending largely on their meanings and the context of use. For example, the count noun "house" is difficult to use as mass (though clearly possible), and the mass noun "cutlery" is most frequently used as mass, despite the fact that it denotes objects, and has count equivalents in other languages:

#### **7.1.4. Grammatical meaning associated with the verb**

Tense, aspect and mood are associated with the verb. Tense–aspect–mood, commonly abbreviated TAM and also called tense–modality–aspect or TMA, is the grammatical system of a language that covers the expression of tense (location in time), aspect (fabric of time – a single block of time, continuous flow of time, or repetitive occurrence), and mood or modality (degree of necessity, obligation, probability, ability). In some languages, evidentiality (whether evidence exists for the statement, and if so what kind) and mirativity may also be included.

The term is convenient because it is often difficult to untangle these features of a language. Often any two of tense, aspect, and mood (or all three) may be conveyed by a single grammatical construction, but this system may not be complete in that not all possible combinations may have an available construction. In other cases there may not be clearly delineated categories of tense and mood, or aspect and mood.

For instance, many Indo-European languages do not clearly distinguish tense from aspect. In some languages, such as Spanish and Modern Greek, the imperfective aspect is fused with the past tense in a form traditionally called the imperfect. Other languages with distinct past imperfectives include Latin and Persian.

In the traditional grammatical description of some languages, including English, many Romance languages, and Greek and Latin, "tense" or the equivalent term in that language refers to a set of inflected or periphrastic verb forms that express a combination of tense, aspect, and mood. In Spanish, the simple conditional (Spanish: *condicional simple*) is classified as one of the simple tenses (Spanish: *tiempos simples*), but is named for the mood (conditional) that it expresses. In Ancient Greek, the perfect tense (Ancient Greek: *χρόνος παρακείμενος* *khronos parakeimenos*) is a set of forms that express both present tense and perfect aspect (finite forms), or simply perfect aspect (non-finite forms).

Not all languages conflate tense, aspect, and mood, however; close to a theoretically ideal distinction, with separate grammatical markers for tense, aspect, and/or mood, is made in some analytic languages such as creole languages.

#### 7.1.4.1. Tense

Tense is a term that refers to the way verbs change their form in order to indicate at which time a situation occurs or an event takes place. For finite verb phrases, English has just one inflectional form to express time, namely the past tense marker (-ed for regular verbs). Therefore, in English there is just a contrast between present and past tense. Needless to say, non-finite verb phrases (to-infinitives and -ing forms) are not marked for tense. When occurring with modals, verb phrases are used in their base form, with no tense marker. Each tense can have a simple form as well as be combined with either the progressive or perfective aspect, or with both of them:

(a) I work; I'm working; I have worked; I have been working (present)

(b) I worked; I was working; I had worked; I had been working (past)

Sentences can also be used in the passive voice (note that the perfect-progressive is not normally found in the passive):

(a) I am told; I'm being told; I have been told

(b) I was told; I was being told; I had been told

Time and tense are not overlapping concepts. Though tense is related to time, there is no one-to-one correspondence between the two. Tense is a grammatical category: rather than with "reality", it has to do with how events are placed, seen, and referred to along the past-present-future time line. Thus, a present tense does not always refer to present time, or a past tense to past time. Actually, the present and past tenses can refer to all three segments of the time line (past, present, and future). For example, the present tense may be used to speak about a future event (often, but not necessarily, accompanied by a future time adverbial), while the so-called "historic present" – frequently used to convey dramatic immediacy – refers to the past as if it were happening now:

The World Cup starts next week

Hear what happened to me the other day. The boss comes in my office and says: ‘You’re fired!’...

By the same token, a past tense can refer to present time. This occurs, for instance, in hypothetical sentences, in reported speech, as well as in other structures:

If I had more money, I would buy a new car

Did you tell him you were/are busy?

It’s time you changed your car

Furthermore, the past tense can express tentativeness, often associated with politeness:

Did you want to make a phone call?

Were you looking for me?

Semantically, the grammatical features of tense serves essentially to locate the event referred to in the sentence with reference to the time at which the utterance was produced (Cruse, 2000:274). Only languages which encode timing distinctions by means of grammatical elements (usually inflectional morphemes or grammatical markers such as auxiliary verbs) can be properly said to manifest the grammatical feature of tense. Many languages encode the timing of a designated event lexically, by means of expressions equivalent to yesterday, last year, next week, etc. (Cruse 2000: 274).

A distinction is usually made between primary (or absolute) tenses, which encode event time directly relative to the time of speaking, and secondary (or relative) tenses, which encode event time relative to a secondary reference time which, in turn, is located relative to speaking time, thus making the relation between event time and speaking time an indirect one (Cruse 2000: 274).

The tense system of most of the languages are said to be vectorial, that is, they essentially indicate the direction along the time-line from speaking time to event time. Some languages also grammatically encode degrees of remoteness, equivalent to contrasts such as the following (Cruse 2000: 274)

(a) I used to go for an run every morning, once (distance past)

(b) I went for a run (past)

(c) I've just been for a run (recent past)

The alternative to a vectorial system is a material system of tense, based on definite intervals of time. The most frequent is hodiernal system, which distinguishes "today" and "not today". Up to six or seven intervals may be distinguished, with, as in most tense system, the past being more highly differentiated than the future. According to Comrie (1985: 99) Yagua makes the following distinctions in its grammatical tense system (Cruse, 2000:274): past (today), yesterday, within a few weeks ago, within a few months ago and distant past.

There are three basic primary tenses, past (event occurs before time of speaking); present (event occurs concurrently with speaking time, or includes it); and future (event projected to occur after the time of speaking) (Cruse 2000: 274):

- (a) Raja saw Radha
- (b) Raja sees Radha
- (c) Raja will see Radha

In the case of secondary tense, there are nine possibilities. Presumably all languages can express all nine secondary tense relationships one way or another, no language with an inflectional tense system has distinct inflections for all time (Cruse 2000: 274)..

#### 7.1.4.2. Aspect

Aspect is a grammatical category that reflects the perspective from which an action/situation is seen: as complete, in progress, having duration, beginning, ending, or being repeated. English has two aspects, progressive (also called continuous) and perfect(ive). Verbs that are not marked for aspect (the majority of them are not) are said to have simple aspect.

In British English, the perfective aspect is much more common than in American English, since Americans often use the past simple where Britons use the present perfect. Verb phrases can be marked for both aspects at the same time (the perfect progressive, however, is infrequent). The following combinations are possible: present progressive; past progressive; present perfective; past perfective; present perfective progressive; past perfective progressive:

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- (a) He's sleeping; He was sleeping
- (b) He has slept; He had slept
- (c) He has been sleeping; He had been sleeping

Usually, grammars contrast the progressive with the perfective aspect (and the simple, for that matter) on the basis that the former refers to an action/event as in progress, while the latter tends to indicate the completeness of an action, to see actions and events as a whole and a situation as permanent. This is certainly a useful distinction, which will not be questioned here; yet students must be aware that the above is an oversimplified view, as is demonstrated by the fact that the two aspects can combine within a single verb phrase.

It is important to distinguish aspect clearly from tense. Tense serves to locate an event in time; aspect says nothing about when an event occurred (expected by implication), but either encodes a particular way of conceptualizing an event, or conveys information about the way the event unrolls through time. It is also important to make a distinction between aspect as a semantic phenomenon, and aspect markers in a particular language, which may have a variety of semantic functions. To make things even more complicated, a lexical verb may encode aspectual information as part of lexical meaning; this may affect the way the meaning of the verb interacts with the meanings of aspectual markers with which it is associated.

#### **7.1.4.2.1. Progressive aspect**

The progressive aspect, either in the present or past tense, generally refers to an action/event (usually of limited duration) in progress at a particular time, to an uncompleted activity, to a temporary state of affairs or a temporary habit. The present progressive is formed by the present tense of the verb be + the -ing form of the lexical verb, the past progressive by was/were + the -ing form of the lexical verb: Can you answer the door? I'm shaving Look, it's snowing! I'm going to bed very late these days We're studying German this year I was sleeping when I hear a strange noise I was living in Buenos Aires at the time.

The activity may also not be, strictly speaking, continuous, that is to say it may refer to a series of individual acts:

Some of the demonstrators are smashing shop windows

Needless to say, the progressive aspect does not reflect the length of an action, but the speaker's view of a certain event. Though aspect and the duration of an action are somehow related – in fact, to describe an event lasting only a short time the simple aspect is more frequently used – the simple aspect is not reserved for short actions nor is the progressive used exclusively to talk about events lasting for a (fairly) long time.

As we have seen above, the progressive aspect can combine with the perfective aspect, both present and past, as well as with a modal or a modal and a perfective together. Finally, the infinitive can also be used in the progressive:

I've been toiling for hours You must be kidding He must have been joking It's too early to be sleeping

Normally, only so-called dynamic verbs are used in the progressive, while stative verbs are found in the simple aspect. Yet, there is no one-to-one relationship between dynamic verbs and progressive aspect or between stative verbs and simple aspect: as we shall see later on, stative verbs can sometimes occur in the progressive – when, for instance, they refer to a situation which extends over time but is not permanent – while some dynamic verbs – those referring to actions taking a very short time – usually occur in the simple form. Indeed, the difference between stative and dynamic verbs is not so clear-cut as is often thought to be, and thus deserves to be examined in some detail. Such difference is better conceived in terms of a continuum, and it would be more correct to talk about the stative or dynamic senses in which a verb is used, though the traditional distinction between stative and dynamic verbs is undoubtedly convenient (provided it is not applied in a simplistic way).

Stative verbs are verbs of “being”. Since they refer to “states”, they are normally used with the simple aspect. On the contrary, dynamic verbs are verbs of “doing”, they refer to activities, events and processes. They can occur in both the simple and the progressive aspects, depending on the meaning speakers wish to convey. The first of the following sentences refers to a habitual, repeated action, the latter to an action in progress at the time of speaking:

I work on Saturday morning I'm working now

In general, two elements determine if a verb is frequently or rarely found in the progressive aspect: the length of the action described by the verb and the status of the subject as either agent or experiencer. The progressive form is common in clauses that have a human agent as subject and refer to an action, event, state or situation which last for a substantial period of time; contrariwise, verbs that are rarely used in the progressive form describe temporary states of short duration or actions that take place very quickly.

Stative verbs indicate possession and describe thoughts, beliefs, feelings, wishes, preferences, perceptions of the senses, as well as states of being. Verbs that typically occur with stative senses are: \

(1) verbs of perception, such as: appear, feel, hear, see, seem, smell, sound and taste; (2) verbs that refers to mental, emotional and cognitive states, such as: adore, assume, believe, care, consider, desire, detest, dislike, doubt, envy, expect, fear, find (meaning “consider”), forget, forgive, guess, hate, hear (meaning “to be told”), hope, imagine, intend, know, like, love, mean, mind, notice, prefer, realize, recall, recognize, refuse, regard, regret, remember, see (meaning “understand”), want, wish, wonder; (3) verbs that contain the idea of “being” and “having”, that refer to situations which cannot easily be imagined as having a time limitation: be, have (meaning “possess”), belong, compare (meaning “be similar to”), concern, consist, contain, cost, depend, deserve, differ, equal, exist, fit, hold, include, interest, involve, lack, matter, measure, need, owe, own, possess, remain, require, resemble, suit.

Some examples of verbs normally used in stative senses:

- (a) It just seems strange to me I detest football.
- (b) The police intend to prosecute him.
- (c) Of course I recall our first meeting!
- (d) The whole estate belongs to him I'm afraid this will involve plenty of paperwork.
- (e) It surely matters how you spend our money! I owe you a favour.
- (f) We think we deserve some reward for our work My opinion on the issue of genetically-modified food does not differ from yours

The progressive aspect is unacceptable with stative verbs describing qualities – i.e. (relatively) permanent and inalienable characteristics/properties of the subject referent – as different from states, which refer to less permanent situations and thus can occur in the progressive:

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They own a beautiful country house / \*They are owing a beautiful country house She has wonderful eyes / \*She's having wonderful eyes

Most stative verbs are not incompatible with the progressive aspect, though. When used in the progressive form, these verbs are reclassified, and a change of interpretation takes place. They may refer to an action/situation or behaviour that has limited duration:

He is not an honest man; I'm sure he's not being honest with you.

I love music; I'm loving the music tonight.

That car costs quite a lot; This night out is costing me a fortune:

Stative verbs can also take the progressive form when the idea of an uncompleted physical or mental state is emphasized. Furthermore, verbs expressing attitudes or emotions may convey tentativeness if used in the progressive (often the past progressive):

I'm hoping they will reconsider their decision I'm forgetting all I have learnt at school I was wondering if I did the right thing

Verbs referring to sensory perceptions are usually preceded by can/could. However, they can also be used in the progressive, when emphasis is put on the process of perception:

I can hear you I could feel the difference There's no need to shout. I'm hearing you! I'm not seeing well with these new glasses

The deliberate acts corresponding to the involuntary sensory reactions indicated by hear and see are expressed through the verbs listen and look. On the contrary, feel, smell and taste refer to both voluntary action and involuntary perception. Needless to say, verbs referring to voluntary actions can be found in the continuous form:

I (can) hear what they say;

I'm listening to what they are saying

I (can) see her;



I'm looking at her  
 I felt / could feel a hand touching my shoulder;  
 I'm feeling the quality of the leather I (can) smell gas;  
 She's smelling the flowers  
 I (can) taste cinnamon in the cake;  
 He's tasting the custard

When they refer to a temporary condition, verbs describing bodily sensation can be used in both the simple and progressive form with hardly any difference in meaning:

My knee aches badly;  
 My knee is aching badly I feel tired;  
 I'm feeling tired

As we have already stated, dynamic verbs indicate activities, they do not describe events as a whole. They can occur in both the progressive and non-progressive form. They include verbs indicating a temporary situation or an activity having some duration (for example *cook, jog, live, read, study, work*):

I was living in New York at that time I'm making a cake

Some dynamic verbs are punctual, i.e. they refer to events that have very little duration, and thus they generally occur in the simple aspect. Examples of punctual verbs are *break, close, hit, jump, knock, nod, and tap*. When used in the progressive, they often indicate the repetition of an action:

They were jumping in with excitement someone's knocking at the door.

A punctual verb can also be used in the progressive aspect for emphasis. This could be the case, for instance, when speakers see events in slow-motion, or when they want to focus on something which happened while something else was going on, even though this latter is an action taking only a little time to be completed:

Here Beckham is committing a nasty foul The bullet struck him while he was closing the window

Two more examples: They were hitting the man with a baton; He's opening the door of the hotel. The first sentence refers to the repetition of a momentary act, to a series of blows delivered to the man; the second would make sense, once again, if interpreted as a series of acts (the person performing the action is a hotel doorman), or if reference is purposely made to the few seconds an act such as opening a door takes to be completed. In a radio or television commentary about an important political meeting, for example, it would not sound strange even to dwell upon the opening of the door of a Prime Minister's residence.

Verbs indicating a change of state or position, such as: arrive, become, die, drown, grow, land, leave, stop, turn, can be used in the progressive aspect. When this is the case they refer to the period of time leading up to the change of state (which need not take place):

Do something! They're drowning I'm growing old The plane is landing I'm leaving

A few verbs can be used either in the simple or the continuous form with no significant difference of meaning:

You look great / you are looking great I feel depressed / I'm feeling depressed

Other verbs can be used in both aspects, but with a difference in meaning. Consider the following examples:

I think you're wrong (= believe);

I'm thinking about what you said (= reflecting on)

She comes from France (= lives in);

She's coming from France (= travelling)

I see what you mean (= understand);

I'm seeing her quite often (= meet)

This room looks really nice (= the verb refers to the appearance of the room);

He's looking at you (= he has directed his eyes in your direction)

Your suitcase weighs too much (the verb refers to the weight of the suitcase);

People at the check-in desk are weighing his suitcase (= they are measuring how heavy the suitcase is)

The rules apply to everyone (= concern);  
 We are applying for a trading license (= make an application for)  
 I consider him to be the best in his field (= think);  
 They are considering my application (= look carefully at)  
 Would you mind if I borrowed your bike? (= object);  
 Our friends are minding the bags (= take care of)

#### 7.1.4.2.2. Perfective aspect

The perfective aspect is used to refer to a state or action which has taken place before the time of speaking, as well as to a state or action (or series of actions) occurring in a period of time we imagine as continuing until the present or until a certain moment in the past (until now or until then), or that has just ended. Remember: the events and situations referred to by the perfective aspect have some relevance to the time of speaking (the present in the case of the present perfective, the past in the case of the past perfective, the future in the case of the future perfective). The perfective aspect is also used to indicate the completeness of an action, to see events as a whole:

I have tidied my room  
 I've often spent my holidays in South America  
 She had just found a solution to the problem

The present perfective is formed by have/has + past participle, the past perfective (statistically less common than the present) by had + past participle, while the future perfective by will have + past participle:

I have had the same car for twelve years! It's time to get a new one  
 I had lived in Paris for two years when I decided to come back home We will have been together  
 for ten years next month

The perfective aspect can combine with the progressive aspect, with a modal or with a modal and a progressive together (examples of the first and third combination are also provided above); perfect infinitives are also to be found:

I've been running He had been watching TV all day You should have done this more carefully  
 He must have been kidding They seem to have liked the film

Note that the perfect progressive aspect indicates the possible incompleteness of an action. In the following examples, it is not clear whether the action has been completed or not:

I've been repairing my bike (I may or may not have finished repairing the bike)  
 They have been cleaning their room for hours (they may or may not have finished cleaning)

#### 7.1.4.2.3. Perfective vs. imperfective

One of the most widespread aspectual distinction is that between imperfective and perfective. In many languages there is a formal distinction of some sort whose prototypical semantic function is to signal the perfective/imperfective contrast (e.g. Czech and Arabic). In English there is no regular way of indicating the distinction, but it is often associated with the progressive/simple alternation and can be observed in the following examples:

I saw the chicken cross the road. (perfective)  
 I saw the chicken crossing the road (imperfective)

#### 7.1.4.2.4. Perfect vs. prospective

The English perfect is a typical example. Consider the difference between the following:

Raja read the book.  
 Raja has read the book.

Both indicate that Raja's reading of the book occurred in the past. But the first sentence directs our attention into the past, to the specific time when the event occurred; the second sentence, on the other hand, directs our attention towards Raja's present state, or at least at aspects of it which are attributable to his having read the book at some (intermediate) time in the past. This is the essence of the perfect: present relevance of the past events.

Some linguists distinguish a counterpart to the perfect, but involving the future, called the prospective. A gloss of this would be: the present relevance of a future event. Consider the difference between the following:

Raja will leave tomorrow.

Raja is leaving/is going to leave tomorrow.

One explanation is that the first sentence can be a pure prediction, and can apply to an event which is not under the control either of Raja or of the speaker. The second sentence, on the other hand, implies that the event is under the control of one or the other, and the decision and arrangements are currently complete. In other words, things are currently in a state such that, if all goes according to plan, Raja will leave tomorrow.

#### **7.1.4.3. Voice**

In grammar, the voice (also called diathesis and (rarely) gender (of verbs)) of a verb describes the relationship between the action (or state) that the verb expresses and the participants identified by its arguments (subject, object, etc.). When the subject is the agent or doer of the action, the verb is in the active voice. When the subject is the patient, target or undergoer of the action, the verb is said to be in the passive voice.

For example, in the following first sentence the verb "ate" is in the active voice. However, in the second sentence the verbal phrase "was eaten" is passive.

The cat ate the mouse.

The mouse was eaten by the cat.

In following example, in the first sentence the verb "killed" is in the active voice, and the doer of the action is the "hunter". A passive version of the sentence is where the verbal phrase "was killed" is followed by the word "by" and then by the doer "hunter".

The hunter killed the bear.

The bear was killed by the hunter.

In a transformation from an active-voice clause to an equivalent passive-voice construction, the subject and the direct object switch grammatical roles. The direct object gets promoted to subject, and the subject demoted to an (optional) complement. In the examples above, the mouse serves as the direct object in the active-voice version, but becomes the subject in the passive version. The subject of the active-voice version, the cat, becomes part of a prepositional phrase in the passive version of the sentence, and can be left out entirely.

The active voice is the most commonly used in many languages and represents the "normal" case, in which the subject of the verb is the agent. In the active voice the subject of the sentence performs the action or causes the happening denoted by the verb. Examples of active voice include the following; John ate the potatoes. The verb ate indicates the active voice. But consider the following sentence which is in passive voice: The potatoes were eaten by John. The verb were eaten indicates the presence of passive voice. therefore for the case of active voice it shows that someone has done something or has caused something to happen. But for the case of passive voice it shows that something has been done by some else. The passive voice is employed in a clause whose subject expresses the theme or patient of the verb. That is, it undergoes an action or has its state changed. In the passive voice the grammatical subject of the verb is the recipient (not the doer) of the action denoted by the verb.

Some languages, such as English and Spanish, use a periphrastic passive voice; that is, it is not a single word form, but rather a construction making use of other word forms. Specifically, it is made up of a form of the auxiliary verb to be and a past participle of the main verb. In other languages, such as Latin, the passive voice is simply marked on the verb by inflection: *librum legit* "He reads the book"; *liber legitur* "The book is read".

Some languages (such as Albanian, Bengali, Fula, Tamil, Sanskrit, Icelandic, Swedish, Biblical Hebrew and Ancient Greek) have a middle voice, which is a set of inflections or constructions which is to some extent different from both the active and passive voices. The middle voice is said to be in the middle between the active and the passive voices because the subject often cannot be categorized as either agent or patient but may have elements of both. For example, it may express what would be an intransitive verb in English. In The casserole cooked in the oven, cooked is syntactically active but semantically passive. In Classical Greek, the middle voice often has a reflexive sense: the subject acts on or for itself, such as "The boy washes himself", or "The boy washes". It can be transitive or intransitive. It can occasionally be

used in a causative sense, such as "The father causes his son to be set free", or "The father ransoms his son".

In English there is no verb form for the middle voice, though some uses may be classified as middle voice, often resolved via a reflexive pronoun, as in "Fred shaved", which may be expanded to "Fred shaved himself" – contrast with active "Fred shaved John" or passive "John was shaved by Fred". This need not be reflexive, as in "my clothes soaked in detergent overnight". English used to have a distinct form, called the passival, which was displaced over the early 19th century by the passive progressive (progressive passive), and is no longer used in English. In the passival, one would say "the house is building", which is today instead "the house is being built"; likewise "the meal is eating", which is now "the meal is being eaten". Note that the similar "Fred is shaving" and "the clothes are soaking" remain grammatical. It is suggested that the progressive passive was popularized by the Romantic poets, and is connected with Bristol usage. Many deponent verbs in Latin are survivals of the Proto-Indo-European middle voice

#### **7.1.4.4. Functional roles**

Consider the sentence John opened the door. There are two main participants in the event. John and the door. These, however, have different relationships to the act of opening. John is the doer, the agent and supplies the force needed to open the door; the door is passive, is affected by the action, and undergoes the designated change of state. These relationships are variously called functional roles, case roles, deep cases, participant roles, thematic roles (Cruse, 2000: 281). In linguistics, grammatical relations (also called grammatical functions, grammatical roles, or syntactic functions) refer to functional relationships between constituents in a clause. The standard examples of grammatical functions from traditional grammar are subject, direct object, and indirect object.

It may not be enough to limit our knowledge of words to their basic characteristics. It is necessary to examine the functions of lexical items in a systematic way. This can be achieved by focusing on the role relations of lexical items. Indeed, role relations provide information on semantic relationships among lexical items. In doing so, role relationships help to highlight functions of lexical items. The functions of lexical items are referred to as arguments as we have in these examples:

agent, instrument, experience, source, goal, path, location, possessor, patient, etc.

Nouns and noun phrases are described as arguments in relation to the verbs in the sentence. Verbs are central in determining semantic roles. These roles relate to processes, events and state of affairs associated with participants in the sentence.

The agent is usually a noun phrase marked as [+ANIMATE], and which instigate an action or an event as shown below.

(i) *John* boiled eggs (John as agent)

When entities designated as [-ANIMATE] initiate some action, we describe the entities as *force*.

For example:

(ii) *Radiation* caused some damage (Radiation as force)

That entity that is affected by the action of the *agent* or *force* is referred to as *patient*. For instance:

(iii) John boiled *eggs* (eggs as patient)

The entity that undergoes some psychological state is the experience

(iv) *Juliet* became happy (Juliet as experiencer)

The instrument is the semantic role for what is used to carry out a piece of action.

(v) She cleaned the chair with *a brush* (brush as instrument)

*Source* indicates the origin or direction from which an entity comes. The source is usually a location.

(vi) The teacher took out the duster from *the cupboard*. (the cupboard as source)

We can, however refer to the place an entity is situated. That is usually the location as a thematic role.

The semantic role *goal* shows the direction towards which an entity goes. (vii) The mango rolled *into a basket*.



The path shows the route along which an entity moves. For example:

(viii) They reached the town *through the unused road*.

We also have the possessor or the beneficiary, describing the entity benefiting from an action. The beneficiary is always [+ANIMATE].

### 7.1.5. Adjectives and properties

Not all languages have adjectives, but in those languages which have them, adjectives prototypically denote atemporal properties, that is to say, properties which are relatively stable over time, or which are construed in such a way that no account needs to be taken of the passage of time. Adjectival properties are also prototypically unidimensional, denoting an easily isolable concept, in contrast to prototypical nouns which denote rich, highly interconnected complexes of properties.

Noun modification is primarily associated with the syntactic category “adjective.” Adjectives have their sole function the modification of nouns, whereas modification is not the primary function of noun, verb, and prepositional phrases. The lexical organization of adjectives is unique to them, and differs from that of the other major syntactic categories, noun and verb. WordNet contains:

Descriptive adjectives (Ex. big, heavy)

Relational adjectives (Ex. economic’, fraternal)

Reference modifying adjectives (Ex. old, former)

### 7.1.5.1. Descriptive adjectives

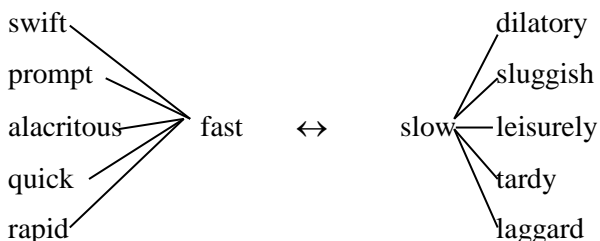
A descriptive adjective is one that ascribes a value of an attribute to a noun. For example, ‘that luggage is heavy’ presupposes that there is attribute ‘WEIGHT’ such that  $\text{weight}(\text{‘luggage’}) = \text{‘heavy’}$ . In the same way ‘low’ and ‘high’ are values of HEIGHT. The word net has to link the descriptive adjectives with the appropriate attributes. The descriptive adjectives require a semantic organization which differs drastically from that of nouns. The hyponymic relation that builds nominal hierarchies is not available for adjectives. It is not possible to say that one adjective ‘is a kind of’ some other adjective. Relating descriptive adjectives with the particular noun they pertain to is known by the term pertainymy.

### 7.1.5.2. Antonymy in adjectives

Antonymy is the basic semantic relation that exists among descriptive adjectives. The word association testes reveal the importance of antonymy in adjectives. As the function of descriptive adjectives is to express values of attributes, and that nearly all attributes are bipolar, antonymy becomes important in the organization of descriptive adjectives. Antonymous adjectives express opposing values of an attribute. For example, the antonym of ‘heavy’ is ‘light’ that expresses a value at the opposite pole of the WEIGHT attribute. Antonymy, like synonymy, is a semantic relation between word forms. The problem is that the antonymy relation between word forms is not the same as the conceptual opposition between word meanings.

### 7.1.5.3. Similarity in adjective

The adjectives lacking antonyms are similar in meaning to adjectives that do have antonyms.



Overwhelmingly, association data and co-occurrence data indicate that *big* and *little* are considered as a pair and *large* and *small* are considered as a pair. These pairs demonstrate that antonymy is a semantic relation between words rather than concepts.

#### 7.1.5. 4. Gradation in adjectives

Most discussions on antonymy distinguish between contradictory and contrary terms. This terminology is originated in logic, where two propositions are said to be contradictory if the truth of one implies the falsity of the other and are said to be contrary if only one proposition can be true but both can be false.

‘alive’ – ‘dead’ (Contradictory terms)

‘fat’ – ‘thin’ (Contrary terms)

Contraries are gradable adjectives, contradictories are not. Gradation, therefore must also be considered as a semantic relation organizing lexical memory for adjectives.

warmth: very hot, hot, warm, cold

age: old, middle aged, young

#### 7.1.5.5. Gradable and non-gradable adjectives

There are two major dichotomies in the classification of adjectives. The first separates gradable from non-gradable adjectives. This has grammatical consequences, because prototypically, the degree inflections occur only in connection with gradable adjectives; if an adjective is basically non-gradable, then it has to be reinterpreted when inflected for degree:

Raja was very married

Radha is very alive.

#### 7.1.5.6. Markedness in adjectives

Binary oppositions frequently have a marked term and an unmarked term. That is, the terms are not entirely of equivalent weights, but one (the unmarked one) is neutral or positive in contrast to the other. Marked/unmarked distinction is found in polar oppositions such as : 'high': 'low', 'old': 'young', 'long': 'short, wide: narrow.

We measure things by ‘height’ rather than ‘shortness’. While asking questions about ‘height’, we say ‘How high that pillar is?’ rather than ‘How short that pillar is?’. A question ‘How short is X?’ is felt to

contain the assumption that X is short, while no equivalent assumption is present in ‘How high is X?’ That is, if the two antonyms contrast with reference to a scale of measurement, the unmarked one is capable of referring to a point on that scale, thereby neutralizing the contrast. Thus the primary member, ‘high’ is the unmarked term; the secondary member, ‘short’ is the marked one. They are related to the attribute noun ‘height’ Word net has to capture the relation between marked and unmarked terms and their cross reference to their variable property.

#### 7.1.5.7. Polysemy and selectional preferences

Polysemy is found among adjectives as a limited number of adjectives are used to attribute a considerable number of nouns. For example, the use of *good* in the following phrases illustrates the polysemous nature of it. The semantic interpretation of adjectives depends on the head noun they modify. Many adjectives take on different meanings when they modify different nouns. The following example will exemplify this statement.

good time, good coin, good friend, good shoes

Adjectives are choosy about the nouns they modify. The general rule is that if the referent denoted a noun does not have attribute whose value is expressed by the adjective, then the adjective-noun combination requires a figurative or idiomatic interpretation. For example, a road can be long because roads have LENGTH as an attribute, but stories do not have LENGTH, so ‘long’ does not admit literal readings. The selectional preferences of adjectives should be captured in such instances.

#### 7.1.5.8. Reference-modifying and referent-modifying adjectives

Distinction has to be drawn between reference modifying and referent-modifying adjectives. For example *old* in the phrase *my old friend* does not refer the referent who is a person as *old*, but attributes the friendship as *old*, whereas *old vessel* attributes directly the *vessel* itself. Similarly, in the following phrase, both the adjectives attribute the quality of being criminals and the quality of being ministers respectively, rather than the persons.

Yesterday’s criminals are today’s ministers

Some reference modifying adjectives may have direct antonyms as in the case of descriptive adjectives.

'past' vs. 'present'

'past' vs. 'present'.

#### **7.1.5.9. Colour adjectives**

Colour terms need to be addressed differently than other adjectives. They can be both nominal as well as adjectival. As adjectives they can be graded and conjoined with other descriptive adjectives. But they differ from the descriptive adjectives as the pattern of direct and indirect antonymy does not hold good for colour adjectives. Only one color attribute is clearly described by direct antonyms: LIGHTNESS, whose polar values are expressed by light: drark

#### **7.1.5.10. Relational adjectives**

Relational adjectives include of a large and open class of adjectives. Relational adjectives can be defined by using the phrase 'of, relating/pertaining to or associated with some noun', and they play a role similar to that of a modifying noun. For example, 'fraternal', as in 'fraternal love' relates to 'brother/sister', and 'economical', as in 'economical difference', is related to. As for as Tamil is concerned noun form is used mostly in the place of relational adjective in English. For example, 'musical instrument', 'dental hygiene'

Since relational adjectives do not have antonyms, they cannot be incorporated into the clusters that characterize descriptive adjectives. And because their syntactic and semantic properties are a mixture of those of adjectives and those of nouns used as noun modifiers, rather than attempting to integrate them into either structure Tamil word net will maintain a separate file of relational adjectives with cross references to the corresponding nouns.

#### **7.1.5.11. Modification**

The principal function of adjectives is modification: the combination of Adj + Noun prototypically restricts the domain designated by the noun alone to a subpart, and designates a subset of entities denoted by the noun alone. There are two main positions for adjectives in English:

a **long** book - attributive position  
 the book is **long** - predicative position

### 7.1.6. Quantification

Quantification is concerned with expressions like the following:

No Tamils came to the party.  
 Some of my best friends are vegetarians.  
 All students can sing national anthem

The subject noun phrases in the above are quantified noun phrases; the sentence express quantification. A quantification requires a quantifier (e.g. no, some, many, all, etc.), restriction (which indicates the sort of things being quantified, e.g. Tamils) and scope, which expresses what is true of the items designated by quantified noun phrase.

In linguistics and grammar, a quantifier is a type of determiner, such as all, some, many, few, a lot, and no, (but not numerals) that indicates quantity. Quantification is also used in logic, where it is a formula constructor that produces new formulas from old ones. Natural languages' determiners have been argued to correspond to logical quantifiers at the semantic level.

All known human languages make use of quantification. For example, in English:

Every glass in my recent order was chipped.  
 Some of the people standing across the river have white armbands.  
 Most of the people I talked to didn't have a clue who the candidates were.  
 A lot of people are smart.

The words in italics are quantifiers. There exists no simple way of reformulating any one of these expressions as a conjunction or disjunction of sentences, each a simple predicate of an individual such as That wine glass was chipped. These examples also suggest that the construction of quantified expressions in natural language can be syntactically very complicated. Fortunately, for mathematical assertions, the quantification process is syntactically more straightforward.

The study of quantification in natural languages is much more difficult than the corresponding problem for formal languages. This comes in part from the fact that the grammatical structure of natural language sentences may conceal the logical structure. Moreover, mathematical conventions strictly specify the range of validity for formal language quantifiers; for natural language, specifying the range of validity requires dealing with non-trivial semantic problems. For example the sentence "Someone gets mugged in New York every 10 minutes" does not identify whether it is the same person getting mugged every 10 minutes, see also below.

Montague grammar gives a novel formal semantics of natural languages. Its proponents argue that it provides a much more natural formal rendering of natural language than the traditional treatments of Frege, Russell and Quine.

#### 7.1.6.1. Quantifiers in classical predicate logic

In logic, quantification is a construct that specifies the quantity of specimens in the domain of discourse that satisfy an open formula. For example, in arithmetic, it allows the expression of the statement that every natural number has a successor. A language element which generates a quantification (such as 'every') is called a quantifier. The resulting expression is a quantified expression, it is said to be quantified over the predicate (such as "the natural number  $x$  has a successor") whose free variable is bound by the quantifier. In formal languages, quantification is a formula constructor that produces new formulas from old ones. The semantics of the language specifies how the constructor is interpreted. Two fundamental kinds of quantification in predicate logic are universal quantification and existential quantification. The traditional symbol for the universal quantifier "all" is " $\forall$ ", a rotated letter "A", and for the existential quantifier "exists" is " $\exists$ ", a rotated letter "E". Quantification is used as well in natural languages; examples of quantifiers in English are for all, for some, many, few, a lot, and no; see Quantifier (linguistics) for details.

In linguistic semantics, a generalized quantifier is an expression that denotes a set of sets. This is the standard semantics assigned to quantified noun phrases. For example, the generalized quantifier every boy denotes the set of sets of which every boy is a member.

$$\{X \mid \{x \mid x \text{ is a boy}\} \subseteq X\}$$

This treatment of quantifiers has been essential in achieving a compositional semantics for sentences containing quantifiers.

### **LEARNING ACTIVITY 7.1.**

- (1) Differentiate between grammatical semantics and sentential semantics.
- (2) Distinguish between lexical meaning and grammatical meaning.
- (3) Describe the meaning of major grammatical categories.
- (4) Discuss about the grammatical meaning associated with nouns and noun phrases.
- (5) Explain the grammatical meaning associated with the verb
- (6) Describe the adjectives and their properties.
- (7) Describe quantification.

### **7.2. Sentential semantics**

A sentence is a grammatical unit, that is, it is a string of words of a particular type, whose well-formedness conditions are specified in the grammar of the language. Thus, the following are the sentences of English:

The cat sat on the mat.

Raja put his hat on the table.

A sentence possesses meaning exclusively by virtue of the word it contain, and their grammatical arrangement. We may assume that the grammar of a language is associated with principles of composition, that is, rules which tell us how to put together the meanings of the constituents of construction to get the global meaning of the construction. Although a sentence, outside of particular uses, does not have a truth value, it does have truth conditions, that is, conditions which must hold for the sentence to be used to make a true statement. Those aspects of the meaning of a sentence is being used to make, in a particular situation, is true of false, are collectively known as the propositional content of the sentence.

#### **7.2.1 Paraphrase**

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Paraphrase is to the sentence what synonymy is to words. This means that the paraphrase explains a situation in which two or more sentences have one meaning. Indeed, a sentence can have many paraphrases. There are two types of paraphrases: lexical and structural paraphrases. In lexical paraphrases, we have two or more sentences giving the same interpretation as a result of the replacement of one word or phrase by another. The following are examples:

- (i) The chef hired *a bachelor*
- (ii) The chef hired *an unmarried man*

In the two sentences above, the change in their structure is as a result of the substitution of a bachelor for *an unmarried man*. Both *a bachelor* and *unmarried man* are phrases. Consider further the following sentences:

- (iii) The man was *agitated*
- (iv) The man was *anxious*

We have achieved the paraphrase by the substitution of the word *agitated* for another, *anxious*. Structural paraphrase is achieved when we alter the arrangements of the sentences through transformations. The following are examples:

- (i) They bought a new apartment (Basic –subject + Verb+ object)
- (ii) It was a new apartment that they bought (Cleft)
- (iii) What they bought was a new apartment (Pseudo cleft)
- (iv) A new apartment was what they bought (topicalised)

### 7.2.2. Ambiguity

When an expression can be given more than one interpretation ambiguity arises. Therefore, why polysemy relates to words, ambiguity is concerned with sentences. We have two types of ambiguity – lexical and structural.

Lexical ambiguity occurs when the presence of just a specific word leads to multiple interpretations. Consider the following examples:

- (i) The team has many *goals*
- (ii) She prepared *tables*

It should be noted that goals and tables can be interpreted in different ways based on the contexts.

Structural ambiguity is achieved by the organisation of the elements of the sentence. It is possible to interpret these elements in different ways. Consider these examples:

- (i) They promoted all English teachers
- (ii) boiling water can be dangerous

The ambiguity in the second sentence derives from the possibility of reading the sentence as:

- (a) Water that is boiling (i.e. hot) can be dangerous
- (b) The act of boiling water can be dangerous

The first interpretation makes *boiling water* as the subject noun phrase whereas in the second interpretation, *boiling water* is the complement.

### 7.2.3 Vagueness

A sentence is vague when it has no definite meaning. This lack of meaning may derive from the incompatibility of the semantic properties of some of the words. Sometimes, a vague expression may be grammatically well formed, yet its meaning may be farfetched. Consider the following classical example taken from Chomsky (1965).

- (i) Colourless green ideas sleep furiously together

It should be noted that many of what we describe as literary language would have been vague except that we understand the background as literary. Consider further the following example:

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- (ii) The stones consoled her

This expression is clearly a personification since *stones* which are inanimate have been endowed with the characteristics of *consoling*.

#### 7.2.4 Tautology

A situation of tautology arises when we have unnecessary repetition of elements in communication. There is undue emphasis without necessarily making meaning any clearer. Tautology is closely associated with redundancy which is the introduction of linguistic units which do not affect the status or meaning of the larger construction. The following are examples of tautology.

- (i) This bachelor has not been married  
 (ii) The congregation are members of a church

Other instances of tautology are: Circumnavigate *around*; Unlawful theft; *Can* be able.

#### 7.2.5 Presupposition

In presupposition, there is usually a piece of information which the speaker assumes the hearer already knows. This assumption is based on some shared background knowledge between the speaker and the hearers. An outsider in the circle of communication may be at a loss. Let us illustrate this situation with the following sentences.

- (i) John: Are you able to bring Harry along?  
 (ii) Peter: That will be splendid. On our way, we shall pick up the drinks.

The presupposition in this conversation is that both John and Peter know who Harry is. They both have an idea of the drinks, and the source from where to bring them.

#### 7.2.6 Entailment

In entailment, there is usually a pair of sentences and the truth of one derives from the truth of other. Consider the following sentences:

- (i) Tracy is a spinster
- (ii) Tracy is a female

Sentence (i) derives from the meaning of sentence (ii). This means that if sentence (i) entails sentence (ii) then, sentence (ii) is necessarily the implication of sentence (i).

### 7.2.7 Anomaly

Anomaly results from the combination of two semantic features that are not compatible in describing a phenomenon. Words attract specific selectional restrictions. For instance *trees* are *vertical* while *rulers*, *ropes* and *snakes* are *horizontal*. For vertical items, we describe them in terms of *tall*, while for the horizontal ones we talk of *long*. Thus, we can have *tall trees*, *tall buildings* *tall people*, but *long ropes*, *long snakes*, *long rulers* etc. It will, therefore, be anomalous to have the following: *a long man*, *a tall snake*, etc,

### 7.2.8 Contradiction

Contradictory expressions present two opposing proposition at the same time. Thus, a person cannot be *dead* and *alive* at the same time. Other examples of anomaly are:

- (i) That circular house is rectangular
- (ii) The drains are flooded because there are no rains

### 7.2.9 Analyticity

We talk about analyticity when we have sentences in the grammatical forms and lexical meanings of their proposition which make them necessarily true. Consider the following examples:

- (i) Churches are usually attended by Christians
- (ii) Unmarried ladies are spinsters

## LEARNING ACTIVITY 7.2.

- (i) List the different areas of interest in the study of the meaning of the sentence.
- (ii) Describe lexical and structural paraphrases.
- (iii) Distinguish between ambiguity and vagueness.
- (iv) Discuss the nature of presupposition and entailment.

## SUMMARY

A great deal of the problems of communication derives from the misinterpretation of the grammatical and sentential meaning. It is always profitable to explore the full range of meaning from the point of view of grammar and sentence. This we have attempted in this unit. In this unit, we have studied semantics in its two dimensions: grammatical semantics and sentential semantics. Under grammatical semantics we studied about the difference and relation between lexical meaning and grammatical meaning, the meaning of major grammatical categories, grammatical meaning associated with nouns and noun phrases, grammatical meaning associated with the verbs, adjectives and their properties and quantification. Under sentential semantics we have focused our attention on paraphrase, ambiguity, vagueness, tautology, presupposition, entailment, anomaly, and analyticity.

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## Unit 8

### PRAGMATICS

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## OVERVIEW

It will be most inconceivable to limit the study of semantics to the abstract study of meaning. Indeed, a dependable theory of meaning should explore language use. The relationship between semantics and language use is referred to as pragmatics. We shall explore this relationship in the course of this unit.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

We should examine different aspects of pragmatics and speech acts in the sections that follow:

At the end of this unit, you shall be able to

- (i) define pragmatics;
- (ii) relate pragmatics to the meaning of sentences;
- (iii) explain reference, referents, anaphora and deixis;

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- (iv) explain the theory of speech act;
- (v) explain implicature

### 8.1. Pragmatics

Pragmatics is concerned with the range of choices and constraints available to users, and based on the context. In pragmatics, emphasis is on the pairing of sentences and their appropriate contexts. The choices made in language have been found to affect the listeners and their responses. It is possible to observe norms of politeness, appropriateness, formality and respect in the way language is used. It is believed that pragmatics determines the appropriate interpretation of sentences since there could be differences between literal and implied meanings. Differences in meaning are at the instance of the situation, the shared background and the linguistics context of the expression.

Pragmatics, according to Kempson (1986) is the study of the general principles necessary for retrieving information from a specific utterance based on the context. Emphasis is not necessarily on the grammatical or structural properties of the sentence. Indeed, a great deal of what we do in human communication is determined from the context. This means that the meaning of any stretch of communication is based on the interpretation of the listener. We also lay emphasis on the message, the participants, the deductions to be made from the utterance, the implications of what is said or assumed and the impact of the non-verbal aspects of the interaction on the meaning.

In terms of objectives, pragmatics deals with the totality of the processes through which utterances convey meaning hearing in mind the context and how participants respond to the meanings intended. It will therefore be easy to see that the common tie between *pragmatics* and *semantics* is *language*. However, while semantics is concerned with language *meaning*, pragmatics is concerned with language *use*. This will necessarily mean that the contextual approach to meaning will be very relevant to pragmatics. Since the full manifestation of language from the point of use deals on the implied processes, we shall explore the nature of *implicature*.

#### LEARNING ACTIVITY 8.1.

- (1) Define pragmatics.

### 8.2. Reference, Anaphora, and Deixis

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A lack of accurate understanding of the terminologies can cause terminological confusion among language teachers. In order to avoid the confusion, we presents and comprehensively discusses some central semantic notions such as reference, referent, referring expression, anaphora, and deixis. An accurate understanding of these notions can help language teachers, particularly semantics teachers, to enrich their insights into semantic terminologies.

### 8.2.1. Reference, Referring Expression, and Referent

Reference is commonly construed as an act in which a speaker, or writer, uses linguistic forms to enable a listener, or reader, to identify something. In other words, reference is concerned with designating entities in the world by linguistic means. Matthews (1997:312) states that "reference is the relation between a part of an utterance and an individual or set of individuals that it identified." It is important to note that reference is often contrasted with the notion sense. While reference deals with the relationship between the linguistic elements (language) and the non-linguistics elements (the world), sense is exclusively concerned with the intra linguistic relations, particularly words (Palmer, 1981). Thus, the sense of *tulip*, for instance, relates to sense of other words such *flower* (known as hyponym), and the sense of profound relates to the sense of deep (known as synonym). The relation among words is also known as sense relation.

The linguistic forms or the linguistic means used to identify or designate entities are called referring expressions, which can be proper nouns (Edison, Bandung), noun phrases that are definite (the woman, the singer), or indefinite (a man, an island), and pronouns (he, her, it, them). Noun phrases, proper nouns are called primary referring expressions, while pronouns are termed secondary referring expressions (Kreidler,1998). In addition, Kreidler (1998:130) states that referring expression is "a piece of language that is used in an utterance and is linked to something outside language, some living or dead or imaginary entity or concept or group of entities or concepts."

When the sentence *Einstein is a famous scientist* is uttered to make a statement, we will say that the speaker refers to a certain individual (Einstein) by means of a referring expression. The thing or things (or the individual named Einstein in this case) in the world referred to by a particular expression is called its referent(s). Thus the notion referent is an expression for the thing picked out by uttering the expression in a particular context (Saeed, 1997:27). Sentences may also contain two or more referring expressions. For



example, if the sentence *Bill kissed Mary* is uttered, with its characteristic force of making a statement, both *Bill* and *Mary* would be referring expressions, their referents being the individuals identifiable by names as *Bill* and *Mary*.

Kreidler (1998) further argues that the difference between referent and referring expression lies in the fact that there is no natural connection between referring expression and referent. There is no privileged one-to-one relationship between the expression *Bill Clinton* and the Bill Clinton, who was the president of the USA. Furthermore, the existence of a referring expression does not guarantee the existence of a referent in the physical-social world that we inhabit. We can create expressions with referents such as *the dragon in my house, the emperor of Indonesia* without necessarily proving the existence of their physical referent.

### 8.2.1.1. Types of Referents

Kreidler (1998) provides a comprehensive account of different types of referents used by a language to identify entities in the world. According to him, there are essentially three kinds of differences in referents. Each of these will be discussed below.

#### 8.2.1.1.1. Unique and Non-Unique Referents

A referent has a unique entity or unique sets of entities if its referring expression has fixed reference. Thus entities like *the Rocky Mountains, the Louvre, the Pacific Ocean, Germany* designate unique entities that can be found only in certain places, and knowledge of it is part of one's general knowledge. On the other hand, a referent may have a non-unique entity if its referring expression has variable reference. Entities such as *that woman, my brother, a mountain*, are not unique since they are different every time they are used, and knowledge of it is a matter of specific knowledge. It is the physical and linguistic contexts that help the speakers to identify those entities.

#### 8.2.1.1.2. Concrete and Abstract Referents

Concrete referents are denoted by concrete or tangible objects such as *book, lamp, tree, brick*, whereas the abstract ones are designated by abstract or intangible entities such as *beauty, democracy, knowledge, philosophy*. It is interesting to note that lexemes with different kinds of denotation generally occur in different kinds of utterances and may have different effects on other lexemes. Thus the lexeme *key* has a

concrete referent in the phrase *the key to the front door*, bearing literal meaning, and an abstract one in *the key to success*, bearing figurative meaning.

### 8.2.1.1.3. Countable and Non-Countable Referents

It is the property of noun phrase that merits the notion countable and noncountable, both of which can be concrete and abstract. Concrete countable expressions are those that are separate from one another, and those that can ordinarily be counted one by one. This includes such entities as *pencil, bags, chairs, and watches*. Abstract countable nouns include such entities as *problem, experience, and suggestion*. Concrete non-countable phrases have three kinds of reference: those that refer to continuous substances (*ketchup, sauce, milk, ink*), those that name substances consisting particles not worth counting (*rice, sand, sugar*), and those that refer to collections (*furniture, jewelry, luggage*). The feature that distinguishes countable noun phrases from non-countable ones is that the former recognize the division between singular and plural forms while the latter do not. Thus we can say *an apple, a hat, an umbrella*, the overt specifier being present preceding the singular nouns, and *some apples, some hats, some umbrella, some apple sauce, some mud, some ink*, with a zero specifier preceding both plural countable and non-countable.

In a language such as English the names of the animals that are countable by nature become uncountable when referring to food. An instance of this is the lexemes *(a) lamb, (a) chicken, and (a) turkey*. Finally, some nouns phrases may have dual class membership in that it can be countable and non-countable, depending upon the items it designates. Such entities as *(a) paper, (a) iron, (a) glass, (a) coffee*, etc. can be countable and non-countable.

### 8.2.1.2. Types of Reference

The discussion of reference has become a central concern in semantics, and the classification of different types of the ways of referring is relatively uncontroversial and remains undisputed among semanticists. Lyons (1977), Hofmann (1993), Kreidler (1998), and Cruse (2000) agree on the following classification of reference types:

#### 8.2.1.2.1. Generic and Non-Generic Reference

The meaning of the notion *generic* (not really synonymous with general) can be understood by observing the following:

- (1) The cat is a nice pet.
- (2) A cat is a nice pet.
- (3) Cats are nice pets.

Each of these sentences may be used to assert a generic proposition, that is a proposition which says something, not about this or that group of cat or about any particular individual cat, but about the class of cats as such. In other words, the entity *cat* in the above sentence is reference to a class of referents (Cruse, 2000:311). The fact that the *cat* in the sentences above has generic meaning can be demonstrated by proposing the question "which cat (s)?" Obviously none of the above sentences are the answer of such as question because the question is not germane. Sentence (1), (2), and (3) are in contrast with sentences (4) and (5) below.

- (4) A cat is lying on the mattress
- (5) Cats are lying on the mattress

In that the latter do not have generic reference. They do not necessarily refer to the whole class of cats. Although they are not the answers of the question "which cat (s)?" either, such a question is germane in this context. Lyons (1977) and Cruse (2000) identify two sorts of proposition involving generic reference as argument: either something is predicated of the whole class referred to, or something is predicated of each member of the class. The former has collective reference and the latter distributive reference. Sentence (1) has collective reference, and sentence (2) exemplifies distributive reference.

#### **8.2.1.2.2. Definite and Indefinite reference**

Kreidler (1998:143) argues that referring expression is definite if the referent from the physical-social context is identifiable for both speaker and hearer. The directive put the book on the table contains definite referring expression the book and the table.

Moreover, if the speaker assumes that the addressee can make the necessary implicature to relate a new reference to a previous one, this is also the case of referring expression. The utterance I bought a new

house in a quite neighborhood. The kitchen is very big has a definite expression the kitchen. We can also say that a referent is definite if the referring expression is fixed and therefore presumably part of the addressee's general knowledge, like Mount Everest. Finally, referring expression is definite if the referent has a unique or nearly unique position in the more limited world of the speaker and addressee. For example, the definite referring expression of this type can be seen in the interrogative have you received the reports from the doctor?.

The central idea of the indefinite referring expression is that the identity of referent is not germane to the message, and that the hearer has to make a choice from the extension of the noun (Krediler, 1998; Cruse, 2000). It must be emphasized here that indefiniteness is not restricted to the indefinite article only. The following sentences also contain indefinite expressions (Cruse, 2000:308):

- (6) Come up and see me sometime.
- (7) I expect he's hiding somewhere.
- (8) You'll manage somehow.
- (9) Are you looking for something?

### 8.2.1.2.3. Specific and Non-Specific Reference

In order to identify whether a referent has a specific or non-specific reference, it is of importance to understand the discourse rather than the expression of the referent per se. It is the discourse that determines the specificity or non-specificity of a reference. Consider now the following sentence:

- (10) Every evening at six o'clock a heron flies over the chalet.

The indefinite noun phrase a heron in this sentence can, under one interpretation, be understood to refer to a specific referent. It refers to a particular heron that the speaker has in mind. We can further support the specificity of the reference by providing the same context as follow:

- (11) It nests in the ground of the chateau.

The pronoun *It* in (11) is co-referential with *a heron* in (10). Again let us observe the sentence below:

- (12) I trust we can find answers to all your questions.

The referent answer in (12) can be understood to refer to a non-specific reference since both speaker and hearer are not really sure about the referent being spoken. It should be admitted, however, that very often we cannot exactly tell whether an indefinite noun phrase is being used with specific reference or not as it is dependent very much upon how the speaker/hearer interprets it. Hence, due to the alleged ambiguity of the indefinite noun phrase in the sentence below, it can be construed as being used specifically or non-specifically:

(13) I want to marry a girl with blue eyes.

Under one interpretation, the indefinite noun phrase is used specifically if it implies the existence of some individual who satisfies the description of having blue eyes, and thus can be equated to having the same sense as the definite noun phrase the girl with the blue eyes in the same context. On the other hand, it is used non-specifically provided that no presupposition or implication exists.

### 8.2.2. Anaphora

Halliday and Hassan (1976), in a lengthy discussion of textual cohesion in English, classify reference into two types: exophora and endophora. When we utter *his shirt or your uncle*, we refer to some entity in the real world: real world reference is called exophoric reference. But we can also refer to the referents in the text items using linguistic means: reference in text is called endophoric reference.

Consider the following sentence:

(14) Danny doesn't like hamburger. He avoids eating it whenever possible

*Danny* and *hamburger* are two nouns with exophoric reference, while *he* and *it* have endophoric reference: they refer to *Danny* and *hamburger* in the context, and not directly to real-world entity. Traditionally they are called pronouns. Endophoric reference can be classified into anaphora and cataphora depending on the position of the antecedent. Observe the short passage below:

(15) In the film, a man and a woman were trying to wash a cat. The man was holding the cat

while the woman poured water on it. He said something to her and they started laughing.

The pronouns (*it, he, her, and they*) in the passage are subsequent reference to already mentioned referents, which are known as anaphoric reference or anaphora. Technically speaking, the subsequent reference is called anaphor and the initial or already introduced reference is known as antecedents. Quirk et. al. (1985) states that anaphoric reference is used where the uniqueness of reference of some phrase the X is supplied by information given earlier in the discourse. They further distinguish two kinds of anaphora: direct and indirect. In direct anaphora, the referents have already occurred in the text, and thus can be identified directly, whereas in indirect anaphora the hearer identifies the referents indirectly from his knowledge by inferring what has been mentioned. Consider the following sentences:

(16) John bought a TV and tape recorder, but he returned the tape recorder.

(17) John bought a car, but when he drove it one of the wheels came off.

Sentence (16) exemplifies the use of direct anaphora where the referent the tape recorder can be identified directly, while sentence (17) contains the indirect anaphora where the noun *car* has been substituted by anaphor *it*.

Similarly, Matthews (1997:18) defines anaphora as "the relation between a pronoun and another element, in the same or in an earlier sentence, that supplies its referents". Finally, Kreidler (1998) adds another type of anaphora, which he calls lexical anaphora. This anaphora is the restatement of a certain referring expression by means of repetition, synonym and superordinate as in (19):

(18) There was a strange painting on the wall.

(19) I wondered where  $\left. \begin{array}{l} \text{the painting} \\ \text{the picture} \\ \text{his work of art} \end{array} \right\}$  had come from.

### 8.2.3. Cataphora

The notion cataphora is less common in use than that of anaphora. Cataphora is the relation between an anaphoric expression and an antecedent that comes later (Matthews 1997:48). Thus cataphora refers to entity that is mentioned latter in the discourse. Consider this sentence:

(20) I turned to the corner and almost stepped on it. There was a large snake in the middle of the path.

The pronoun *it* (the cataphor) in the sentence can be interpreted as referring forward to a noun phrase a large snake, (the antecedent) and is said to have cataphoric reference. Cataphora is also known as anticipatory anaphora or backward anaphora.

#### 8.2.4. Deixis and its types

The notion deixis has become one of the important topics that merits our attention. Deixis is a semantics notion, which is originally derived from a Greek word meaning pointing or indicating via language. Any linguistic form used to accomplish this pointing is called a deictic expression. The adjective deictic (deikticos) has the sense of demonstrative. When we notice a strange object and ask, "What's that?" we are using a deictic expression (that) to indicate something in the immediate context. Deictic expressions are also sometimes called indexical. The notion of what deixis is relatively uncontroversial among the linguists. Lyons (1977:637) offers the following definition of deixis: "the location and identification of persons, objects, events, processes and activities being talked about, or referred to, in relation to the spatiotemporal context created and sustained by the act of utterance and the participation in it, typically of a single speaker and at least one addressee." Similarly, Yule (1996:9) argues that deixis is a form of referring that is tied to the speaker's context, with the most basic distinction between deictic expressions being "near speaker" versus "away from the speaker." If the referents being referred to are near the speaker, the proximal terms such as *this*, *here*, *now* are used. By contrast, the distal terms such as *that*, *there*, *then* are employed provided that the referents are away from the speaker. Matthews (1997:89) states that deixis is "the way in which the reference of certain elements in a sentence is determined in relation to a specific speaker and addressee and a specific time and place of utterance." From the three definitions given above, it can be inferred that the notion deixis involves the pointing of certain referents that belong primarily to the category of persons (objects), speaker-addressee relationship, space, and time, context of utterance. Respectively, this category is termed person deixis, social deixis, spatial deixis, temporal deixis, and discourse deixis (Cruse 2000: 319). We shall examine each of these in detail.

##### 8.2.4.1. Person Deixis

Person deixis basically operates on a three-part division, exemplified by the pronouns for first person or the speaker (I), second person or the addressee (you) and third persons or other participants (he, she, it). What is important to note here is that the third person singular forms encode gender, which is not deictic by nature because it is not sensitive to aspects of the speech situation (Cruse, 2000). Another point worth making with regard to the person deixis is the use of plural pronouns, which can be in the representative or true use (Cruse, 2000:320). If the pronoun *we* is spoken or written by a single speaker or writer to represent the group he or she refers to, it is the case of representative use. On the other, if it used to refer to the speaker and the group, the pronoun *we* is employed in its true sense. The representative and true use of pronoun *we* are also called inclusive and exclusive *we*, respectively. The inclusive-exclusive distinction is explicable in the utterance Let's go (to some friends) and Let us go (to someone who has captured the speaker and friends). The action of going is inclusive in the first, but exclusive in the second. The pronoun systems in English can be seen in the following (Cruse 2000: 319-320):

	Singular	Plural
1st person	I/me	we/us
2nd person	you	you
3rd person	he/him, she/her, it	they/them

#### 8.2.4.2. Social Deixis

In many languages the deictic categories of speaker, addressee, and other(s) are elaborated with markers or relative social status (addressee with higher status versus addressee with lower status). Expressions that indicate higher status are described as honorifics. A widely quoted example to describe the social deixis is the so-called TV distinction, from the French *tu* (referring to familiar addressee), and *vous* (referring to non-familiar addressee). Other languages that make a distinction between the social status are German with the distinguishing pronoun *du* and *Sie*, and Spanish with *tú* and *Usted*. In the social context the higher, older, and more powerful speaker will tend to use the *tu* version to a lower, younger, and less powerful addressee, and be addressed by the *vous* form in return.

#### 8.2.4.3. Spatial Deixis



The concept of distance is relevant to spatial deixis, where the relative location of people and things is being indicated. As Cruse (2000:320) puts it "spatial deixis manifests itself principally in the form of locative adverbs (here and there) and demonstratives or determiners (this and that)." In English the spatial deictic system is indicated by two terms labeled proximal and distal. Such terms as *here* and *this* indicate that the location is relatively close to the speaker, and hence proximal. Conversely, the terms *there* and *that* indicate the relative distant of the location from the speaker, and hence distal. In considering spatial deixis, Yule (1996) warns that the location from the speaker's perspective can be fixed mentally and physically. Speakers temporarily away from their home location will often continue to use *here* to mean the (physically distant) home location, as if they were still in that location. Speakers also seem to be able to project themselves into other locations prior to being in those locations, as when they say "I'll come later" (movement to addressee's location). This is sometimes described as deictic projection.

#### 8.2.4.4. Temporal Deixis

Cruse (2000: 321) asserts that temporal deictic s function to locate points or intervals on the time axis, using the moment of utterance as a reference point. The time axis can be divided into three major divisions: before the moment of utterance, at the time of utterance, and after the time of utterance. The time adverbial that forms a basic concept in temporal deixis in English includes *now* and *then*. *Now* displays the same capacity for indefinite extension, which can refer to a precise instant, such as Press the button-now!; or it can accommodate a wide swathe of time like The solar system is now in a relatively stable phase (Cruse, 2000:320). However, very often *now* indicates the time coinciding with the speaker's utterance; for example,

*I am reading a novel now* (the action done at the moment of the speaker's utterance).

Then, on the other hand, designate the time period which is distal from the speaker's utterance. Then is normally interpreted from the context, as the following sentences indicate:

(20) Watching movies at 8.30 tonight? Okay, I'll see you then.

(21) December 23 rd , 2002? I was in Solo then.

Apart from the time adverbial, there are essentially other types of temporal deixis worth mentioning here. One type is related to calendric notions that include both clock time as in [1] and calendar time as in [2].

Other temporal deictic related to calendric system includes such expressions as today, yesterday, tomorrow, this week, last week, next week, this month, last month, next month, this year, last year, and next year. The last type of temporal deixis in English is related to the verb tense, as illustrated in the following sentences.

(22) We live here now.

(23) We lived there then.

The verb tense in (3) is in simple present and is normally treated as close to (proximal) the speaker's current situation, whereas in (4) the verb tense is simple past, and is thought as distant (distal) by the speaker.

#### 8.2.4.5. Discourse Deixis

Discourse deixis is actually a linguistic device used to designate an entity in the discourse. The linguistic devices can be the deictic expressions *this* and *that*, the expression *hereby* in the explicit performative sentence, and sentence adverbs such as *therefore* and *furthermore*. The following sentences exemplify each of these devices (Cruse 2000: 323).

(24) Listen to this, it will kill you!

(25) That has at least two implications.

(26) Notice is hereby served that if payment is further delayed, appropriate legal action will be taken.

(27) That rationale is controversial; furthermore.....

The deictic expression *this* in (5) and *that* in (6) respectively refer to future discourse element and past discourse element. Similarly, the *hereby* in (7) points to current discourse. Finally, the sentence adverb marker in (8) refers to what follows in the future discourse. Discourse deixis is not, however, to be confused with anaphora, the difference being that the latter might extract a referent from an extralinguistic entity. Thus the anaphor *she* in sentence (9) below does not strictly refer to the word *Susan* itself.

(28) Susan is indeed sexually attractive. She has been admired by many men.

#### LEARNING ACTIVITY 8.2.

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- (1) Describe the different types of referents with examples.
- (2) Describe the different types of reference with examples
- (3) Differentiate between anaphora and cataphora.
- (4) Discuss the different types of deixis.

### 8.3. Speech acts

A speech act in linguistics and the philosophy of language is an utterance that has performative function in language and communication. According to Kent Bach, "almost any speech act is really the performance of several acts at once, distinguished by different aspects of the speaker's intention: there is the act of saying something, what one does in saying it, such as requesting or promising, and how one is trying to affect one's audience." The contemporary use of the term goes back to J. L. Austin's development of performative utterances and his theory of locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts. Speech acts are commonly taken to include such acts as promising, ordering, greeting, warning, inviting and congratulating.

#### 8.3.1. Austin's speech act theory

A theory of language based on J. L. Austin's *How to Do Things with Words* (second edition, 1975), the major premise of which is that language is as much, if not more, a mode of action as it is a means of conveying information. As John Searle puts it, "All linguistic communication involves linguistic acts. The unit of linguistic communication is not, as has generally been supposed, the symbol, word, or sentence, or even the token of the symbol, word, or sentence, but rather the production or issuance of the symbol or word or sentence in the performance of a speech act." Meaning, then, should be regarded as a species within the genus intending-to-communicate, since language itself is highly complex, rule-governed intentional behavior. A theory of language is part of a theory of action. The basic emphasis of speech act theory is on what an utterer (U) means by his utterance (x) rather than what x means in a language (L). As H.P. Grice notes, "meaning is a kind of intending," and the hearer's or reader's recognition that the speaker or writer means something by x is part of the meaning of x. In contrast to the assumptions of structuralism (a theory that privileges langue, the system, over parole, the speech act), speech act theory holds that the investigation of structure always presupposes something about meanings, language use, and extralinguistic functions.

In *How to Do Things with Words*, Austin commences by enunciating a reasonably clear-cut distinction between constative and performative utterances. According to him, an utterance is constative if it describes or reports some state of affairs such that one could say its correspondence with the facts is either true or false. Performatives, on the other hand, "do not 'describe' or 'report' or 'constate' anything at all, are not 'true' or 'false.' . . . The uttering of the sentence is, or is part of the doing of an action, which again would not normally be described as saying something." Marrying, betting, bequeathing, umpiring, passing sentence, christening, knighting, blessing, firing, baptizing, bidding, and so forth involve performatives. The attitude of the person performing the linguistic act – his thoughts, feelings, or intentions – is of paramount importance. Whereas the constative utterance is true or false, the performative utterance is felicitous or infelicitous, sincere or insincere, authentic or inauthentic, well invoked or misinvoked. An "I do" at a marriage ceremony is insincere and misinvoked if the utterer is already married and has no intention of abiding by the conditions of the contract.

Austin divides the linguistic act into three components. First, there is the locutionary act, "the act of 'saying' something." Second, there is the illocutionary act, "the performance of an act in saying something as opposed to the performance of an act of saying something." Third, there is the perlocutionary act, for "saying something will often, or even normally, produce certain consequential effects upon the feelings, thoughts, or actions of the audience, of the speaker, or of other persons." In other words, a locutionary act has meaning; it produces an understandable utterance. An illocutionary act has force; it is informed with a certain tone, attitude, feeling, motive, or intention. A perlocutionary act has consequence; it has an effect upon the addressee. By describing an imminently dangerous situation (locutionary component) in a tone that is designed to have the force of a warning (illocutionary component), the addresser may actually frighten the addressee into moving (perlocutionary component). These three components, then, are not altogether separable, for as Austin points out, "we must consider the total situation in which the utterance is issued -- the total speech act -- if we are to see the parallel between statements and performative utterances, and how each can go wrong. Perhaps indeed there is no great distinction between statements and performative utterances." In contradistinction to structuralism, then, speech act theory privileges parole over langue, arguing that external context -- the context of situation -- is more important in the order of explanation than internal context -- the interrelationships among terms within the system of signs. (See also Linguistics and literary theory.)

The concept of an illocutionary act is central to the concept of a speech act. Although there are numerous opinions regarding how to define 'illocutionary acts', there are some kinds of acts which are widely accepted as illocutionary, as for example promising, ordering someone, and bequeathing.

Following the usage of, for example, John R. Searle, "speech act" is often meant to refer just to the same thing as the term illocutionary act, which John L. Austin had originally introduced in *How to Do Things with Words* (published posthumously in 1962). Searle's work on speech acts is also commonly understood to refine Austin's conception. However, some philosophers have pointed out a significant difference between the two conceptions: whereas Austin emphasized the conventional interpretation of speech acts, Searle emphasized a psychological interpretation (based on beliefs, intentions, etc.).

According to Austin's preliminary informal description, the idea of an "illocutionary act" can be captured by emphasizing that "by saying something, we do something", as when someone issues an order to someone to go by saying "Go!", or when a minister joins two people in marriage saying, "I now pronounce you husband and wife." (Austin would eventually define the "illocutionary act" in a more exact manner.)

An interesting type of illocutionary speech act is that performed in the utterance of what Austin calls performatives, typical instances of which are "I nominate John to be President", "I sentence you to ten years' imprisonment", or "I promise to pay you back." In these typical, rather explicit cases of performative sentences, the action that the sentence describes (nominating, sentencing, promising) is performed by the utterance of the sentence itself.

Austin (1962) describes the Speech Acts theory as an approach that explains the roles of utterances in shaping the attitudes of participants in interpersonal communication. Speech acts reveal the intentions of speakers and the effects the speaker's utterances and expressions have on the hearers. The implication of speech acts is that every utterance has a purpose which derives from the specific context. It has been observed that language use depends on such contextual factors as social and physical conditions, attitudes, abilities, beliefs and the relationship existing between the speaker and the listener.

### **8.3.1.1. Levels of Speech Acts**

There may be some confusion regarding types and levels of speech acts. We have already discussed types of speech acts – representative, declarative, directive, expressive and commissive. For levels of speech acts, emphasis is on the different stages of interaction between the speaker and the listener through the use of speech acts. Three distinct levels are usually observed – locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary acts.

**Locutionary Acts** – These are observed as the processes of producing grammatical and meaningful utterances which can be recognised by the hearer.

**Illocutionary Acts** – Illocutionary acts are the force behind the utterances. Indeed, the speaker performs these acts to achieve the purpose of communication as a statement, a question, a command, an invitation, a threat, a request, an apology etc. It is possible, for instance, to use a sentence that has the structure of a statement for the purpose of a warning. For example:

(i) You will lose all your deposits – (from a financial adviser to a client)

This sentence may be a warning or a piece of advice. Therefore, it is possible to use identical utterance types for different tokens based on the intentions of the speaker and the context.

**Perlocutionary Acts** – These are the effects of the speaker’s utterance on the behaviour of the hearer. They are the acts performed by the hearer as a result of the effect of the speaker’s utterances. It is assumed, for instance, that the hearer will respond to a question of the speaker in a specific way, or behave in accordance with the demands of the context. It should be noted that the illocutionary force is the intended effect of an utterance on the hearer from the point of view of the speaker. The perlocutionary effect is the actual effect of the speaker’s utterance on the action, behaviour, attitude or belief of the hearer.

Maximum communication is achieved when there is illocutionary uptake. This situation arises when the listener understands the intended effect of the speaker. This demand is at the core of semantics since meaning must be shared.

Austin himself admits that these three components of utterances are not altogether separable. “We must consider the total situation in which the utterance is issued- the total speech act – if we are to see the parallel between statements and performative utterance, and how each can go wrong. Perhaps indeed there is no great distinction between statements and performative utterances.” (Austin 1962).

### 8.3.1.2. Different types of speech acts

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There are different types of speech acts, the most common being the following:

- (a) Representative Acts;
- (b) Declarative Acts
- (c) Directive Acts
- (d) Expressive Acts; and
- (e) Commissive Acts.

**Representative Acts:** These acts describe events, processes and states. Usually, the speaker is committed to the truth of the assertion, claim, report, suggestion, prediction, description, hypothesis or conclusion.

**Declarative Acts:** These are acts that immediately change the state of affairs to which they apply. These acts are used in arresting, christening, marriage, sentencing, acquittal etc. Consider the following:

- (29) I discharge and acquit the accused
- (30) I hereby name this baby Amanda

**Directive Acts:** In directive acts, the addressee is instructed to carry out some instruction by responding verbally to an utterance or by performing some physical actions. The acts can be questions, commands, requests, pleas or invitation.

e.g.

- (31) Kindly lend me some money!
- (32) Please, be my guest!
- (33)What is your name!

**Expressive Acts:** Expressive acts show the psychological states – feelings and attitudes towards some events and affairs. These usually occur in greetings, scolding, condoling, appreciating, thanking, congratulating, apologising, etc.

e.g.

- (34) we congratulate you on your success
- (35) I apologise for my mistakes

**Commissive Acts:** In Commissive Acts, the speaker is committed to some future action as in challenging, betting, promising, offering, threatening, vowing, warning, etc.

e.g.

(36) I pledge a hundred thousand Naira

(37) We promise to build them a house

It should be noted that commissive acts carry specific performative verbs – *promise, swear, name, pledge, warn, advise, declare, bet*.

### 8.3.2. Searle's Classification of illocutionary speech acts

Performative verbs fall fairly naturally under a small number of headings. It is useful to group them in this way, as it enables us to gain a picture of the range of functions that these verbs perform. Searle (1975) has set up the following classification of illocutionary speech acts:

**Assertives:** Assertives commit the speaker to the truth of the expressed proposition:

state, suggest, boast, complain, claim, report, want (that)

**Directives:** Directives have the intention of eliciting some sort of action on the part of the hearer: order, command, request, beg, beseech, advise (to), warn (to), recommend, ask, ask (to)

**Commissives:** Commissive commit the speaker to some future action:

promise, vow, offer, undertake, contract, threaten

**Expressives:** Expressives make known the speaker's psychological attitude to a presupposed state of affairs: thank, congratulate, condole, praise, blame, forgive, pardon

**Declaratives:** Declaratives are said to bring about a change in reality: that is to say, the world is in some way no longer the same after they have been said. In an obvious sense this is true of all the performative verbs: after someone has congratulated someone, for instance, a new world comes into being in which that congratulation has taken place. The specialty about declaratives is that they cause a change in the world over and above the fact that they have been carried out. If someone says, I resign, then thereafter they no longer hold the post they originally held, with all that that entails.

resign, dismiss, divorce (in Islam), christen, name, open (e.g. an exhibition), excommunicate, sentence (in court), consecrate, bid (at auction), declare (at cricket)

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There is a finite number of explicit performative verbs in English (several hundred), but there is no reason to believe that there is a theoretically finite set of possible speech acts.

### **LEARNING ACTIVITY 8.3.**

- (1) Define speech act.
- (2) Differentiate the following from one another: locutionary, perlocutionary and illocutionary acts.
- (3) Describe the types of speech acts.
- (3) Describe the Searle's classification of performative verbs.

## **8.4. Implicatures**

Implicature is a technical term in the pragmatics sub-field of linguistics, coined by H. P. Grice, which refers to what is suggested in an utterance, even though neither expressed nor strictly implied (that is, entailed) by the utterance. As an example, the sentence "Mary had a baby and got married" strongly suggests that Mary had the baby before the wedding, but the sentence would still be strictly true if Mary had her baby after she got married. Further, if we append the qualification "not necessarily in that order" to the original sentence, then the implicature is now cancelled even though the meaning of the original sentence is not altered. "Implicature" is an alternative to "implication," which has additional meanings in logic and informal language.

### **8.4.1. Grice's conversational maxims**

Implicature, a term coined by H.P. Grice refers to what is suggested in an utterance and which may not have been expressed. The speaker deliberately breaks the rules of a conversational maxim to convey additional meaning. For instance, the following could be a possible question and respond respectively:

- (38) Do you really believe Betty?
- (39). She was speaking grammar.

The answer implies, among other things that Betty was not telling the whole story. It is expected of people in communication to obey certain co-operative principles. These principles have been presented as maxims's of quantity, quality, relation and manner.

#### **8.4.1.1. Maxim of quality**

Maxim Quality is concerned with truth telling, and two parts:

- (i) Do not say what you believe is not true;
- (ii) Do not say that for which you lack evidence.

One could argue that the second sub-maxim entails the first: there will obviously not be adequate evidence for a false statement. We can paraphrase this maxim as Do not make unsupported statements (Cruse, 2000: 355).

#### **8.4.1.2. Maxim of Quantity**

Maxim of quantity is concerned with the amount of information (taken in its broader sense) an utterance conveys.

- (i) Make your contribution information enough;
- (ii) Do not make your contribution more informal than necessary.

#### **8.4.1.3. Maxim of relation**

The maxim is very simple: Be relevant. The point of this maxim is not sufficient for a statement to be true for it to contribute an acceptable conversational contribution. For example

A: Have you seen Mary today?

B: ?I am breathing.

Notice that this maxim is implicated in the Maxim of quantity, which could easily be reformulated as: [Make] the strongest statement that can be relevantly made.

#### **8.4.1.4. Maxim of manner**

Maxim of manner has four components:

- (i) Avoid obscurity of expression.
- (ii) Avoid ambiguity.
- (iii) Avoid unnecessary prolixity.
- (iv) Be orderly.

It is generally regarded as being less important than the others. There are also conventional implicatures used for communicating non-truth-conditional meaning for specific linguistic expressions. It is largely self-explanatory.

#### **8.4.2. Conversational implicature**

Paul Grice identified three types of general conversational implicatures:

1. The speaker deliberately flouts a conversational maxim to convey an additional meaning not expressed literally. For instance, a speaker responds to the question "How did you like the guest lecturer?" with the following utterance:

Well, I'm sure he was speaking English.

If the speaker is assumed to be following the cooperative principle, in spite of flouting the Maxim of Relevance, then the utterance must have an additional nonliteral meaning, such as: "The content of the lecturer's speech was confusing."

2. The speaker's desire to fulfill two conflicting maxims results in his or her flouting one maxim to invoke the other. For instance, a speaker responds to the question "Where is John?" with the following utterance:

He's either in the cafeteria or in his office.

In this case, the Maxim of Quantity and the Maxim of Quality are in conflict. A cooperative speaker does not want to be ambiguous but also does not want to give false information by giving a specific answer in spite of his uncertainty. By flouting the Maxim of Quantity, the speaker invokes the Maxim of Quality, leading to the implicature that the speaker does not have the evidence to give a specific location where he believes John is.

3. The speaker invokes a maxim as a basis for interpreting the utterance. In the following exchange:

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Do you know where I can get some gas?

There's a gas station around the corner.

The second speaker invokes the Maxim of Relevance, resulting in the implicature that "the gas station is open and one can probably get gas there".

#### 8.4.2.1. Scalar implicature

According to Grice (1975), another form of conversational implicature is also known as a scalar implicature. This concerns the conventional uses of words like "all" or "some" in conversation.

I ate some of the pie.

This sentence implies "I did not eat all of the pie." While the statement "I ate some pie" is still true if the entire pie was eaten, the conventional meaning of the word "some" and the implicature generated by the statement is "not all".

#### 8.4.2.2. Conventional implicature

Conventional implicature is independent of the cooperative principle and its four maxims. A statement always carries its conventional implicature.

Donovan is poor but happy.

This sentence implies poverty and happiness are not compatible but in spite of this Donovan is still happy. The conventional interpretation of the word "but" will always create the implicature of a sense of contrast. So Donovan is poor but happy will always necessarily imply "Surprisingly Donovan is happy in spite of being poor".

#### 8.4.2.3. Implicature vs entailment

**This can be contrasted with cases of entailment. The statement "the President was assassinated",** for example, not only suggests that "the President is dead" is true, but requires this to be so. The first sentence could not be true if the second were not true; if the President were not dead, then whatever it is that happened to him would not have counted as a (successful) assassination. Similarly, unlike implicatures, entailments cannot be cancelled; there is no qualification that one could add to "the president was assassinated" which would cause it to cease entailing "the president is dead" while also preserving the meaning of the first sentence.

It is always common to hear people argue over what is meant, and what is implied. This means that there could be differences between what a speaker says and how the listener interprets it. However, success in communication depends on how well the meaning intended by the speaker and the implicature of the listener converge. This is usually possible when participants in communication obey principles of conversational implicature.

#### **LEARNING ACTIVITY 8.4.**

- (i) Discuss about Grice's conversational maxims.
- (ii) Describe about conversational implicatures.
- (iii) Differentiate between scalar implicature and conventional implicature.

#### **SUMMARY**

We have discussed about the role of pragmatics in semantics. In the second part of the unit we have discussed about reference, anaphora and deixis. We have studied the difference and the relation between reference, referring expression and referent. We have also learned about the types of referents and the types of reference. We have discussed about anaphor and deixis in details. We have learned about deixis and its types. In the third part of the unit, we have discussed about speech acts. We have learned about Austin's speech act theory and Searle's classification of speech acts. In the third part of the unit we have discussed about implicature. We have learned about Grice's conversational maxims and conversational implicature

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